

ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD OF THE SACBC STATEMENT ON NEGOTIATIONS (27/10/89)

The Administrative Board of the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference committed the conference to working for a negotiated political settlement in South Africa, and said "while welcoming the current talk about negotiations we recognise that negotiations are not possible as long as there is no freedom of association and political activity.

"The obstacles which prevent dialogue must be removed as a matter of urgency. Several countries, organisations and individuals have called on the government to:

- Release all political prisoners and detainees unconditionally;
- Lift all bans and restrictions on prescribed and restricted organisations and persons;
- Heed the call of the people concerning the removal of troops from the townships;
- End the state of emergency and repeal all legislation prohibiting free political activity; and
- Cease all political trials and executions.

The bishops have in the past made similar calls and endorse these. They are resolved to work for the removal of obstacles to negotiations in South Africa.

In addition the bishops call on all South Africans to stand for the truth by acquainting themselves with the issues involved in achieving a political solution and with the views of the major grouping involved.

The bishops urge all Catholics to work towards creating a suitable climate for negotiations by promoting democracy and reconciliation.