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Rev. Dr. Jerry Pillay

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Statement of the World Communion of Reformed Churches on the death of His Excellency, Nelson Mandela

December 6, 2013

We received the news of the passing on from this life of his Excellency Nelson “Madiba” Mandela with a deep sense of sorrow and at the same time with gratitude to God for giving such a remarkable man to the world for 95 years. The World Communion of Reformed Churches stands together with his family, with South Africans and with millions of people all over the world in mourning his death.

We give thanks to God for the impact Nelson “Madiba” Mandela has made in his lifetime as a leader. We give thanks to God for his prophetic leadership and example as a courageous leader who exposed and defied the very vicious evil of apartheid and paid a heavy price for it. Yet, at the threshold of victory over apartheid, he was gracious and proved to be the icon of reconciliation as he moved all of South Africa into a new era characterised by freedom and justice, an era in which South Africa’s multi-racial and multi-ethnic population can begin to build community together harmoniously. Nelson Mandela was the inspiring hands-on leader whose vision, life and example fostered the reconciling community that the world needs.

His one-term presidency of South Africa set a high standard of leadership not only for South Africa, but for the whole continent of Africa – indeed for the whole world. His impact for decades before he became president, during his presidency and since he left office as president will be difficult to match by any other political leader. The World Communion of Reformed Churches and its antecedents are very happy that we participated in the campaigns for his release from prison when he was unjustly incarcerated, and for our actions towards exposing and dismantling the evil apartheid systems. The impact of Nelson Mandela made us doubly satisfied that we made these commitments.

The Nelson Mandela foundation continues to impact society for good, and will add to the many legacies of Nelson Mandela. He will be missed in this life, but his impact will continue.

As we thank God for his life, contributions and impact, we pray for strength and comfort for Mme Graça Machel and the entire family of our beloved Nelson “Madiba” Mandela.

On behalf of the leadership and member churches of the World Communion of Reformed Churches we offer our condolences to the entire family and to the nation of South Africa as we mourn the death of a beloved and good leader whose impact has been felt all over the world – a person who knew and understood suffering, and who walked with those who suffer, and as a leader modelled selfless commitment to building reconciling communities.

Sincerely yours,



Rev. Dr. Jerry Pillay
President



Rev. Dr Setri Nyomi
General Secretary