

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**NATIONAL CHURCH LEADERS FORUM MAKES STRONG CALLS ON ANC TO ACT**

*JOHANNESBURG:* The South African Council of Churches (SACC) National Church Leaders Forum (NCLF) has cautioned the governing party to effect immediate changes to the course of government, or stand the risk of delegitimizing its foundations. This call was made, following the many challenges currently experienced by South Africans, as a ripple effect of corruption and maladministration.

There is a discernable pattern of a project to undermine and render the state and its institutions impotent and governance compromised and potentially derailed in the interests of alternative nefarious purposes. We call on all citizens of this country and Christians in particular to be vigilant and alive to the subtle nuances and messages that conceal the worst of the public sin of corruption and maladministration and its impact on the every-day lives of poor families in our communities.

Many acts of corruption surfaced through the SACC's Unburdening Panel, including many of those revealed by the Public Protector in the State of Capture Report of November 2016. The church leaders took considerable time to reflect on the state that our country finds itself, and believe that all options should be pursued in ensuring that the project to capture the state and its key institutions is terminated at all levels of Government and operation. It is against this background that we believe now that the responsibility lies squarely on the ANC in government to turn the ship around before it reaches the irreversible point of constitutional illegitimacy. When this point is reached, and this may not be far off, the ANC leadership collective and its members must bear the responsibility thereof.

In the weeks leading to the SACC National Conference in June 2017, the Church leaders have committed to a programme of active engagements with diverse stakeholders; and also to encourage their congregations to reflect on the state of the nation, so as to equip their delegates for a fuller engagement on the issues at the SACC National Conference. The engagement with various stakeholders will be in line with the ongoing approach of the SACC, such as the meetings previously held with the President of the Republic and the leadership of the governing party (ANC); and will similarly continue with a variety of other organisations. This is to better understand the diverse perspectives on the state of the nation.

The church leaders encouraged the participation in prayer networks across the country between Easter and Pentecost – some of which are publicly organized and yet others are private prayer chambers of small groups. In addition to this, the SACC calls on churches to observe a prayer moment between 12pm and 2pm on Ascension Day which is Africa Day, May 25, where we remember, not only South Africa but the whole of the continent, and all of its challenges. Also on the afternoon of Pentecost, Sunday June 4,



churches are encouraged to hold inter-denominational worship prayer services as this immediately precedes the SACC National Conference, which follows that week, to have a definitive position on the state of the nation.

The ministry of the SACC, through The South Africa We Pray For, has been nurtured for such a time as this, where the interests of the marginalized segments of our population and congregations must be at the centre of every intervention of the church.

**ENDS**

