



THE APOSTOLIC FAITH MISSION OF SOUTH AFRICA DIE APOSTOLIESE GELOOF SENDING VAN SUID-AFRIKA

(PBO no/WO nr: 930004069)

NATIONAL OFFICE – NASIONALE KANTOOR

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12 July 2021

STATEMENT BY THE NATIONAL OFFICE BEARERS OF THE AFM OF SA REGARDING COVID 19 AND THE CURRENT VIOLENCE IN THE COUNTRY

The National Office Bearers of the Apostolic of Faith Mission in South Africa call upon our pastors and members, in these difficult days to keep the faith and pray to God to redeem us from this devastating pandemic. Psalm 46:1-2: *“God is our refuge and strength, always ready to help in times of trouble. So, we will not fear when earthquakes come and the mountains crumble into the sea”* (NLT).

We are mindful of the words of Paul in Ephesians 6 verse 12 *“For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.”*

We record our most sincere thanks and appreciation to our pastors and members for embracing the non-pharmaceutical safety measures regarding Covid-19. We urge our pastors and members to continue to observe Covid-19 safety rules and to avail themselves for vaccination.

The Covid-19 pandemic inflicted severe damage on the lives and livelihoods of South Africans. In their press release of 21 April, 2021 Ipsos stated: *“One of the most devastating “unintended consequences” of the response to the Covid-19 pandemic in South Africa is the spread of hunger.”* The study conducted by Ipsos further stated that almost 46% of adult South Africans agreed with the statement: *“Adults and children in my household often had to go hungry during the Covid-19 pandemic, as we did not have enough money for food.”* The number of job losses will increase during Alert Level 4, inflicting even more pain on our society.

We are currently experiencing a third wave which, is more infectious than the previous two waves. The infections continue to rise and the number of people succumbing to the pandemic has gone beyond 64 000. We are disappointed that the vaccination timelines of Government have not been met and we urge Government to enable broader participation to assist with the vaccine rollout.

We are aware of the immense challenges that our pastors and members are experiencing because of the prohibition of church gatherings. We are very concerned about the non-responsiveness of Government to our requests for an audience with the President and the way Government takes

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decisions that affect churches without consultation. The South African society, including the church is expected to be law-abiding, while certain organizations and people break Alert Level 4 Regulations, seemingly without any consequences.

The “lives” and “livelihoods” of the citizens of South Africa does not only depend on their physical and economic well-being, but also on their emotional and Spiritual health. Our government seems not to properly recognize the vital role of the church in providing essential pastoral and psychological services, in terms of bereavement, grief- and stress counselling, as well as moral and Spiritual guidance and Hope to our society.

No scientific evidence has been provided to substantiate the assertion that it is dangerous for churches to operate when all the health protocols including the opening of windows are observed, yet airplanes and taxis with closed windows and no social distancing are allowed to operate. The relief to the restaurants, gyms and agricultural livestock auctions are welcomed. We are however deeply disappointed that no relief was granted to churches who has proved to be disciplined with compliance to Covid-19 protocols. **We, therefore, call upon the President to urgently lift the ban on church gatherings.**

We are aware of the calls from some church leaders for civil disobedience. While we agree that the Government has, up to now not properly engaged and responded to the concerns raised by the Church, we do not support civil disobedience at this stage.

The National Leadership Forum will give guidance on the appropriate action to be taken by the AFM.

More than ever before, the collective wisdom of all sectors of the South African society is required to successfully fight this pandemic and we call upon our government to urgently involve civil society, including the Church, in a participatory manner to develop collective solutions for this pandemic.

We are disturbed by the current wave of violence accompanied by property damages and destruction. People’s anger should never be directed to economic sabotage. This will lead to job shedding. The road blockages will also disrupt health services. No amount of anger justifies what is currently happening. We condemn all criminality and call on Government to intervene appropriately. We also urge all those involved to stop their actions.

We call on all our pastors and members to immediately start interceding for our country, with a special focus on prayer for the rest of this week, Sunday and next week.

Kind Regards



MG MAHLOBO
PRESIDENT

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