



**Archbishop
Desmond M. Tutu**

Foreword

It is my pleasure to learn that the training manual for African religious leaders and communities *Advancing Justice and Reconciliation in relation to the International Criminal Court* has been worked on by the Faith and Ethics Caucus for the ICC, in close collaboration with African counterparts.

Coming from my background of South Africa, a land that I love passionately, I have witnessed the high costs of apartheid that I saw in numerous demolitions in the squatter camps of Cape Town and the killing of innocent people in the townships. These victims included very young children and elderly persons. I have witnessed our communities being uprooted and, above all, torn apart leaving the fabric of our entire civil society in shreds.

However, it is my firm belief that we as human beings are of infinite value, all children of God and therefore need to work to be peacemakers in such situations that we now face not only in South Africa but in various parts of Africa. As peacemakers, we are called to share in Our Lord's Ministry of reconciliation. If we want peace, let us work for justice and let us beat our swords into ploughshares.

This Training Manual comes in at an appropriate time to give a helping hand to our African communities to advance the cause of Justice and Reconciliation and link our concerns with the international community so that we can build a common future together.

The establishment of the International Criminal Court (ICC) is one of the most important steps in international law in the last decades. The ICC provides the international community with an instrument to pursue justice for specified crimes that would otherwise be committed with impunity. The Victims Trust Fund of the ICC, of which I have the privilege to be Board Member, will do its utmost to contribute to this goal and will provide support for the victim survivors.

In this path of justice and reconciliation, the African religious leaders have an important role to play. At times, these are key roles they can play. Religious leaders and organisations can prioritise peace and reconciliation initiatives, disseminate information, mobilise



religious communities, conduct human rights training, monitor human right violations and do advocacy work. African religious leaders can, in particular, contribute to understanding the local traditional approaches and help in exploring values and beliefs, fears and suspicions, interests and needs, relationships and network perceptions from local and traditional perspectives.

I hope that we can link with the ICC to enable our societies in Africa to make the political transition from situations of violence, conflicts and discrimination to situations of peace where we can live with love and harmony with ourselves and our neighbours.

Let us recall that God calls us to be fellow workers with Him, so that we can extend His Kingdom of Shalom, of justice, of goodness, of compassion, of caring, of sharing, of laughter, joy and reconciliation, so that the kingdoms of this world will become the Kingdom of our God.



Archbishop Desmond M. Tutu

