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acting in solidarity for a just peace in Africa and the world

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MESSAGE OF SUPPORT TO GAUTENG MUSLIM COMMUNITY

Salaam Alaikum. The xenophobic violence of the past two weeks has been reported globally, and has been condemned by all leaders (including Archbishop Buti Tlhagale on behalf of the Roman Catholic Church in South Africa. See www.sacbc.org.za). However, two particularly heinous acts committed during the violence have escaped public attention – the arson attack on the Nugget Street Mosque in Johannesburg on Sunday afternoon 8 September, and the torching of the Mosque in Katlehong three days before that. We condemn these two attacks in the strongest terms possible.

“There is only one God, one faith One Father of all” (Ephesians 4 verse 5-6). “Do we not all have one Father? Did not one God create us? Why do we profane the covenant of our ancestors by being unfaithful to one another?” (Malachi 2 verse 10). There is only one God, and we are all His children. Therefore, an attack on a Mosque is an attack on the Muslim community, and an attack on the Muslim community is an attack on all people of faith.

The perpetrators of the attack and their followers will justify their actions in the name of religion. But Jesus said: “Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter”. (Matthew 7 verse 21). And what is the will of the Father? “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.” (Matthew 22 verse 37 – 40).

There's a verse from the Qur'an that is poignant: Surah 22, Verse 40. "Had it not been for God's checking some people by means of others, monasteries, churches, synagogues and mosques, wherein the name of God is much invoked, would certainly have been destroyed. Verily God is sure to help those who help His Cause. Verily God is Strong, Almighty."

In these troubled times we pray that the peace of God will be with you all, and that the Almighty will keep you all under his protection.

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