

DISCIPLES OF CHRIST DRAFT RESOLUTION ON SOUTH AFRICA

Background Information:

The World Council of Churches (WCC) and the SACC, meeting in Utrecht, Holland on June 12, 1993, stated that "Under the apartheid system, government and business systematically deformed the economy. Today South Africa has one of the most unequal distributions of income and wealth in the world, a shrinking economy in which only half of the work force can find formal employment, high costs, gross over concentration of ownership and markets, and corrupt management."

In Utrecht, the WCC and SACC stated that "the sobering reality is that the correction of these structural distortions will require years of cooperation between the new democratic government, its partners in civil society and the international community."

The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) has consistently opposed apartheid, sought to aid those struggling to end this system, and voted in its 1983 General Assembly (Res. 8329) to urge "all general administrative units, institutions, regions and congregations of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to establish by 1985 a process for divestment from their investment portfolios all shares of stock of companies continuing to do substantial business in South Africa."

At the 1989 General Assembly, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) voted (Res. 8945) to "strongly urge(s) the institutions, and regions, which have not yet taken positive action (on divestment), to reconsider prudent sale of stock held...in U.S. companies still doing major business in South Africa."

WHEREAS, we celebrate the June 1993 multi-party agreement that established a date for South African elections on April 27, 1994; and

WHEREAS, we rejoice in the victories of the democratic forces in South Africa - victories which have placed the country, in the words of Archbishop Desmond Tutu, "on the threshold of becoming a democratic, non-racial, non-sexist country"; and

WHEREAS, we celebrate the role that millions of people around the world, here in the United States and Canada, and in our churches have played in the South African struggle for freedom and justice; and

WHEREAS, we highlight the important role that sanctions and divestment have played in accelerating the process of change in South Africa; and

WHEREAS, the African National Congress (ANC) and our partner institution, the South African Council of Churches (SACC), plan to call for the lifting of sanctions and the ending of other financial pressures once a Transitional Executive Council (TEC), representing all of the major political actors in the country, has been established; and

WHEREAS, we know that the establishment of a TEC will not equal the arrival of democracy, as only elections and equal participation of all South Africa's citizens at all levels of society will guarantee this; and

WHEREAS, the setting of an election date and the establishment of a TEC will be a great initial victory for democratic forces; and

WHEREAS, this victory is significant, apartheid has nevertheless left a terrible legacy in South and Southern Africa.

WHEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), meeting in St. Louis, Missouri, July 15-20, 1993, will consider its sanctions and divestment campaigns to have come to an end once a Transitional Executive Council (TEC) has been established in South Africa.

Sanctions and divestment pressures on military materials will remain in effect until a democratic government is in place.

BE IT FURTHER IT RESOLVED, that the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) will continue to support the SACC's and the ANC's efforts to secure multi-party control of the South African security forces;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that once there is a TEC, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) General Assembly will:

be in solidarity with the peoples of South Africa by supporting the building of a just, democratic, non-racist, non-exploitative and sustainable South Africa;

adhere to the WCC's and SACC's "call for new investment and support for the entire southern African region which will help meet the region's challenge" for change;

encourage businesses to invest in the region in the words of the WCC and SACC, "encourage businesses to invest in the region creatively and responsibly in the reconstruction process" of South Africa;

support the SACC's efforts to develop an effective code of conduct for domestic and international businesses, with monitoring and enforcement mechanisms; and

IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that until the SACC's code of conduct for investment has been developed, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) General Assembly calls on all present and future investors

South Africa to invest only in corporations doing business in South Africa which uphold workers' rights; recognize representative unions and the right to collectively bargain and strike; end all forms of racial, gender, political, religious and physical handicap discrimination; engage in environmentally responsible investment; invest in developing the productive capacities of all South Africans; uphold standards comparable to the best conditions in the relevant sector of the economy; and work toward the empowerment of African owned businesses.

mitted by:

Hart Mill, Crestview Christian Church, Indianapolis, IN
 Ferdinand Garcia, LaHermosa Christian Church, New York City, NY
 Mark K. Reid, Murray Hill Christian Church, Beaverton, OR
 Bert S. Bates, University Park Christian Church, Indianapolis, IN
 Edward L. Hamm, Vine Street Christian Church, Nashville, TN
 Melene Urban, First Christian church, Colorado Springs, CO
 Robert Somerton, Lafayette, California Christian Church
 John G. Redding, Country Club Christian Church, Kansas City, MO
 David L. Click, First Christian Church, Knoxville, TN
 Carl M. Snow, Central Christian Church, Grand Rapids, MI
 Edward L. Lofton, First Christian Church, Keokuk, IA
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*Reference and Counsel recommends that the General Assembly
 adopt Business Item No. 9341. (Debate time 12 minutes)*