

SACBC STATEMENT ON THE DEATH OF CHRIS HANI (10/4/93)

It is with profound shock that the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference has learnt of the tragic death of Mr Chris Hani. In the first place, it wishes to extend its deepest sympathy to Mrs Hani and family. Mr Hani's death is a loss to the South African community as a whole, but more especially to the black community and in particular the youth, many of whom identified with him as their leader. The SACBC extends to them its condolences as well.

The SACBC once again condemns in the strongest terms possible, the resort to violence to resolve differences. Human life is sacred and must be respected at all times.

The assassination of Mr Hani is singularly tragic, given the key leadership role he has played in appealing for a non-violent resolution to the South African conflict.

The SACBC calls for calm on the part of all South Africans. It urges all the participants in the negotiations process not to let Mr Hani's brutal murder in any way be an excuse for aborting the process. On the contrary, it should lead to an even firmer resolve to pursue negotiations with greater determination and urgency.

This tragic event will engender anger in the hearts of many, youth in particular. The SACBC pleads that this anger be constructively channelled to produce a groundswell movement for peace.

To avoid unnecessary speculation and rumour, it is essential that the South African police waste no time in resolving this murder. The SACBC also calls on the Government to see that all leadership involved in the negotiations process is afforded the necessary security and protection to ensure that no further occurrence of this nature takes place.

The leadership of the Catholic Church in South Africa wishes to assure Mrs Hani and her family of their prayers for them in this time of bereavement. We pray also for Chris that he may rest in peace.