

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**28 March 2017**

**From the desk of Bishop Malusi Mpumlwana  
General Secretary of the SACC**

**SACC STATEMENT ON AHMED KATHRADA'S SAD DEPARTURE**

*JOHANNESBURG:* The South African Council of Churches mourns the sad passing away of Mr Ahmed Kathrada, a deep reservoir of national wisdom dressed in the gentle humility of his person - a Gentle Giant! Our hearts, thoughts and prayers are with Ms Barbara Hogan and the Kathrada clan at this difficult time. We express our condolences to the family, to the African National Congress (ANC) and the South African Communist Party.

Mr Kathrada was not a Christian, but he lived a Christ-like life of love, honesty and integrity; a disciple of truth in season and out of season, giving of self entirely and taking nothing for himself - a true example of the human calling in society; and he was not a Christian! Many Christians have much to learn from his life example.

Mr Kathrada was not an ethnic African, but he lived the values of ubuntu-botho most remarkably; proving the point championed by his friend and comrade who said ubuntu-botho is not the preserve of ethnic Africans. Indeed we say it represents the values that, lived like Ahmed Kathrada lived them, are a key ingredient in the formula for a reconciled and non-racial South Africa.

The country is going through deep pains in its body politic. When in 1993, we nearly lost ourselves as a nation with the brutal and senseless assassination of Chris Hani; it was the peaceful death of the venerable Oliver Tambo that restored our sanity.

We pray in hope that we shall not now, have so lost ourselves that so great and sad a moment of Kathy's departure will not awaken us to the core values that make for the promise of South Africa - a just, reconciled, peaceful, equitable and sustainable South Africa, free of racial, ethnic, xenophobic and gender prejudices, free of corruption and deprivation, with food and shelter for all, and for each child born to grow to its God-given potential.

May His soul rest in peace even as we remain to ask ourselves every eventful morning, "what would Uncle Kathy be saying today?"

**ENDS**