



SOUTH AFRICAN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES STATEMENT ON THE TRAGEDY OF THE LAGOS CHURCH DISASTER

September 18, 2014

The South African Council of Churches extends deep condolences to the families and friends of people that have lost their lives in the painful tragedy of the Lagos church disaster. We call upon all member churches and all people of goodwill to avail themselves to comfort and support distressed families, some of whom are having sleepless nights of anxiety not knowing the fate of their loved ones.

It is much to be regretted that it took such a long time for even the sketchy facts of what happened, were to emerge, says after the disaster!

However, we commend the efforts of the South African Government in working with the Government of Nigeria on this crisis and in supporting our families in distress. The conflicting messages on the exact numbers of the deceased are immaterial, whether we had lost seven or sixty seven people is not the point, our hearts go out for those souls and the families they leave behind. The national grief cannot be mitigated by the numbers. We appeal to faith communities across the country to use their worship time this weekend – in mosques, shuls/synagogues/temples, churches and all places of worship on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, to uphold this disaster and pray for its victims.

Much has been made of the fact that people go on frequent pilgrimage to Pastor TB Joshua's Lagos Synagogue Church of All Nations; and we have been asked to comment on the nature of his ministry. We do not think it is appropriate in the present circumstances to be analysing or commenting one way or the other on the ministry of this church and its attraction to people from all over. We wish to focus our prayers and support to the families of those who have perished or injured at the site of disaster, and encourage rescue speedy efforts for any that may have survived the initial crash and in desperate need to be unearthed from the pockets of air under the rubble.

Bishop Malusi Mpumlwana

Acting General Secretary, SACC

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