



**Resolution
of the International Secretariat
of the Interparliamentary Assembly on Orthodoxy (I.A.O.)
on the problems of South Africa**

The members of the International Secretariat of the Interparliamentary Assembly on Orthodoxy, following their visit to the Republic of South Africa where they had the opportunity to contact various political, religious, cultural and social organisations, and discuss with them the present problems of the African continent, and following the conference which was organised by the department of Modern Greek studies of the University of Johannesburg with the subject: «Orthodoxy facing the social and economic problems of Africa. The contribution of the monotheistic religions to their solutions», in which they participated and presented their reports, during their meeting they adopted the following resolution:

While the vast problems of this continent are well known to everyone, the efforts being made by the civilized world towards their resolution are limited and ineffective. Nevertheless, it is well known to all of us, that most of these problems were created and accumulated during colonisation which determined the big socio-economic losses in this continent. At the same time any values of the western culture, during this period, were imposed with brutal and violent methods.

Thus, the peoples in Central and South Africa were westernized relatively late and in many cases, violently.

Nevertheless, the models of the western culture have been consolidated in the countries of Central and South Africa. These models determined the modern history of the region.

Many times the European ideas on democracy and politics and the religious beliefs collide with the local cultural particularities. All this contributes to the broad socio-economic crisis, which is connected with the underdevelopment of the industry of many African countries and with the demographic explosion of the 90's.

In addition, the western developed countries while they support their own industrial products, they limit the presence of "foreigners" in the international markets, while the support of the local rural production by the developed countries deters the demand of rural products from countries of the third world.

Poverty, hunger, illnesses and wars in Africa are human criminal actions. They are crimes without punishment.

Today, following the liberation from the yoke of colonisation, all these countries seek their own path of development.

The peoples in Central and South Africa need effective support in order to overcome the vast socio-economic crisis that has affected the continent, in order to overcome poverty, in order to put a stop to the frequent deaths from hunger as well the illnesses which swarm the continent, in order to overcome this extended crisis which costs thousands of human lives. A crisis which is determined by the particularities in the development of this continent, during the history of which



fundamental reversals took place in the area of socio-political and cultural life, as well as the callous exploitation of people and natural resources.

For this reason, the members of the International Secretariat of the Interparliamentary Assembly on Orthodoxy declare that for the obliteration of poverty, it is essential to increase the international aid, to plan effective systems for the distribution of humanitarian aid, so that it reaches our suffering fellow citizens, to change the terms of the international trade in favour of the poor and weak and to fight against violent conflicts. And for this reason, the most important problem of Africa has to be resolved, the one of racial discrimination and tribalism.

We call upon all national communities in Central and South Africa to decline the aggressive policy against the other national groups. The contribution of the orthodox communities in this area may be very significant.

In Africa, aside from the many orthodox national-regional communities that exist, we observe an increased number of Orthodox among the local residents. With the help of the Christian Orthodox, hospitals and schools are built, and a mission of medico-pharmaceutical and humanitarian aid is taking place. We consider the support of such efforts essential, as well as the progressing help for supplying commodities through the universal Orthodox society. We, the Orthodox parliamentarians, should make known our concerns for the problems of the African continent in the national parliaments and in the interparliamentary European bodies.

We consider it important to initiate our collaboration with the International Red Cross, international interparliamentary unions, as well as all the Christian beliefs in order to bring forward the problems of Africa and the efforts for their resolution. Especially during the year of 2006 which is dedicated to Africa and its problems.

The I.A.O. welcomes every African citizen, sympathizes with everyone that is suffering from poverty and illnesses and proclaims with them the belief to the expression that considers the problems of Africa part of the problems of the economically developed world.

It pays tribute to all those that have suffered or sacrificed their life against "apartheid" while they defended the honour and reputation of society as a whole.

It calls upon all developed countries, their parliaments, the social organisations, the non governmental organisations, every person of good will, to use up every possible way in order to contribute towards the resolution of the problems of Africa.

**Johannesburg, Republic of South Africa,
3 December, 2005**