



THE NDOLA DECLARATION

CONFERENCE ON: "CHALLENGES ON THE FUTURE OF THE AFRICAN YOUTH IN CHURCH TODAY"

We, the delegates of the Southern African Youth Conference, coming from Zambia, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Namibia, Angola, Mozambique, Burundi, Botswana, Sudan, Nigeria, Malawi, Lesotho, Ghana, Gambia, and Canada gathered from 1st to 7th May, 1988, in the Republic of Zambia, at the National Vocational Rehabilitation Centre-Ndola, with our theme: "Challenges on the Future of the African Youth in the Church Today," reflecting on the burning issues like: The Peace Challenge, The Development Challenge, The Theological Challenge and The Social Action Challenge, a result of a resolution for such a conference adopted at a meeting of the general secretaries of the East and Southern African Christian Councils in Gaborone, Botswana, in July 1987, and convicted by the call expressed in Isaiah 58: 6-10:

"Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen;
to loose the chains of injustice,
to untie the cords of the yoke,
to set the oppressed free...
to share your food with the hungry. . .
to provide the poor wanderer with shelter
to clothe the naked.
..
If you do these, your night will become like the noonday.' Resolve the fol-

lowing:

1. We have noticed that in spite of its political independence, Africa's development is still hampered by economic dependence on capitalist Western Countries.

We therefore call upon the African youth to support the movement toward a new international economic order. We will respond to the sacred calling of God to engage in holy labour by supporting indigenous development projects like:

(i) buying locally manufactured goods and lending our support to Southern African Development and Coordination Committee (SADCC), Preferential Trade Area (PTA), and other like organisations.

(ii) starting self-help projects.

(iii) taking pride in our African Culture.

2. We call upon the Fundamentalist churches and organisations to develop a theology relevant to life and death reality in our suffering world.

3. We have noted that an important way of practising theology is not relevant to our situation. We therefore call upon the churches to develop a contextual theology from the grassroots which will also draw our sacred African culture.

4. In solidarity with the Ecumenical Decade of Women, we call upon our churches to support the ordi-

nation of women and to encourage them to fully participate in the leadership of the church.

5. We further pledge our solidarity in Southern Africa's fight against the imperialist exploitative support of the racist regime and the inhuman and barbaric regime of South Africa against the majority.

6. In view of the above we call for:

(i) The unconditional release of all the political prisoners and imprisoned children of South Africans and Namibians.

(ii) The unbanning of banned political organisations and the returned of exiles.

(iii) The immediate lifting of the imposed state of emergency.

(iv) The immediate withdrawal of South African troops from Angola and Namibia.

(v) A stop of South Africa's aggression and destabilisation policies on the Frontline States.

7. We call on:

(i) All Christian youth to commit themselves to pray and work for the downfall of the Pretoria regime and to give material support through the OAU liberation funds in their respective countries, to South Africa and Namibia in their fight for total liberation and for refu-



gee programme.

(ii) The UN to implement Resolution No. 435 on Namibia.

(iii) All the progressive youth and the liberation forces to come together to fight the oppressor regime since we believe in unity we stand and divided we fall.

8. We urge all peace loving nations of the world to support the economic sanctions on South Africa's apartheid regime in order to accelerate its downfall so as to avoid more bloodshed in South Africa and Namibia.

9. We call on all churches and youth organisations to promote conscientisation

programmes and to give material support to organisations or committees in charge of refugees from South Africa, Namibia, and other parts of Africa. Where there is no such refugees organisations or committee, we resolve to create one to care for such refugees.

10. We call upon the South African President P.W.Botha, to grant clemency to all patriots on death row, to forthwith stop all treason trials, and to stop the death sentence as a form of punishment.

11. To express our solidarity with the South Africans and Namibians in their struggle to topple the Pretoria regime, we resolve as soon as possible to:

(i) withdraw all funds

and interactions with Barclay's (First National) standard banks and other financial institutions with dealings in South Africa.

(ii) participate fully in and encourage cultural boycotts.

(iii) boycott all South African goods.

12. We resolve to form a continuous committee, to be based in Zimbabwe, out of the participants of this conference whose task will be to set up a network of youth and student organisations to facilitate information sharing and exchange programmes, to follow up in six month's time on the resolutions here recorded, and to plan for further conferences of this nature.

THE CHURCH/STATE CONFLICT

WHAT HAS HAPPENED?

* On 24 February 1988, 17 organisations, including the UDF, DPSC, and other groups were effectively banned.

* The following week church leaders walked from St. George's Cathedral in Cape Town to parliament to present a petition protesting the bannings. Some church leaders were arrested (including Archbishop Tutu, Dr. Boesak, Archbishop Naidoo, Rev. Chikane, Rev. Mgojo).

* P.W. Botha, in response to this protest, wrote a letter to

* Archbishop Tutu asking him if he is 'serving the Kingdom of God or Kingdom of the SACP and ANC'.

* Bishop Tutu was supported in his stand of protest by the Anglican bishops of South Africa who said 'We question the right to define what is spiritual or decide what is valid Christian witness.'

* Rev. Chikane, general secretary of the SACC, wrote a letter to P.W. Botha in support of the church position of protest.

* P.W.Botha responded to Rev. Chikane accusing him of promoting hatred and revolution.

* Forty-five leading theologians from theological faculties and departments across the land came out in support of the church leaders and explained that 'the church has a clear Biblical basis for its protest and is in accord with the mainstream of Christian tradition in resisting injustice.'