

THE METHODIST CHURCH OF SOUTHERN AFRICA
MISSION UNIT – JUSTICE & SERVICE DESK

**Addressing Land Reform in the
Connexion**

CONFERENCE DIRECTIVES

1998-2001:

- Formulate Policy to guide the Church on land issues in consultation with all levels of the church
- Ensure that Land is available to communities especially the poor
- Take into account particular needs of the Church
- Hasten completion of the inventory & audit of MCSA owned land including:
 - Residents
 - Beneficiaries
- Campaign to inform people on restitution claims
- Establish communication with churches of other countries with similar circumstance e.g. Canada, Australia, New Zealand and African Countries with similar circumstances

Conference Directive

2005:

Church to play a prominent role in the land reform process

2006:

Hope that success of Our Church Land Programme will provide a model of the country, and clearly demonstrate our commitment to the eradication of poverty

Conference Directive

- **2017:**
- Directs the Mission Unit in consultation with the Ecumenical Affairs Unit to hold a reflective session to include issues in all member countries , to address this issue of land reform,
- Compensation, and
- redistribution

RESPONSES TO CONFERENCE DIRECTIVES

- Draft Policy has been developed
- The audit and inventory for South Africa were completed in 2004 now require to be update.
- A partnership on low income cost housing was entered into with the Federation of Homeless people.
- MCSA participated in the South African Council of Churches discussion on land
- Participated in the Moral Regeneration Movement Summit
- Held a reflective Session on Church Land

Purpose of the Reflective Session

- To provide the MCSA with an opportunity to reflect on on:
 - The concepts of EXPROPRIATION without COMPENSATION and its theological implication
 - It's contribution to the dialogue on Section 25 of the Constitution
 - Encouraging meaningful public participation in land reform so as to promote reconciliation & address issues of inequality, unemployment, poverty, justice & peace,
 - What is needed to contribute to meaningful nation building , especially women & children as well as to continue maintaining the land, And,
 - The implementation of Resolutions of Conference

Next Steps of Reflective Session

The following next steps were identified:

- The need to **identify/develop Theological tools** to assist in addressing the land issue, (Include Social Analysis),
- MCSA **see it role from a justice & moral basis** – which should be aligned to Our Vision & Mission Statement
- **Acknowledge and Confess** its own involvement in dispossession, land reform, legislation that inform policy (throughout the Connexion)
- **Educate & Inform** about **history & legacy** of land, dispossession, reform, & Legislation Policies throughout the Connexion

- **Research, Capturing and or Review of MCSA land in all 6 Countries,**
- **Assess & draw attention to current processes of land claims,** especially as it refers to the roles of women & children,
- **Raise awareness on “political games”** – especially as it refers to the Political Parties,
- **Remind MCSA members about the various Resolutions** taken by Conference,
- **Review MCSA’s current Policy** on Land;
- **Request Districts, Circuits, Societies & Organisations to Urgently convene Reflective Sessions** on Land locally and to inform MCO on outcomes.
- **Strengthen & Build Partnerships with Ecumenical Bodies** to discuss collaboratively on the land issue/work.

CONCLUSION

The Reflective Session came to the mind that the following needs to happen – coordinated by the Mission Unit (J&S Desk),

- Further Reflective Sessions be convened throughout the Connexion – especially in the 5 *countries*,
- A **Communique** from the Presiding Bishop be sent to all Bishops & other relevant stakeholders (Regarding the mind & Outcomes), and
- Request Conference NOT to formulate any further resolutions regarding land – rather compel Districts & Circuits to seriously engage existing Conference Resolutions and find ways of implementing them.