



ALL AFRICA CONFERENCE OF CHURCHES (AACC) - CONFERENCE DES EGLISES DE TOUTE L'AFRIQUE (CETA)

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SOLIDARITY FOR ONE HUMANITY, ONE FUTURE

International Symposium on Global Justice and Africa's G20 Priorities: Linking Moral Vision with Policy Strategy

Cape Town, June 23-24, 2025

“The Role of Civil Society and Faith in Global Transformation”

Esteemed participants at this very important symposium, allow me to simply stand on the already established protocol and bring you ecumenical greetings from the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC). The AACC is a fellowship of 215 churches and National Christian organizations in 43 African countries, mainly Protestant, Orthodox and African Instituted Churches. With the General secretariat in Nairobi, we also have a liaison office to the African Union in Addis Ababa and a regional office in Lomé.

I am grateful for this opportunity to reflect on the prophetic role of civil society and faith in global transformation. Why are we even involved in these somewhat political matters of the G20?

We are engaged because faith is the barometer and guide of ethical and moral convictions which govern how we live together as one humanity. Due to the divine calling and sending we perceive and have towards the world, we are compelled to be engaged. It is our ethical responsibility to make a sustained prophetic call to action for planetary justice, ethical governance, and intergenerational responsibility when systems and structures are no longer in the will of God for the world. We are expected to remind the world of what God desires and expects in how we live and are related with one another and all creation in its entirety, both in this generation and beyond.

The theme of this symposium "Solidarity for one Humanity & Future" underlines two core aspects of our role in driving social transformation. One of these is the understanding the civil and faith communities have, that all human life is sacred and deserves a dignified existence.

We have one humanity. When a member is injured or in pain or in need, we are all affected. It is not only about those who are alive today, but also those who will come tomorrow. We are called to make sure that everyone respects the dignity and image of God in every human being. This conviction is reflected in the African concept of Ubuntu: I am because we are; and because we are, I am.

Then there is the issue of solidarity. It reminds me of the story of God in the garden of Eden, when he asked Cain: “Where is your brother Abel?” Cain, full of guilt he lied: “I do not know. Am I my brother’s keeper?” Indeed, Cain was responsible to know about Abel. The garden of Eden was for both of them. But he killed his brother and pretended he did not know. But God knew what happened. The question of “Am I responsible for the life of the others” is a great theological foundation for our engagement in seeking justice for all. When some of us in this world are not eating adequately, or cannot get medical treatment and die early, or have no freedom to live the way they are fulfilled with, or are suffering from the effects of war and exploitation, we hear God is asking us: “where is your sister or brother? How is she doing? Has she eaten? How are his children?” We cannot say “We do not know. We do not care! They take care of themselves!” We care. That is solidarity! We morally and practically stand in solidarity with those who:

- experience injustices, and inequalities in their daily lives,
- suffer the wrath of tyrant leaders and the greed of selfish men and women in power,
- hungry and power with deplorable shelter
- mourn all kinds of loses and groan in the pain of unhealed wounds of systemic injustices,
- are struggling to improve their lives, so that they actually do succeed.

Proverbs 31:8 calls us to speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves. I think they actually can speak, but they have not space. They are not voiceless but their voices are not heard. We must create spaces of engagement and amplify their voices until they are heard, until they agitate for the change they desire and right for justice, freedom, and dignity. We need to remind everyone what God requires of all of us in Micah 6:8: to act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with God.

I strongly affirm the three proposals that this symposium offers as a practical, moral vision for the G20 because they provide to the world an opportunity to live in accordance to God’s will for us.

An Ecological Impact Fund (EIF), a Just and Accountable Global Debt Architecture as well as a globally universal school lunch program indeed provide to the G20 an opportunity to correct and transform systemic injustices that continue frustrating Africa's efforts to achieve sustainable development. Unlike many civil society campaigns and demands which only reject and criticize the status quo without proposing alternatives, this one puts at the table concrete practical ways through which the world can come together to do good, seek justice and correct oppression as it is required of all people of God in accordance to Isaiah 1:17.

Two years ago, the young people of AACC launched a pan-African campaign leading to the first All Africa Youth Congress. The theme and slogan is: "AFRICA. MY HOME. MY FUTURE." Their goal is, through their active citizenship to transform the continent's narrative such that the reality of hopelessness and desperation among youth and all people severely affected by ecological calamities, economic injustices, political instability, poverty, hunger and other challenges burdening our continent. They will have their second All Africa Youth Congress in Nairobi in October 2025.

The upcoming G20 meeting is very critical in the success of these youth led efforts and this symposium offers us the opportunity to prepare ourselves to ensure that this G20 accelerates the pursuit for justice and equity. It is my prayer therefore, that the spirit of God who entrusts us with the power and spaces to remind the world of God's love for justice and equity will empower to achieve this.

I thank you all very much for your attention.

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