



South African Council of Churches

**THE 7TH ANNUAL DESMOND TUTU PEACE LECTURE BY THE REVEREND FRANK CHIKANE
DELIVERED ON THE 14 OCTOBER 2011 AT THE CAPE PENINSULA UNIVERSITY OF
TECHNOLOGY, BELVILLE CAMPUS, CAPE TOWN.**

The Programme Director and Director of the Western Cape Provincial Council of Churches (WCPCC), Rev. Siyabulela Gidi;

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Rector of the Cape Peninsula University of Technology, Dr. Chris Nhlapo;

Distinguished Guests; Comrades; Brothers and Sisters; and

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I feel honoured to have been invited to deliver the 7th Annual Desmond Tutu Peace Lecture this year. In this regard I would like to thank the leadership of the Western Cape Council of Churches (WCCC) and the Cape Peninsula University of Technology for extending the invitation to me.

Let us start where we should and must. It is Mama Leah Tutu's Birthday today and we wish her a Happy Birthday. Mama Leah and the Archbishop emeritus, Desmond Tutu, remain a great inspiration to me as they have been for many years. I am one of those who find it difficult to accept that they have retired as we will miss their prophetic voice. But I would like to suggest that we accept this reality and allow them to enjoy their retirement. The baton is now in our hands and we must run with it. Whatever challenges we are facing it is now our turn as the younger generation to take them on and play our part as well.

When I accepted the invitation to deliver this Lecture almost ten months ago I was thinking more about the impressive life, ministry and witness of the Archbishop for as long as I have known him. Least did I know though that I will be delivering it in the midst of a storm relating to the VISA debacle of the Dalai Lama which has drawn the Archbishop into the public arena again.

The Archbishop's angry outburst in this regard shocked many. In my Birthday wishes to the Archbishop I said to him that I had not seen him so angry since the old days of the apartheid system. Whether one agrees with the Archbishop or not, his anger and outburst was like a wake-up call to many South Africans. Ordinary South Africans stopped and asked questions like, 'what has happened? What has gone wrong to make the Archbishop so angry?'

The response to the threat of 'prayer' was even more surprising to me; that people are 'scared of prayer' and take such a threat seriously! This for me showed that whatever our forms of belief or the absence thereof South Africans are generally religious or spiritual people who have a sense of what prayer can do.

Whatever the concerns about the Archbishop's response to the Dalai Lama matter, I have tried to understand his feelings by getting into his boots and looking at the matter from his perspective. In my reading about the Desmond Tutu Peace Foundation I found out that the Dalai Lama was not just a fellow Nobel Peace Prize Laureate to Archbishop Tutu but he has become a personal friend of the Archbishop. The Archbishop has also been a fervent campaigner for Tibet and the Dalai Lama for many years. Some may not agree with this campaign, but this is how the Archbishop sees it and has understood it. But what many South Africans do not know is that the Dalai Lama is a Patron of the Desmond Tutu Peace Trust (SA), and this makes the Dalai Lama part of the Archbishop's life and legacy projects.

As this matter seems not to be going away, my proposal is that the Government and the Archbishop should meet as South Africans and discuss the matter and agree or even agree to disagree on how this matter should be handled into the future.

THE LEGACY OF DESMOND TUTU

Whatever happens we need to accept that the legacy of Desmond Tutu, whom we honour through this Lecture today, is a legacy of a prophetic ministry which is by its nature controversial and unsettling for many, especially those who are in positions of power here at home and abroad.

The Archbishop is known for speaking without fear or favour, particularly against people in high places who are seen to be committing acts of injustice against others. He does not mince his words. Some say that 'he calls it like it is' or 'calls it like he sees it'¹. One may not like what he says, but one thing sure is that he says it as it is. 'Political correctness' does not seem to be one of his concerns as it would for many of us; what is 'correct' for him is what can stand the test of justice and human rights 'as he sees it'. He is also not driven by a particular ideological perspective as many of us would. He will deal, for instance, with the Middle East crisis, particularly about Israel, in the same way as he would deal with Zimbabwe or Libya.

Those of us who like being strategic in dealing with specific situations get disappointed from time to time as the Archbishop does not work on that basis. It is about what is right 'as he sees it'. Some would even say that this approach at times makes him look 'superficial' in the sense of taking things as they appear on the surface, and that this makes him vulnerable to sophisticated projects of some of the major powers. The other side of the same coin though is that those of us who are too analytical to try to understanding the dynamics of a particular situation and the forces at play tend to close our eyes to some injustice that might be in our face as we worry about other matters that ordinary people do not worry about or have no information about it.

The one thing that most of us would respect the Archbishop for is that 'power' or 'powerful' individuals or states do not deter him from being prophetic about the situation or about anything under the sun. He cannot be 'bought' using money or favours. He cannot be influenced in one direction or another because of either personal interests, benefits or material interest. In my view this is the stuff that makes an ethical leader and put him in the league of our revered leaders like Albert Luthuli, Oliver Tambo, Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Beyers Naude, Albertina Sisulu, and many others.

An example of this character which singles him out amongst many is his fearless witness against one of the worst violation of human rights by the US as a leading superpower. It is the infamous US **Guantanamo Bay detention centre**. He has taken it head on whilst the world turns a blind eye on it. Amnesty International has called this detention centre a 'human rights scandal' of the USA. In fact the 2005 International Report of Amnesty International calls this scandal 'the gulag of our time' and a violation of international law.

For some of us who have been victims of detention without trial and extreme forms of torture in detention find the silence of the world about the detentions and torture in Guantanamo Bay deafening and inexplicable. Reading about it reminds me of our experienced in the hands of the apartheid security forces: 'beatings', 'sleep deprivation', being 'kept in confined cells' (kulukutu), 'prolonged constraints' including being hanged head-down, 'semi-starvation', 'abuse of religion' (including depriving me of a copy of the Bible as they believed that the Bible made me a 'terrorist), and so forth. What is worse is the collaboration of some medical doctors in these acts against their own Code of Ethics.

All this notwithstanding the international community has not been moved to take any action against the USA as it would do with weaker states or smaller countries. As of May 2011 171 detainees were still kept at Guantanamo.

But Desmond Tutu has taken it on without fear or favour and expressed sharp views about it. For him detentions without trial were "utterly unacceptable" in the same way as they were unacceptable in apartheid South Africa. He stated that when Apartheid South Africa used similar methods it was condemned by the international community, but when powerful countries like Britain and the United States of America do the same the world is silent. "It is disgraceful", he said, "and one cannot find strong enough words to condemn what Britain and the United States and some of their allies have accepted".

One of the most sensitive areas politically is the **Middle East**, especially the Palestinian and Israeli conflict. Here the issues of justice and human rights are thrown out of the window and power-relations and violence determine what is true or false, just or unjust. The moral sense of 'good and evil', 'right and wrong', 'virtue and vice', and so forth, is totally lost. What matters are the national interests of powerful countries rather than those of the

people who are affected by this endless conflict, and, there seems to be no light at the end of the tunnel. Even here, the Archbishop put his foot in it irrespective of the consequences. As one would expect he has been viciously attacked, vilified and ridiculed about this matter.

I became **General Secretary of the South African Council of Churches (SACC) in the 1980s** at the height of the struggle against the apartheid system with high levels of violence. The challenge for the church was to be in solidarity with the victims of this evil and oppressive regime. It is during this time when I came closer to the Archbishop. At the worst of circumstances I could count on him and he was there to support me and often dropped anything he was doing to join me or accompany me in dealing with risky situations. The most challenging of these situations were the massacres in Black townships like in Alexandra, Sebokeng, and in many others which were characteristic of the late 1980s.

In fact when I was appointed General Secretary I chose to emerge from 'underground'² at Desmond Tutu's place in Soweto to ensure I did not disappear or be summarily arrested without anyone's knowledge. As one would expect of Desmond Tutu, he met me at the gate of his house, as his guest, and chased away the security police who had come seemingly to intercept me there as they would have been listening to our telephonic communication.

Desmond Tutu's message during the struggle was to give people hope where there was no hope. Even now I can still hear the echoes of his words of encouragement to the masses of our people, that our 'freedom was unstoppable', and that 'we shall be free' one day against the odds.

No one would gainsay that over the many years of his life, ministry and witness, Desmond Tutu has been consistent as the '**moral voice of the people**', especially those who are victims of any form of injustice. He maintained, in an unusual way, a morally and ethically high standard of leadership which gives him the edge against many and makes it impossible not to take his pronouncements on critical and controversial issues seriously. His credibility landed weight to his witness. In fact I would like to submit that his life, ministry and witness make him **an embodiment of ethical leadership** I have been asked to speak about today.

THE CHALLENGES (KAIROS) THE COUNTRY IS FACING

In dealing with this theme I have chosen to locate it within the context of the ***Kairos South Africa is facing today***. As you would know *kairos* is not only a moment of truth (a crisis) which requires decisive action, but is also a moment that offers us opportunities to find solutions to our critical challenges. The last time we dealt with a *kairos* moment was in the mid-1980s at the height of our struggle for liberation. In the face of extreme forms of violence and repression by the apartheid regime (in defence of an immoral system that was declared a crime against humanity) the church was called upon to make its decision about what it was going to do in the midst of this crisis. No one could sit on the fence anymore. It was a call to be prophetic, to take decisive action on the side of justice and the victims of society.³

From a church perspective decisive actions were taken then to declare the apartheid regime an 'illegitimate' government and 'a tyranny' which had to be removed and replaced with a just (non-racial, non-sexist), democratic Government where all would be equal before the law. This was a radical decision for the church at the time and was built on equally radical earlier decisions that declared 'racism a sin' and the 'theological justification thereof a heresy' on the one hand. As we know the UN had already declared apartheid a crime against humanity.

The ***kairos*** in our country today is different from that of the 1980s. Now it is both **political and economic** and unfortunately it still has racial overtones. From the perspective of the ordinary South African, the **political side** of it consists of worrying pictures and stories of divisions and political battles within the ruling party, the African National Congress (ANC) to control the levers of power for other reasons other than offering services to the people. Although this contestation would be considered by some as just part of a normal democratic process which allow for robust debates, for many it creates a feeling of insecurity and fear, and, this time it involves both whites and blacks.

For many the ANC is the only thing they have and they fear that if something disastrous could happen to it, it could spell disaster for the country. Even those who do not think much about the ANC historically do worry about the implications of the developments within the party that could have dire consequences for them as well. For whites, songs like *Dubhula Ibhunu* ('kill the boer') which are a subject of court proceedings currently do not help the

situation. They make then even more unsettled and increases the levels of fear and uncertainty.

Secondly, many South Africans worry about reports of **corruption** (whether true or false) and apparent failure to deal with it decisively. One needs to state that this is not just the problem of the ruling party but the rest of the society (Business, Public Service, etc.). Apparent rampant corruption involving billions of Rands, coupled with failure to meet some of the basic needs of the poor of the poorest generates a feeling of unhappiness and dissatisfaction. Worst more these billions seem to be wasted or going into the pockets of the few who unashamedly display their wealth in a way that anger the poor and makes taxpayers to be aggrieved that their hard earned money was misused.

Some worry about the apparent erosion of moral and ethical standards amongst our leaders and ethically problematic models of leadership many of our young people are exposed to. Related to this is the bellicose and distasteful language which is used in the political discourse which at times borders on the pornographic.

On the **economic front** it is the rising levels of dissatisfaction by the younger generation of black people who are affected by poverty, joblessness, and a feeling of exclusion in the economy of the country. For those who are directly affected by poverty the volumes of statistics that show that South Africans are better off since the dawn of democracy do not make any difference in their perspectives of the levels of crisis we are facing economically. What is more worrying in this regard is that seventeen years into our democracy poverty and joblessness still define themselves in racial terms. As a result the politically conscious black youth feel that there is no possibility of achieving 'economic freedom' in their life time unless radical actions are taken to correct the situation. It is for this reason that solutions espoused by the leadership of the ANC Youth League like 'nationalisation of the mines' and 'land redistribution' are appealing to the youth whatever the consequences. This goes with a worrying trend of 'a feeling of entitlement' based on the historical reality of exclusion and marginalisation of blacks over many years of colonial and apartheid rule.

Another challenge is that the measurement of success for blacks is in terms of current standards of living of white South Africans which obviously are unsustainable. We will deal

with this matter later. In my interaction with some of the politically engaged black young people I was shocked that they were prepared to achieve these standards of living by any means, including corrupt means. They argue that those who have that wealth today also used any means, including corrupt means legitimated by the apartheid system and its myriads of discriminatory apartheid laws.

What worried me most though was the apparent 'new trend' and logic that suggests that our revered leaders like Mandela, and others who were involved in the 1990s political settlement, 'sold us out' on the economic front. This we know it is not true, but for some of them this logic has become an absolute truth.

On the other hand the average white person feels like they are under siege because of laws related to affirmative action, black economic empowerment, employment equity and others. Expressed in the words of one of our white members of my church' "... white people feel marginalized, isolated and downgraded to second class citizens because of the exclusion to compete for tender opportunities offered by the state or parastatals, retrenchment due to affirmative action, jobs and bursaries reserved for black people only, job promotions withheld from white people, etc., etc."4

The blame for failure to meet the basic needs of millions of blacks who are poor is directed at the 'black government'. To use a quote from my interlocutor, the new government was supposed to use "help from with-in the country and the many countries abroad that wanted to use their expertise and resources, to now help develop and expand the new South Africa on all sectors of society". He then concludes that "Unfortunately, the new government *wasn't able* to utilize and facilitate all the help that was presented whilst *it lacked the ability* to really get going with the creation of jobs for the masses"5.

One does not have to agree with the views expressed by my white interlocutor, what is pertinent is that he represents the views of many whites in this country.

DRIEFTING APART

The picture painted above suggests that seventeen years into our democracy blacks and whites are drifting apart again and the risk is that we might find ourselves where we were

pre-1994. The caption used in the *Dinokeng Scenarios* Report for this scenario is 'Walk Apart' and for me it symbolises an act of 'walking away' from each other within the same country as if the *tsunami* that is about to hit us will discriminate between us.

Generally and because of this analysis (whether one agrees with it or not), there is an unsettling feeling which (this time) goes across racial lines that the political settlement of the 1990s which earned us accolades that we are a 'miracle', a 'rainbow nation', an example of what can be done to resolve intractable conflicts, was beginning to unravel. There is also a feeling, particularly amongst whites, that this might be the end of Mandela's reconciliation project and that the 'Madiba magic' will not be there to save us if things went radically wrong in the country.

I would like to submit that the situation we are facing today is a perfect *kairos* moment which calls on all of us (black and white) to act decisively and save the country from an impending disaster. In fact, I believe that this crisis (*kairos*) presents us with an opportunity to return to the drawing boards, retrace our steps, learn from the experience of the last seventeen years, and then develop a more lasting solution to the challenges facing our country.

My second submission is that to turn this tide around we need ethically moral leaders from all sectors of our communities to engage with these issues and become part of the solution.

ETHICAL LEADERS AND MORALITY

The challenge in today's world is that **ethical leadership** is as scarce as hen's teeth, unless we are talking about a mutant chicken called 'Talip' which lasts only for about 16 days⁶. In this world looking for ethical leaders is like trying to find a dinosaur. In fact if one is found, as some of the youth told me, it must indeed be a dinosaur, meaning that one does not belong to this 'real world' where they are.

The reality is that we are living in a world where "leaders are often morally disappointing", as Joanne Ciulla would say. "It's hard to have heroes in a world where every wart and

wrinkle of a person's life is public".⁷ In this situation the models of leadership unfortunately reinforces and reward unethical types of behaviour and leadership.

In a world where major countries that are taken as leaders of the world, invade Iraq under the pretext that there were weapons of mass destruction when they knew very well there were none⁸; a world where an undemocratic 'regime change' in Libya is engineered in the name of 'protecting civilians' when in fact it is an outright war to help rebel groups; a world where presidents of small, poor and vulnerable countries are called during the night and told how they should vote in the international governance system or else they would lose their budget support or aid; in a world where the appointments of international public servants depend on how much aid or assistance will be made available to poorer and vulnerable countries to vote in one or other way; in such a world one cannot be talking about ethical leadership.

In South Africa we have been privileged to have very ethical and selfless leaders who were products of the pain and suffering they endured under apartheid. They knew what was right and wrong, and what was just and unjust. They also understood that the only way to have peace was to ensure that all had equal rights irrespective of race, colour, creed, gender or disability. This included guaranteeing rights even to one's enemies.

But a few years into the new South Africa this began to change as material interests took the centre stage to drive the motive of getting involved in politics and being elected into office. In this changed environment the struggle for power becomes of paramount importance as it guarantees access to resources. Once in power and having being corrupted or compromised the next level of struggle is to make sure that one remains in power to avoid going to jail. If one is not in the top leadership one makes sure that those one campaigns for and votes for will guarantee their interests. In this situation ethical behaviour is thrown out of the window and the culture of 'dog eats dog' takes the centre stage.

This is why and suddenly party electoral conferences have become so emotionally charged and often turn violent. Here, ethical behaviour becomes the first casualty, and fraud, dishonesty, lies, and so forth take the centre stage. I would like to submit that no leader (either at a party political level or at any level of Government or of any organisation) can be

elected in a corrupt or unethical manner and still become an ethical leader. Dishonesty, lying, manipulating constituencies, and using money or other resources during election campaigns (party or government), to secure votes or to get into power is the surest way of producing unethical leadership. This applies to all institutions, organisations irrespective of whether or not leaders are elected or appointed.

Unethical leaders do not 'walk the talk'. They say one thing today and do the opposite tomorrow. They have a world of 'make believe' whilst they are living in 'another world'. In short they are just hypocrites and professional actors.

If all this happened in undemocratic states or countries it would be understandable. But this happens in democratic and constitutional states. My thesis in this regard is **that the democratic system is a vulnerable system, and its vulnerability unfortunately is inherently built in its self**. The system of 'wheeling and dealing' in democratic politics, where promises of one form or another (including money) are made, compromise the essence of the very system and makes it susceptible to corrupt deals. Patronage, especially in terms of jobs or favours (tenders, etc.) which seems to be part of established democracies makes the system vulnerable and robs the voter of value that could have been derived if this practice was not allowed.

The challenge of these developments in our societies (nationally and internationally) is that once the system is corrupted from above it informs everything that happens at all levels of an organisation, institution or society from the highest to the lowest levels. The saying that 'a fish rots from the head down' becomes true in this regard. It is common knowledge that leaders provide the organisational ethical 'tone at the top'⁹.

Trevino, Hartman and Brown in their paper on the "Moral person and moral manager: How Executives develop a reputation for ethical leadership ..." say that **a reputation for executive ethical leadership rests on two essential pillars:**

- (1) The executive's visibility as a moral person (based upon perceived traits, behaviours, and decision-making processes), and**
- (2) Visibility as a moral manager (based upon role modelling, use of reward systems, and communications).¹⁰**

What we need in our country and in today's world is the visibility of leadership as 'moral persons' as too much of what is reported in our media is negative and suggest that our leaders are generally ethically immoral. A leader is expected to show the highest levels of ethical morality based on 'perceived traits, behaviours, and decision-making processes. The way one makes decisions and the nature of those decisions informs subordinates (or those who are led) about the ethical moral standards of the leader.

The questions subordinates will always ask are: 'is the manager fair? Is the manager or leader managing the 'reward system' for performance in a manner that is fair and just? If the manager or the leader is seen as acting fairly and justly then the subordinates or 'the led' are likely to follow in his or her footsteps. In fact, in their research, Trevino, Hartman and Brown conclude that ethical leadership "includes an overlooked transactional component that involves using communication and the reward system *to guide ethical behaviour.*" (My own emphasis)

Research results show that "**six dimensions of ethical culture were negatively related to observed unethical behaviour**". (My own emphasis). These are **(1) ethical role modelling of management; (2) ethical role modelling of supervisors; (3) capacity to behave ethically; (4) commitment to behave ethically; (5) openness to discuss ethical issues; and (6) reinforcement of ethical behaviour.**¹¹

A **sample of young politically engaged comrades** I had discussions with earlier this year unashamedly made it clear to me that as far as they were concerned 'everyone was doing it (corruption) from top to bottom' and they do not understand why I was 'taking a hard stand against it'. 'In any way', they said, 'everyone was doing it internationally'. It was almost like 'if everyone does it there can be nothing wrong about it'. In fact there was a feeling that 'the likes of me' were targeting them when others have already 'made it' using corrupt means. It was like I was 'muzzling' them.

This reminded me of the saying that one should not "muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain", but the difference is that the ox was treading the grain whilst they wanted to just 'take' without working for it and adding any value. The context here was about the 'ploughman', the 'sower' and 'thresher'.

As I have said earlier what shocked me most was the fact that these young comrades were ready to discard the examples of the Mandela's, the Sisulu's, the Tambo's and follow the 'new trend' which was clear and 'in their faces' daily. They were of the view that these leaders belonged to their times which were different from where they were today.

The fact is that there is a 'trickle down' effect of the moral decay in our society from top to bottom. It seems to me that it does not matter what the real story is and whether or not the allegations and reports about corruption affecting those in leadership are true or false.

What is 'in the face of our young people' is that people are making money through corrupt and irregular means and that becomes the best way to make it in life. You do not have to work hard here; you just need a 'good deal' or 'an arrangement' that will make you a millionaire over night!

Mayer, Mkuenzi, Greebaum, Baroles and Sawadr, deal with this 'trickle down model' in their article on, "How low does ethical leadership flow? Test of a trickle down model". The research examines the relationships between top management and supervisory ethical leadership and group level outcomes and suggest that "ethical leadership flows from one organisational level to the next"¹²

As a country we need ethical religious, political, business, labour, etc. leaders and even moral psychologists to help us rebuild our moral capacity even if it was just in our psych. We need moral agency developers to turn things around, and against the tide, to return South Africa to its initial glory in terms of being 'a guide' and 'a pointer' to something new that the world has failed to be or achieve. We need to assist our young people to look forward to something beyond what they see now. We need to make it clear that the current models which are based on corruption are not sustainable and that they are bound to end up marginalising the majority of the people who are poor who are likely to rise up against the elite who will now be black. In fact, this approach is the best recipe for a revolution.

EFFORTS OF THE DESMOND TUTU FOUNDATION

A reading of some of the **activities of the Desmond Tutu Foundation**, the Peace Centre and Peace Trust points in the direction of commitment to work for the development of ethical leadership in the country and globally. The objective of the Foundation for instance is "to

convert his (the Archbishop's) unique leadership into the kinds of practices, approaches and tools that any individual can use to improve society through his or her own personal contributions".

Using the spirit of the founder of the Foundation (Archbishop) and the South African experience the foundation dedicates itself to "advancing reconciliation, peace building, non-violence, conflict resolution and *ethical leadership* so that all may live in a more peaceable and sustainable world".¹³ (My own emphasis) Of importance for me here is that 'ethical leadership' is associated with 'a more peaceable and sustainable world'. Unethical leadership is bound to lead into a future of conflict, war, anger and bitterness which can only lead to disaster.

In pursuance of the objective of developing ethical leadership, the Desmond Tutu Foundation and its related organisations have embarked in programmes of leadership training, particularly for the youth. On its inception the Foundation initiated and supported what is called 'Emerging Leadership Programme (ELP) for the youth. It also supported the 'Women for Leadership Programme. In 1999 the Peace Centre hosted a colloquium on 'Value-Based Leadership in Africa'. The overall objective is to learn more about the "*leadership challenges that inhibit world peace*"¹⁴. (My own emphasis)

There are many and complex challenges that inhibit world peace: some are internal and others are external. The internal are, amongst others, about the leader or leadership the world (or country) has. This includes their personalities, their character, their understanding of their own countries (societies), and the world, their moral values and ethical perspectives, and so on. But the most critical of these is their moral values and ethics.

REVOLUTIONARY MORALITY AND THE 'COMMON GOOD'

Some may be uncomfortable with the concept of 'moral values' as they feel that it is too much of a religious concept. Yes, it is a religious concept, but it goes beyond religion to the ethical lives of people and a society which takes it to what I would call higher levels of morality. We developed this concept of a higher level of morality in a working group within the National Executive Committee (NEC) of the ANC which we called 'revolutionary morality'. It goes beyond personal, family, friends, ethnical groups, religious beliefs, and the

national interests of a country, to the 'common good' of all of humanity based on the foundations of justice for all.

The 'common good' by its definition also encroaches into one's personal life, that there can be no personal or private life that impact negatively on other people's lives or the environment. All the time I listen to family backgrounds and stories of children and young people during my counselling sessions I am struck by how decisions of adults or 'mothers' and 'fathers', especially at their teenage years, can determine the life and future of their children. This reminds me of the fact that what people call 'private life' at times cannot be left in that realm as it impacts negatively on other humans. If we had leaders whose ethical perspectives were about the 'common good' of all of humanity we would not have decisions that cause pain to others, including senseless sectarian wars.

From a South African perspective we know that we have peace in this country because of the quality of leadership who had the wisdom to focus on the future we all wanted instead of allowing the past and the present to detain them and blow up our future. The compromises they made were very necessary to 'release the future' and give all of us the opportunity to can shape it to what we would like it to be. We did not only avoid the Armageddon in a way that earned us the label of a 'miracle', we also found a way of reconciling warring parties and made peace. Apartheid as we knew it came to an end and all South Africans, white and black are treated as citizens of this country with all the rights that go with it.

PROGRESS AND CHALLENGES

Although this political settlement was based on some compromises it was followed by an extra-ordinary effort to transform the society from an apartheid one to a non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and equitable society. Enormous progress has been made to change the quality of life of the people, especially the historically disadvantaged (and, particularly women) and the poor. The latest packaged statistical evidence in this regard can be found in the National Planning Commission Diagnostic Report¹⁵ and the *Dinokeng Scenarios* Report¹⁶. But there are still major challenges, particularly in the area of our economy. The economy has not grown at rates which can radically change the conditions of lives of all, especially the

poor. The limited growth we have had has not created the number of jobs necessary, especially for the younger generation. Some call this 'jobless growth'!

As we have said before the challenge about this is that poverty and joblessness are still defined mainly in racial terms and the overwhelming numbers of the poor and jobless are black. Even young black professionals who had the opportunity to study are also part of this pool of the unemployed. This is the generation that is now asking critical questions many of us were not able to ask or would not want to hear them. Yes, we have political freedom, but are we also going to have an economic freedom during our life, they ask? When will we reach a stage where the levels of poverty and joblessness will not be defined in terms of colour or race? Did our leaders settle for political freedom without giving a thought to the economic freedom (that is equality) that will signify the death of racism in this country? What should we do to correct this situation?

The young people who are asking these questions have not received satisfactory answers, if any, and have decided to develop their own solutions, like 'nationalisation of the mines', which has scared many, particularly whites in this country. The slogan is 'economic freedom during our time'! As we have said earlier, the language is rough and bellicose, and at worst uncouth.

What makes this challenge worse is that in a highly unequal society with a huge gap between the rich and the poor, the expectations are higher than what is sustainable, and ethical leadership has to worry about the questions of sustainability. Anyone who is going to look for solutions for this economic challenge has to accept that the level of the standard of living of whites in this country is higher than in a normal society and this was possible because there was exploitable commodity (human labour and natural resources) provided for by apartheid policies and systems. Apartheid policies also ensured that the standard of living of blacks was depressed. It reduced them to squalor conditions. In this way the apartheid system created more opportunities for whites and high quality facilities like hospitals, schools, and so forth, which was possible for the small numbers they had to deal with, outside the black majority which was neglected as part of the policy design.

If 'economic freedom' means taking all blacks to the level where whites are now without any exploitable commodity then the project will be next to impossible, unless there is an explosion in the growth rate of the economy in a way that is competitive internationally. This challenge has led others to call on blacks to moderate their expectations, but this will be unacceptable to the youth who are calling for an 'economic freedom' during their time. They want equality with their fellow white brothers and sisters and not moderation at a lower level. The argument is that the historically disadvantaged cannot be the only ones who are expected to make further sacrifices when 'whites give up nothing'. This to them would be unethical!

The reality is that whites in this country will have to also climb down from their historical tower of privilege and meet their brothers and sisters halfway to end the economic gap between blacks and whites. And, if this is done with an economy that is growing at higher rates, then the price to be paid will be at lower levels than otherwise. And, for this to happen, whites who are better endowed will have to invest their surplus capital in industries and opportunities that will help to grow the economy at higher levels. The cost here will be moderation of the expectation of returns to their investments as some of the projects or businesses which will create more jobs may not be ones that bring higher returns.

Whites who are endowed with more skills and other resources can also deploy them in a manner that will contribute in growing the economy or partner with their black brothers and sisters to participate in value-add projects or businesses. Contrary to the view that skills of whites in this country are not wanted, every skill, capacity or experience we can get into this economy is absolutely necessary.

The Preamble of the Constitution we as South Africans adopted through our 'freely elected representatives' requires of us as a nation firstly to "heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights". In a sense, the founding Preamble of the nation links 'healing' with building a society based on 'social justice'. Secondly, the Preamble requires of us to 'improve the quality of life of all citizens and free the potential of each person'. The understanding here is that 'social justice' must lead to the improvement of the 'quality of life of all citizens' as we as 'free' the 'potential' to make a contribution to the development of this country.

This can only be a joint project adopted by all South Africans through their 'freely elected representatives' (as stated in the Preamble) and cannot be left to one section of our society or another. One of the initial elements of a vision for the National Planning Commission is expressed in a form of a statement that asserts the perspective of a 'people united in diversity, recognising our common interests', including those of women, children and people with disabilities.

TOGETHER WE CAN WIN!

At the birth of our new democracy which started with a **concept of a Government of National Unity (GNU)** and we understood at the time that we needed, together, to stabilise the country politically and well as manage the transition from an apartheid system and society to a non-racial, non-sexist, just and equitable democratic society. But instead of taking the concept further into the economic sphere to work together to deal with the gross inequalities created by many years of apartheid and racism and deep levels of poverty, the concept of a united effort died with the premature withdrawal of the National Party (NP) from the GNU.

My view is that at the time most of us missed the long term importance of the concept a GNU or a united manner of dealing with the enormous challenges the country was facing. Blacks wanted to 'govern' without the burden of having to explain themselves every step of the way but needed the NP to manage the transition peacefully. On the other hand, whites were worried about being governed by a 'black government' and wanted to remain in Government to secure the interests of the 'white minority' as they saw it. In a sense we all felt that we were forced into it and saw this as an interim short term arrangement rather than a long term strategy.

The fundamental problem here is that the NP leadership (that is the 'white leadership') - and one would even say the majority of whites in the country - never saw the transformation of the South African society from an apartheid society to a non-racial, non-sexist, just and equitable democratic society as part of their responsibility. In fact some even see the project of transformation as a conspiracy to rob whites of what they have 'worked

hard for'. In a letter from a white member of my church entitled "TRANSFORMATION: The modern instrument to oppress people!" he says that:

When the first democratic election was completed and declared "free and fair" by the Electoral Commission, a long awaited goal was achieved: South Africa *was now transformed* into a genuine democratic and non-racial country. ...

However, not long after this historic victory for all the people of South Africa, it became apparent that *the ruling party also had a second agenda as far as transformation is concerned*. It needs to be called *a hidden agenda*, for this *strategy was never put on the table during the negotiations* that took place at the World Trade Centre in Kempton Park, and thus never formed part and parcel of the agreements reached between the parties.¹⁷

The emphases in the text are mine and highlight the sense of conspiracy in my interlocutor's mind. For him the agreed upon transformation was the democratic election of 1994. Anything beyond that is a conspiracy, a 'hidden agenda' by the ruling party, in his view to 'oppress' whites by pursuing programmes like 'Affirmative Action', 'Black Economic Empowerment', 'Employment Equity Act, and so forth. He concludes by saying that:

The excitement that filled my heart, the expectations that drove me forward in 1994 to move into a brighter future with all the peoples of this land, have made way for a weary hart(sic), looking into an uncertain future for my descendents.¹⁸

It is thus not surprising that the 'white leadership' (represented by the NP then) participated in reaching a political settlement to create what Desmond Tutu called a 'rainbow nation', but withdrew (exited) when we had to deal with the transformation of the society, including the economy, which was the greatest challenge faced by the country. From here on the 'white leadership' (represented in Parliament) became spectators and monitors of what the so-called 'black government' was doing as an opposition party rather than parties committed to *work together* to deal with the challenges occasioned by many years of apartheid.

Initially 'white business' took a 'wait and see' position for almost two to three years after the 1994 democratic election. When they loosened up after extensive discussions with Government and having satisfied themselves that the political agreement was holding there

was expressed willingness to be part of the solution. In this regard the Business Trust was formed to (1) create jobs, (2) build capacity, and (3) to enhance trust and build cooperative relationships between business and Government. Later various Summits were held in this respect to deal with the economic challenges faced by the country, especially the need to create more jobs.

Regular discussions were also held at the National Economic Development and Labour Council (NEDLAC) between Government, Business, Labour and community groups to try to agree on a social compact which would make it possible for all sectors of our society to moderate their expectations as well as work together for the common good. Presidential Working Groups with business and labour, amongst others, were later created to collaborate in this project.

In my view not enough was done to develop strategies to deal with many years of apartheid and its impact on black people. The various interest groups marked each other all the way. Rather than play as a team they planned and played the game to beat each other all the way to preserve their sectoral or group interests.

The third scenario in the Dinokaneng Scenarios, called 'Walk Together' says it all, as opposed to 'walk apart' (first scenario) and 'walk behind' (second scenario). The message of 'Walk Together' is that "we can address our critical challenges only if citizens' groups, business, labour and broader civil society actively and effectively engage with the state to improve delivery and enforce an accountable government".¹⁹ My view though is that the emphasis here should have been 'actively and effectively' engaging each other rather than just with the state. In my view, we need to engage the state in a participatory manner and not as spectators to improve delivery of services to the people and make Government accountable to them.

I would like to submit that 'walking together' and understanding each other better is the only way in which we can deal with the challenges that were occasioned by many years of apartheid and racism and the challenges of the last seventeen years of our democracy.

The key areas we need to focus on, amongst others, are:

- (1) Reducing unemployment radically or creation of jobs which will need us to grow the economy at a 6% or more growth rate. We need a developmental path that promotes growth and social equity²⁰. This will require moderation in terms of profit margins for projects or businesses which will create more jobs;
- (2) Making the educational system more efficient and effective to give every child the possibility of reaching the limits of their potential and capacity;
- (3) Improve the poor health facilities and services to give all South Africans a better chance in life; and
- (4) Deal ruthlessly with corruption of whatever nature as it undermines the legitimacy of the state and service delivery²¹. More so, it robs the poor and impoverishes them more.

CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSALS

In conclusion I would like to summarise the points we have made here in a form of eleven theses which also include proposals as to how we could deal with these challenges.

- 1. That the 1994 political settlement brought great relief and hope for all South Africans (black and white) except that their hopes were defined differently.** For Blacks it was about being treated as humans in their own country and the hope of changing their quality of life. For Whites it was the hope for a future of peace and that whatever they had would not be arbitrary taken away and given to others.
- 2. That a Government of National Unity (GNU) was formed to ensure that there was a smooth transition from an apartheid society to a non-racial, non-sexist, just and democratic equitable society. Unfortunately the GNU had an untimely death which had an effect of whites 'exiting' from the project of transformation of the apartheid society and leaving the project to the new democratic government which was mainly black.** The 'exit' of whites went together with the necessary resources (financial, skills, etc.) for the project of transforming the apartheid society.
- 3. That without the participation of whites in the project together with their resources the project was bound to fail or would take ages to achieve its objectives. In this regard, and generally, whites were destined to accumulate more**

whilst blacks followed a depressed growth path, increasing the gap between whites and blacks economically and increasing the tensions between them.

4. **Seventeen years later this development path or trajectory has led to feelings of unhappiness and restlessness on both sides with blacks feeling that their dreams were not realised whilst whites feel that their resources (wealth) were under threat because of affirmative action policies, Black Economic Empowerment, employment equity, and statements about 'nationalisation' and 'land repossession' made by the Youth League.**
5. **In the light of the above the 1994 Political Settlement now seems to be unravelling to many South Africans as the anger of the black youth and their dissatisfaction grows whilst whites become more aggrieved, afraid and restless. It is almost like the end of the Madiba project of reconciliation.**
6. **And, that in the light of the above, we need to go back to the drawing boards, retrace our steps, and learn from the experiences of the last seventeen years and develop strategies to deal with this crisis.**
7. **That instead of whites complaining from 'outside' (having exited the project for one reason or another) they should be invited to come back and participate in this project of transformation of the society in a manner that grows the economy to better the lives of all South Africans, blacks and whites.**
8. **And that instead of blacks complaining as if they were 'outsiders' (feeling that they have not been allowed to use state powers to address this persisting problem) they should also be called upon to join hands with their white brothers and sisters, put their shoulders on the wheel together and move the country to a higher growth path that is sustainable and able to meet the needs of all South Africans.**
9. **That unlike the GNU we need a mass participation model that will allow all (black and white) South Africans to be involved and develop strategies together as well as implement programmes that arise out of them. All sectors of our society (business, labour, religious communities, etc.) and all other organisations, institutions, etc., are called upon to participate in this project from the bottom to the top starting from wherever they are.**

- 10. That to achieve this we need ethical leaders, at all levels of our society, who are committed to serving the people rather than their own interests to take the initiative and be part of this project.**
- 11. And that as part of this project we need to give notice to corrupt and unethical leaders that their time has come to an end as their project (of corruption and unethical behaviour) was an anti-thesis of the project of the type of society we would like to build where the 'quality of life of all citizens' (and not the corrupt) will be radically improved, and that 'the potential of each person' will be freed, as the Preamble of the Constitution says.**
- 12. That if the corrupt and corrupted are not willing to change radically and be part of this noble project they must know that they will be forced to ship out by the masses of our people!**

Based on these theses above I would like to make a call to all South Africans to consider creating or forming a 'coalition of the willing' to 'work together' at all levels of our society to make sure that we reverse the tide by turning the economy around for the good of all South Africans. That this 'coalition of the willing' goes beyond any party lines or historical divisions within our society.

Secondly, I would like to call on all South Africans to remember that many of our brothers and sisters - many of our comrades - made enormous sacrifices to secure our freedom and that we should not allow a few unethical and corrupt leaders to reverse our revolutionary gains as well as holt the National Democratic Revolution (NDR) which was meant to correct the injustices of the past (political and economic) and better the lives of all South Africans.

The sacrifices made by comrades Tambo, Mandela, Sisulu, Mbeki, Ngoyi, Helen Joseph, Mahlangu, etc. must fuel us to take a bold stand and say no to the reversal of the gains of the struggle. We need to join our sister Council, Diakonia Council of Churches in KZN, and reassert the fact that 'a transformed world is possible' as we did during the days of apartheid. This is a statement of faith and hope for the future.

This is our challenge, our opportunity, and the time – that is, the *kairos* for us to make a difference!

I THANK YOU

¹ See the Desmond Tutu Peace Foundation website.

² Some of us were forced to go ‘underground’ to avoid arrest when the State of Emergency was declared in June 1986 and chose to continue with the struggle for liberation from ‘underground’.

³ See the *Karros Document*, 1985.

⁴ Letter by a white member of my church dated the 3 September 2011.

⁵ See *ibid.*

⁶ *Science Daily*, Feb. 23 (2006), or *Current Biology* 16(2006).

⁷ Ciulla, J.B. “Leadership Ethics: Mapping the Territory”, in *Business Ethics Quarterly*, Vol. 5, N. 1, Jan. 1995.

⁸ It is now a well known fact that the leadership which ordered this invasion had their own intelligence information and information from other sources by the time they moved in into Iraq.

⁹ See L. K. Trevino, M. Brown, and L. P. Hartman. “A Quantitative Investigation of Perceived Executive Ethical Leadership: Perceptions from Inside and Outside the Executive Suite”, in *Human Relations*, 56(1): 5-37, 2003.

¹⁰ L. K. Trevino, L. Hartman, and M. Brown. “Moral person and moral manager: How Executives develop a reputation for ethical leadership”, in *California Management Review*, 2000 (vol. 42, Issue 4, Pp128-142).

¹¹ M Kaptein. “Understanding unethical behaviour by unravelling ethical culture”, in *Human Relations*, June 2011, vol. 64 no. 6.

¹² N. M. Mayer, Mkuenzi, R. Greebaum, M. Baroles, and R. Sawadr. How low does ethical leadership flow? Test of a trickle down model”, in *Organisational Behaviour and Human Decision processes*, Vol. 108, Issue 1, Jan.2009, p173.

¹³ See the Desmond Tutu Peace Foundation Website.

¹⁴ See the Desmond Tutu Peace Centre website.

¹⁵ The National Planning Commission Diagnostic Report, June 2011.

¹⁶ *The Dinokeng Scenarios: 3 Futures for South Africa*, 2009. See also www.dinokengscenarios.co.za

¹⁷ Extract from the Letter by a white member of my church dated 3 September 2011.

¹⁸ See *ibid.*

¹⁹ *Dinokeng*, *ibid.* pg 69.

²⁰ See the National Planning Commission Diagnostic Report, *op. cit.*

²¹ See *ibid.*