

**RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS
AS A MEANS FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE IN SOUTH AFRICA**

ADOPTED by the General Assembly

WHEREAS, apartheid-related social and political conflict in the Republic of South Africa persists as a most difficult and dangerous problem destabilizing all countries of southern Africa¹; and

WHEREAS, the government of South Africa maintains a powerful military force² which it uses against people in a manner that makes victims of civilians and that denies basic human rights to people, especially the majority Black population; and

WHEREAS, the African National Congress (ANC) is recognized by the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity as the representative political organization for millions of South African Blacks and committed individuals of other races³; and

WHEREAS, South African ecumenical church leaders, including representatives of partner institutions of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada, have been in close contact with the African National Congress over the years; in fact, Chief Albert Luthuli, (deceased) head of the African National Congress and Nobel Peace Laureate, was a member of the United Congregational Church of Southern Africa of which the former Disciples Churches are a part; and

WHEREAS, the African National Congress has historically envisaged a new South Africa that would be non-racial, unfragmented and governed according to a system of majority rule based upon universal suffrage⁴ and has generally sought to realize this vision without the use of violence; and

WHEREAS, the government of South Africa refuses to recognize the ANC or to even hold discussions with it concerning the future of South Africa; and

WHEREAS, as Christians, we are unalterably opposed to racial segregation and discrimination and are called to seek reconciliation and to work for peace and for justice, particularly with the poor and oppressed; and

WHEREAS, as Christians, we believe that persons should be involved in major decisions which affect their lives, and we are called to determine and to support proximate steps which offer hope for moving toward the goals of peace, justice and self-determination, recognizing that other Christians with the same goals may consider alternative approaches;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana on July 28 to August 2, 1989 recognizes that the African National Congress is an important political organization that deserves an opportunity to contribute to the search for peace and justice in South Africa; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) calls on the government of the United States and Canada to use their fullest political, diplomatic and economic strength to end the vicious cycle of injustice in South Africa; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) urgently asks members of our churches to prayerfully consider these views herein expressed and to exercise their influence on government representatives toward ending conflict and the establishment of peace and justice for all the people in South Africa.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the General Minister and President convey these views to the President, Secretary of State and all leaders of Congress of the United States and to the Prime Minister and Parliament of Canada.

Footnotes

1. The destabilization of all southern Africa by the government of South Africa was documented in Resolution 8757 "Toward the Economic Development of Southern Africa" passed by the 1987 General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) at Louisville, KY.

2. This point is well documented in Robert S. Jaster, "South African Defense Strategy and the Growing Influence of the Military," in *Arms and the African: Military Influences on Africa's International Relations* (eds. William J. Foltz and Henry S. Biernen). New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985.

3. See: Thomas G. Karis, "Revolution in the Making: Black Politics in South Africa," *Foreign Affairs*, Winter, 1983-84, pp. 389-392.

4. See: The Freedom Charter of the African National Congress; and John D. Battersby, "For a New South Africa, Some Plans," *New York Times*, July 28, 1988.