



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**International School Ibadan: School Uniform Policy and the Alumni Standpoint**

The International School Ibadan Alumni Association (ISIAA) is aware of recent developments with its Alma-Mater and the ugly turn of events arising from a disagreement between the school authorities and the Muslim Parents' Forum of the school, concerning introduction of the hijab to the uniform of their female wards. Matters turned worse on Monday, November 12, 2018, when female Muslim students in hijab alongside their parents were denied entry into the school, with the ensuing standoff forcing the suspension of academic activities for safety and security reasons. We have received other reports about this and are profoundly saddened by this occurrence and call on all concerned to handle this matter with utmost caution.

The International School Ibadan (ISI) is a secular international school established to admit and provide the best possible education for boys and girls from all over the world; irrespective of their ethnicity, creed, race or religion. It's a center where children are brought to learn from one another with the aim of finding their common humanity. The uniform policy was introduced to disabuse socio-economic inequalities, discourage segregation and minimize distraction on academic activities. The uniform is unique and is the fabric that has bound ISI culture and tradition till today.

The Board of Trustees and Executive Committee of the Alumni Association, having considered the circumstances leading to this unfortunate occurrence, wish to admonish all authorities and parents to bear in mind the following as they work together towards finding a resolution to this issue.

1. The issue at hand should be viewed from the lens of principles and governing laws of the school and definitely NOT through the lenses of religion
2. That the International School Ibadan is a private school and is governed by its own policies, laws and regulations
3. The existing policy on the school uniform should be revisited and interpreted accordingly. This review should be principle based and guided by the constitution of the school
4. Should there be a need to change the uniform policy, a proper process and channel should be explored by those who seek to do so
5. The final decision and outcome as decided by the Board of Governors of the school should be respected by all concerned.

Beyond this, the Association wishes to advice that all overt religious activities on the school campus be discouraged henceforth. While we believe that every student should be free to practice whatever religion they wish, we are also persuaded that the exercise of such rights must be carried out within the bounds of civility. Within these bounds of civility, what cannot be condoned are actions being taken by a select few that could potentially jeopardise the comfort and safety of all ISI students and teachers. ISI as we believe

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has one mandate and that is to deliver quality education to every single student in the school and nothing more.

As former students of this great school, ISI taught us freedom of expression with respect for one another within the framework of the law. We were bound together in love and oneness – attributes that connect us till today. We are reminded of the words of our former principal Mr. John Gillespie, “in a world where not only is nation hostile to nation, but nations themselves are being driven by fanatical sectarianism, tribalism, injustice, violence and greed, the ideals of our school have never been more needed”. These ideals we hold dear and therefore call for peace and tolerance and ask all parties involved to imbibe forbearance in this matter as we look forward to an amicable solution. END

Tive Ekpere

President, International School Alumni Association (ISIAA)