

## **SACBC STATEMENT ON THE AGREEMENT REACHED ON THE INTERIM CONSTITUTION FOR SOUTH AFRICA (18/11/93)**

The Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference welcomes the historic agreement reached on the Interim Constitution for South Africa and congratulates all the parties involved in this achievement. It is a victory for compromise, negotiation and tolerance. It gives a clear message that South Africans of opposing political views can work together and resolve their differences in a dignified manner.

Sadly, it has not proved possible to have all political parties and groupings support fully the process of negotiations and its fruit, the Interim Constitution. On the one hand, no effort should be spared to address the fears and concerns of these groups. On the other hand, those who have remained aloof from acceptance of the interim Constitution ought now to realise that it is only through participation in the new dispensation that they can contribute to improving what has been achieved and to showing their commitment to democracy.

The Interim Constitution bears all the scars of compromise and haste that are part of any negotiations and therefore it is open to criticism. However, it provides a framework for the transition to a new South Africa. The Constituent Assembly that will emerge from the April elections will have the leisure and the legitimacy required to draw up a final Constitution. In the meantime, the Interim Constitution is cause for celebration and thanksgiving.

We thank Almighty God for the blessings that have been bestowed on South Africa through the negotiation process and we ask God to continue to bless our country as we move together towards a new democratic future.