



Interview

Southern Africa: Interview with South African Archbishop and Nobel Prize Winner Desmond Tutu, Patron of the Regional Campaign against Child Abuse and Child Trafficking

»Zero Tolerance for Child Abuse«

On June 16, the Southern African Region has seen the launching of a Campaign against Child Abuse and Child Trafficking.

What has motivated you to act as a patron of this campaign together with Graca Machel?

I am a father of 4 and we have 6 grandchildren. As a father and a grandfather, I am appalled as surely every decent person must be at the incidents of Child abuse. I want to see this horrendous scourge ended for the sake of our humanity, for the sake of the future.

Are there any intentions on the side of the South African Churches to become involved in the regional campaign activities?

I am retired and therefore cannot presume to speak for the SA Churches. My successor as Archbishop of Cape Town has made it quite clear were our own Anglican Church stands in the matter. Our bishops have said that they would report to the authorities any priest who was accused of child or female molestation, so I would say I would be very surprised if the Churches did not enthusiastically support this campaign.

Given the situation in Southern Africa, what do you consider to be priorities in the fight against the exploitation of children?

I believe education, public awareness are an important priority. Children should be made aware of the dangers to which they are exposed and society should develop zero tolerance for child abuse. There can be no exception allowed. The churches must be involved to raise the level of morality in our societies and we should in every possible way be child friendly. We must eradicate poverty because so many social ills stem from it.

Are people in South Africa aware of the existence of child trafficking and its dimension?

I believe most people who are exposed to TV, radio and the media should be reasonably aware of this problem of trafficking and sexual exploitation.



How do you value the work that has already been done, for example by terre des hommes partners like Molo Songololo, to better protect children's rights and their needs?

It is most impressive with limited resources and is to be encouraged as it is highly commended.

What are your hopes and expectations with regard to the implementation of the campaign in Southern Africa?

I hope we will become a country where children have security and love and can grow up happily, being children who have the space to play and to develop their Godgiven talents to the fullest, knowing that the sky is the limit and that they can reach up to the stars

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