

**IARF Kenya Chapter Press Conference**  
*International Life House boardroom, Nairobi*  
*30<sup>th</sup> November, 2013*



**Prayers**

Present were Bishops, Imams, Sheikhs and African traditional religious group leaders.

The Chairman requested them to lead the meeting with prayers.

## 1. General Secretary's speech

“To our distinguished guest, leaders and the IARF members, Shalom!

First I would want to acknowledge the presence of our distinguished guests Hon. Professor Nathan Kahara, Religious leaders' representatives (imams, sheikhs, bishops, reverends, fathers) and other distinguished guests: ***Hamujambo!***

In your presence, let me salute all the IARF Kenya Chapter members.

### **STATEMENT**

*IARF is pledged to build understanding and respect between people of all faiths.*

*We work towards an interconnected society where all faiths are not only tolerated but where individuals are respected and diversity is valued and celebrated.*

*We achieve this through facilitating interaction, joint action and civic participation, as well as raising awareness and understanding. In fact we try to enable people of all faith communities to engage with each other and the wider community through projects encouraging shared and responsible citizenship.*

*We strongly oppose religious extremism and strife by demonstrating how faith can inform work for unity and peace, rather than hate, war, and division. In the modern times, religion has often been blamed for inciting hatred and war.*

*We seek to promote an opposing image of religion, where religious tradition brings together people of different faiths by informing and inspiring them to service.*

*Though there is a lot of diversity within each religious tradition, understanding each other through our shared values and differing practices encourages strong individual faith while challenging stereotypes of religious people. However, the lack of knowledge and understanding of other faiths remains a strong barrier in this noble cause*

## Objectives

- To gain a deeper knowledge of religious freedom issues locally, nationally and globally.
  - To become familiar with the concepts underlying article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and its application to IARF's Statement of Purpose.
  - To learn through action by creating small- and large-scale projects that enable interfaith encounter to take place, especially in areas where religious intolerance threatens religious freedom.
- **Our Vision**  
To be a catalyst for world peace and harmony in society
- **Our Mission**  
Strive for peace, harmony, goodwill and understanding between people of all faiths and cultures, facilitate interfaith dialog and enlighten society about true Islamic values and principles
- **Our Core Values**  
Peace Love Moderation Integration Knowledge

These are going to be advantages for the wider regional development of our country Kenya.

We as **IARF Kenya chapter** are keen in playing part in promoting the liberal position by turning out to events such as Human Right Education, interfaith encounters, and peace- building seminars, among others.

I therefore welcome you all, with regard for your involvement, and look forward to our being able to spread many further activities of this kind in partnership with all you religious leaders and your communities.

Thank you and welcome. May God bless you all".

Rev. Lawrence Adera,  
*IARF Kenya Chapter Secretary*

## 2. Speech from the Chairman

Mr. Onyari said that without peace, these beautiful buildings we are seeing around here will be bring down and therefore peace must be preached everywhere and whenever we are all the time. I thanked those who made support to bring IARF to Kenya at the right time when our country Kenya has many challenges especially in peace.

“I also want to petition to our government that we are aware that we have refugees in the country and we all know that they are from our neighbouring country Somalia and they have been our friends for so long, we trade together like any other people, but we should still have to know their safety. If they feel that they are not safe at this time, if they go back to their country, there is no need of forcing them out, the care we had been giving them may sound like nothing, so the government should go slowly and make sure the places they are going are safe”.



## 3. Chief guest, Prof. Nathan Kahara, former Mayor of Nairobi

Professor Kahara said that peace is the major factor that has really made the developed countries that people admire - like Europe among others - achieved their goals. He added that without peace, any living thing is in trouble He therefore urge religion leaders to team up and preach peace in collaboration with other organizations, and make sure that where they are, there is peace, and to work even more closely with government agencies.

He said that the only organizations that can preach and maintain peace are religious groups.

He further said that with IARF being in Kenya together with the Golden Rule, we are going to pursue to the East Africa Community and to whole Africa for peace.

*Mrs. Jane reading the Golden Rule presented by Prof. Nathan Kahara, chairman of the Golden Rule initiative for East Africa.*