

STATEMENT ON THE PROPOSED MEETING BETWEEN THE ANC, THE GOVERNMENT AND INKHATA ON NATAL VIOLENCE (12/3/93)

The announcement that the African National congress and Inkhata Freedom party leaders in the Natal Midlands will meet with the Government in an attempt to find a solution to the violence in the region is to be welcomed. Arrangement for the meeting should be concluded as a matter of the greatest urgency and the meeting should take place at the earliest opportunity.

The three massacres of last week, particularly the callous killing of six children, cannot be condemned strongly enough. Yet, that will not restore the victims for their grieving families and friends, nor indeed will it be adequate to console and comfort them in their sorrow.

Above all, action to bring an end to the violence is needed. The sacredness of each and every life must be respected. Political tolerance must be promoted. Political leaders who in the same breath voice their condolences and lash out at their opposite numbers, accusing them of responsibility, in fact inflame passions even further and set the scene for the next outrage.

The proposed meeting can play a crucial role in starting a process of reconciliation and action for peace. The seriousness of the situation should preclude any excuse being found either to postpone the meeting or put it off altogether.

*Issued by: Archbishop W.F.Napier
President of the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference.*