

## **SACBC STATEMENT ON THE SENSELESS KILLINGS THAT PLAGUE OUR COUNTRY (29/3/94)**

The Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference is deeply shocked by the tragic events and loss of life that took place in Johannesburg and Soweto yesterday, and in Natal where, over the last few days, more than one hundred people have lost their lives. It once again condemns in the strongest terms possible the senseless killings that continue to be associated with the political changes that are taking place in our country.

A very heavy responsibility lies on the shoulders of all political leaders to do everything in their power to get their supporters to act with responsibility and restraint. There is also the added responsibility to ensure that they themselves do not contribute in any way to fanning the fires of retaliation and further violence by ill-considered words or actions.

For the long, the country has seen political leaders whipping up emotions and engaging in irresponsible war talk and then stepping back and washing their hands of any and all responsibility for the loss of life and destruction of property that follows.

The SACBC endorses the coming together of the country's principal political leaders within the next two days and furthermore earnestly appeals to all the country's political leaders, as a matter of extreme urgency, jointly to condemn outright and without any reservation whatsoever any resorting to violence to resolve political differences.

The SACBC extends to all the families and friends of those killed in yesterday's tragic events its deepest sympathy and prays that those injured will have a speedy and complete recovery.