



18 February 2014

COMMUNICATION FROM THE EXECUTIVES OF THE UNITING REFORMED CHURCH IN SOUTHERN AFRICA AND THE DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH TO THEIR RESPECTIVE CONSTITUENCIES

The Executives of the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa (URCSA) and the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) met in Pretoria from 17-18 February 2014. Dr Jerry Pillay, President of the World Communion of Reformed Churches, acted as facilitator. We thank God for a very positive and constructive meeting, and want to communicate the following:

1. We as representatives shared with one another where we think we are in our journey together. The representatives from the DRC noted the decisions of URCSA's General Synodical Committee who did not fully appreciate the DRC General Synod's decision on the status of the Confession of Belhar in their confessional basis. The DRC accepted the explanation from URCSA that their decisions state how they view confessions, and that their decisions in reality reconfirm their commitment to the process. We accept one another's decisions and do not see it as a threat for any process we are in. Our Memorandum of Agreement and the Roadmap to Church Reunification remain the guidelines for our journey.
2. We also started to plan visible and tangible acts to illustrate our journey and to be building blocks for our unification. The two broader leaderships (DRC's Moderamen and URCSA's General Synodical Committee) will meet jointly in October 2014 – something to look forward to. A communication will also be sent to our respective regional synods to request them to organize informal and/or formal indabas where they will discern where the churches are in their journeys with one another.
3. The meeting discerned how we can come closer to one another and learn from one another. We would like to suggest that the two churches in their different structures plan that in the month of September the congregations engage in a "Month of Pulpit Exchange". We dream that this may become a standing encounter on our calendars.
4. We recognize that the unity processes in the DRC Family are incomplete without the Dutch Reformed Church in Africa (DRCA) and the Reformed Church in Africa. The DRC and URCSA will pursue bilateral talks on a continuous basis and under the guidance of Dr Jerry Pillay the four churches will be approached for a consultation of the leaderships.
5. Recognizing the destructive power of racism so embedded in all our communities, we resolved to jointly develop and implement a program for our churches to help us all to

address this challenge in a way that will bring us closer together and enhance the healing we so long for.

6. The challenges in our beloved country and our communities are a source of grave concern. We are committed to journey together for the sake of our country and our churches, and we pray that the unity we strive for and wish to attain will be of great healing for everyone around us. We will in due course issue a joint statement with regard to the coming General Elections.

7. We thank our Gracious God for the privilege to be on this journey!

Dr Kobus Gerber

General Secretary: Dutch Reformed Church

Mobile: 0828955680

E-mail: kobusq@ngkerk.org.za

Dr Dawid Kuyler

Scribe: General Synod Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa

Mobile: 0832747616

E-mail: dkuyler@telkomsa.net