

STATEMENT OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF CAPE TOWN

ON

LANGA EVICTIONS (JULY 1981)

“Many people have been deeply shocked by the eviction of hundreds of men, women and children from the Langa bachelor quarters, due to be renovated and upgraded for family quarters.

“The circumstances surrounding the evictions have been very callous. They have taken place in mid-winter and the weather has been appalling. No alternative accommodation has been provided. The subsequent and systematic arrests of men and also of women with babies, is inhumane.

“We believe that in this entire exercise certain basic human rights have been ignored. There is the right of married people to family life. They also have the right to a home, no matter how humble. At the same time they have the right to live in circumstances where they can earn enough to live on, and as human beings they have the right to be respected as such by public officials and private citizens.

“We appeal to the authorities to reconsider the matter carefully and urgently to permit a site and service scheme, and to determine and correct the root causes of this situation. At the same time we appeal to all people of goodwill to give whatever assistance they can in this situation of dire human need.”

Signed:

BILL BURNETT – Archbishop of Cape Town

STEPHEN NAIDOO – Assistant Bishop of Cape Town

REV. JOHN ULSTER – Chairman, Western Province Council of Churches