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Deputy Prime Minister Of Hungary Mr. Zsolt Semjén Visits the President Of the Catholic Bishops Conference Of Nigeria, Archbishop Ignatius Kaigama. *by Ruth Bumang Kaigama*

The President of the Catholic Bishops Conference of Nigeria, Archbishop Ignatius Kaigama of Jos, played host to the Hungarian Deputy Prime Minister at the Pope John Paul Centre in Abuja. At a time when some foreigners are avoiding visiting Nigeria amidst the security challenges, Mr. Zsolt Semjén along with an entourage which included the Hungarian Ambassador to Nigeria Prof. Dr. Gábor Ternák, took a detour on his way to meet with the Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari, to convey words of encouragement and solidarity to the president of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria (CBCN) Archbishop Kaigama Ayau on the 23rd October, 2015.

Archbishop Kaigama deeply appreciated Mr. Semjén's visit saying that in his position as the Archbishop of Jos, he had a first hand knowledge of the acts of violence and continuous threats posed by religious extremists.



Kaigama pointed out that, though things may not be very easy in Nigeria for now, having someone as high-profiled as the deputy prime minister come to Nigeria encourages the people of the country. He added that the visit of the Hungarians is a great show of solidarity; that though the Nigerian Government and Nigerian church need the moral and material cooperation of Hungary, the presence of Mr. Zsolt Semjén is a great source of encouragement to the people of Nigeria.

In a related development, the Deputy Prime Minister promised to grant scholarships to Nigerian priests as he expressed the general satisfaction with the few Nigerian priests in service in some parishes in Hungary.



Mr Zsolt Semjén and Archbishop Kaigama

He said this was what encouraged his country to consider offering more Nigerian priests training in theology and secular courses.

He mentioned that even though 11% of the universities in Hungary are Catholic, the intended beneficiaries are free to choose non religious tertiary institutions in Hungary.

Both Kaigama and Mr. Semjén expressed their eagerness to forge a brotherhood that would go beyond just the educational cooperation between the two countries. The two leaders also foresaw the positive impact that such scholarships would have on the Nigerian society, especially in the area of cross cultural exposure.

In conclusion, Mr. Semjén brought a message of solidarity from the Primate of Hungary, His Eminence Peter Erdő, on behalf of the Hungarian Catholic Church. .