

Loccum Declaration

**of the consultation „Cooperative Development“
March 21 to 23, 2001**

Leading representatives from the Republic of South Africa and the Federal Republic of Germany met over two days from 21 to 23 March 2001 to dialogue on the issue of an extended cooperation between the two countries at the consultation “Cooperative Development” at the Protestant Academy of Loccum, Germany. Among these were the South African Minister for Social Development, Dr. Zola Skweyiya, a representative of the German Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development as well as representatives of the churches, government, business, trade unions and non-governmental organisations.

Following the invitation of the Ambassador of South Africa in Germany, Prof. Dr. Sibusiso Bengu, and Dr. Christian Krause, the Bishop of Braunschweig and President of the Lutheran World Federation, the participants discussed the challenges and future possibilities of the cooperation between Germany and South Africa, notwithstanding the bilateral cooperation agreements. The consultation was supported by the Protestant Development Service, EED. It was rooted in the historical and cultural, economic and religious ties between the two countries.

The churches' support for the people of South Africa during the times of Apartheid created an atmosphere of confidence for an open dialogue. It became clear that the Republic of South Africa can be seen as a special link in the dialogue between the so called developed and the developing world. It is also one of the important markets and increasing export platforms for German companies and trade partners.

The transformation from Apartheid to a democratic state was a major achievement of the South African society. But the participation of all social groups in the economic growth remains a challenge not only for the people in South Africa but for all countries which are supporting the transition to democracy in South Africa.

The fight against poverty, unemployment, inequality and HIV/AIDS as well as the improvement of the education and health system can only be achieved by common efforts of the governments, business and the civil society. Furthermore, it is necessary to overcome the prejudices and project a positive image of South Africa in foreign countries.

Presentations and plenary discussions on the possibilities of cooperation resulted in three working groups, which worked out projects towards a better life for all South Africans and attracting German businesses as good corporate citizens of South Africa. Especially, the projects will aim at the development of human resources, social responsibility of foreign enterprises in South Africa and the intense fight against HIV and AIDS.

The delegates identified a growing gap in the mutual understanding of the challenges that South Africa faces at the moment. They committed themselves to closing this gap in understanding. The South African delegation emphasised their desire to make South Africa an investment destination

of choice among developing countries. The consultation committed itself to explore this issue further and continue to inform each other on what needs to be done to achieve this objective.

The participants of the consultation committed themselves to affirm the past relationships and carry them into the future, to promote a positive image of South Africa in the various sectors, to broadly mobilise the resources for poverty eradication and economic development in South Africa, and to meet for a follow-up conference later this year in South Africa to firm up the implementation of the projects.

Loccum, Germany, 23 March 2001

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