

Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa

Regional Synod Cape – ISinodi-phondo – LaseKapa



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Scribe: Dr JG Botha

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The Executive of the Cape Synod of the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa has learnt with sadness that former President Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela has passed on.

We remember and celebrate the tremendous contribution he has made towards a new democratic order in our country, his commitment to the poor and disadvantaged and his inclusive vision for a united South Africa where it's rich diversity will be fully celebrated and South Africa will truly belong to all who live in it.

Mr Mandela insisted that South Africans must strive towards real reconciliation, fundamental justice and a united people. In this regard he lived and embodied the biblical values that our church has expressed in the Belhar Confession.

We are deeply thankful to God that He has given us the gift of such a statesman that is recognized and emulated by the world community. Mr Mandela has inspired a new generation towards generosity, compassion for the downtrodden and solidarity with those that struggle for their full human dignity including the Palestinian people and the Jewish community. Mr Mandela has eradicated the pernicious and racist ideology that always expects the worse from Africa and set a benchmark by which leaders of other cultures and nations can be measured.

We celebrate Mr Mandela's humility, for although he was of very high stature, he would always acknowledge the humble, the poor and the marginalized. In this he is raising a deep critique of models of leadership today and calling everyone to live a preferential option for the weak and downtrodden. Mr Mandela called South Africans to eschew self-enrichment, to always seek the common good and to live as a servant of the people that called him to political leadership.

Our deepest sympathies and solidarity accompanies Mr Mandela’s family in this hour of bereavement. We pray that his strength of character will encourage them and we bring them before the living God who is the God of all comfort (11 Cor 1:3,4) *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all consolation, who consoles us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to console those who are in any affliction with the consolation with which we ourselves are consoled by God.”* We pray that He will carry and comfort them on the road ahead. We commit ourselves to uphold the great example he has set and urge our fellow citizens and people world-wide to follow in his authentic footsteps.

We ask our congregations to observe a special moment of prayer and commemoration on Mr Mandela’s behalf.

Signed by URCSA Cape Synod Executive

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