



South African Council of Churches

OUR SACC: VITAL YESTERDAY, TODAY AND TOMORROW

Who We Are

The South African Council of Churches (SACC) is an ecumenical association of affiliated Christian Churches, with a mandate to lead common Christian action that works for moral witness in South Africa. It addresses issues of socio-economic justice, national reconciliation, the integrity of creation, eradication of poverty, and contributes towards the empowerment of all those who are spiritually, socially and economically marginalised.





Our Past

The contributions of the SACC are enormous and undeniably fundamental to where South Africa is today. At the worst of times in the lives of the people of SA, particularly in the 1970s, '80s and the first part of the '90s, the SACC became the 'voice of the people', in that it:

- Supported the international ecumenical Programme to Combat Racism (PCR) led by the World Council of Churches (WCC);
- Offered emergency services to victims of the brutalities of the apartheid regime;
- Raised funds for the legal defence of victims of the system;
- Took care of families of detainees and political prisoners;
- Offered bursaries for impoverished black children;
- Funded community development programmes and projects;
- Led the comprehensive sanctions campaign against the apartheid system, which had an international impact;
- Facilitated the establishment of development institutions such as the Kagiso Trust (KT) to mitigate against the

impact of sanctions on those they were meant to support;

- Engaged in youth development as well as in women's rights and empowerment;
- Supported exiled South Africans through its partners internationally and facilitated their return from exile after the unbanning of the liberation movements and the release of political prisoners;
- Assisted in the country's transition, from the negotiation processes to peace-making, participation in the making of a new constitution for the country, supporting the establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), as well as advocacy work for a just, social and economic order and for sustainability of creation, amongst others.



Bishop Siwa,
President of the SACC

Our Present

Our new democracy faces crucial challenges – poverty, unemployment, inequality and corruption – on which the church can advocate collectively for justice and the common good, and make a difference.

In the first half of 2015, SACC called for the mounting of the pains of our society on the Cross of the Crucified Christ; and prayer for the Promise of the post-apartheid South Africa – of a just, reconciled and equitable society, free of racial, tribal and gender

prejudices. A South Africa free of corruption and deprivation, and with enough food and shelter for every citizen; and for each child born to grow to their God given potential.



Our Commitment

In the second half of 2015, the SACC is focusing on the fulfilment of the “Post Apartheid Promise of South Africa”, and committing to its *“The South Africa we shall pray for!”* campaign, with themes such as:

- 1. Towards a Healthy & Reconciled South Africa:** Healing the past, and engaging the challenges of gender based violence, xenophobia, ethnicity and race.
- 2. Family Fabric – The Impact of Transition of Especially the African Family Life:** This recognises that the family is the basic foundation of society; and that the African community, who make up the majority of the population, has undergone major transitions that have an immense impact on the national social fabric, with new radical demands on both Church and State.
- 3. Poverty and Inequality:** Addressing the challenge of the growing gap between the haves and the have-nots in society.



- 1. Economic Transformation:** Dealing with the long-standing problem of the country's economic order, the meaning of real transformation, the place of business in transformation, land reform, etc. asking what sacrifices and/or trade-offs are necessary.
- 2. Education for Productivity:** Development of youth for a meaningful future in civic and economic life. Addressing the high number of school drop-outs – over 50% of children who started grade one in 2002 did not write Matric in 2014 – which results in loss of talent and a low skill base. Tackling the difference between schooling and education.
- 3. The Scourge of Drugs & Substance Abuse:** Drug abuse is ravaging the South African social fabric, destroying family life, and eroding the potential of a stable and productive future for young people.
- 4. Anchoring Democracy – Institutions, practices and people:** Building and sustaining public trust. Interrogating corruption and the decline of public trust in public institutions to promote transparency, openness to critical feedback and accountability of public representatives and officials.
- 5. Towards a Compact of Public Values for Integrity, Human Dignity and Peace:** Reviving the values of “ubuntu/botho”, citizen responsibility and defining the “rules of engagement” that make for a decent South Africa, anchored on the precepts of the Kingdom of God.

6. Christian Churches for Credible Christian Witness: Inspiring churches to introspect and ask themselves if the Christian Gospel is anything any pastor says or does in the name of Christ. Is there room for a mutually acceptable basic code for self-regulation by agreeable churches?



SACC Leadership

The SACC is currently led by:

Bishop Zipho Siwa, President

Rev. Frank Chikane, Senior Vice President

Father Michael Lapsley, Deputy President

Bishop Malusi Mpumlwana, Acting
General Secretary

Heads of Member Churches: Archbishop
Thabo Makgoba as Chairperson, and Prof.
Mary Anne Plaatjies Van Huffel, as Deputy
Chairperson.

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