

LETTER

(Translated from Oshiwambo language)

To all the Churches and Congregations in the Republic of Namibia

We greet you in the name of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, Amen.

Forum for the Future, in partnership with the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, convened an awareness raising workshop conference on climate change. The conference was attended by pastors and priests from different churches in [north-central] Namibia and was held during 12-14 July 2016 in the Conference Hall of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia (ELCIN) at Oniipa. Awareness raising sessions were led by the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (Department of Environmental Affairs), headed by Dr. Jonathan Mutau Kamwi, Chief Conservation Scientist.

The conference resolved to write a Letter to all the Congregations:

We send you this Letter to be read in all the Churches and Congregations in Namibia.

Climate change that has engulfed the whole world has not really been treated as a major problem in our midst. We who have now been informed on this issue have realised with surprise that before receiving appropriate and sufficient information on this issue, we were not convinced that the world and the whole creation are heading towards a catastrophe that would include our surroundings. Such ignorance has led us into great complacency of not taking proper care of God's creation in our villages, our congregations and our churches.

ALTHOUGH IT IS NOT TOO LATE, WE SEE THE TIME IS MOVING FAST; THUS, WE CHRISTIANS AT THE LEVEL OF THE CONGREGATIONS IN OUR CHURCHES SHOULD TAKE UP OUR GOD-GIVEN RESPONSIBILITY.

1. Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over livestock and all the wild animals and over all the creatures that move along the ground" (Gen. 1: 26). This sentence reminds us that our stewardship of God's creation has not changed, is biblical and we shall account for it according to our work.
2. We have to revere and love God, the Creator of all things, the Saviour and Sustainer of all things that we know and those that we do not know. We are the custodians of the creation under the guardianship of God who is

its owner, according to the Holy Scriptures. “The whole world and all that is in it belong to the LORD; the earth and all who live on it are his”, (Ps. 24:1). The creation has been given to us to safeguard it, to cultivate it, but not to destroy it through our own desires, carelessness and greed.

3. In taking care of the earth and all in and on it, we shall be guided by the love of God. The great commandment that we are given by Jesus is this: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.” The second most important commandment is this: “Love your neighbour as you love yourself”, (Mark 12: 30-31). According to this commandment, we have to take care of all the creatures because they too are God’s creation. Our surroundings are our shelters and all that dwell in them have inherent right [to be there].
4. Our government through the Ministry of Environment and Tourism, works against the forces that destroy the environment and has the responsibility towards its people in the spirit of Harambee. The whole world looks at Namibia with wide eyes because it is one of the countries that are most vulnerable to climate change.

WE, CHRISTIANS FROM DIFFERENT CHURCHES IN [NORTH-CENTRAL] NAMIBIA, PLEDGE TO UNITE AMONG OURSELVES AND SUPPORT ALL THE EFFORTS AGAINST THIS THREAT. WE DO NOT DO THIS JUST THROUGH PRAYING AND PREACHING, BUT ALSO THROUGH PUTTING INTO PRACTICE WHAT WE CAN, SUCH AS PLANTING TREES, PRESERVING WATER, AND PLANTING VEGETABLES. WE ADVOCATE FOR THE CHANGE OF THE WAY OF ERECTING OUR TRADITIONAL HOMESTEADS WITH MANY, MANY POLES AND STICKS THEREBY CAUSING DEFORESTATION.

May God help us in this!

Signed at Oniipa on this 14th day of July 2016 by:

Edhina	Ongeleki	Eshaino
1. Rev. Matheuw Iyambo	Jesus Centre F Church	
2. Fr. Martin Apolinarius	Roman Catholic Church	<i>Martin</i>
3. Rev. Julius Mtuleni	ELCIN	
4. Rev. Sylvia S Heita	ELCIN	<i>Sylvia</i>
5. Rev. Namutewa L Nambili	ELCIN	<i>Namutewa</i>
6. Rev. Junias Nghitewapo	ERCIN	<i>Junias</i>
7. Rev. Daniel Shiwaomwenyo	Anglican Church	<i>Daniel</i>
8. Rev. Josia Kuduva	Anglican Church	<i>Josia</i>
9. Fr. Venancio Kavaku	Roman Catholic Church	<i>Venancio</i>
10. Rev. Selma N Shafudah	Anglican Church	<i>Selma</i>
11. Rev. Hafeleni Hamakwiyu	Anglican Church	<i>Hafeleni</i>
12. Rev. Petrus Hamunyela	Anglican Church	<i>Petrus</i>
13. Rev. Abed Kahungu	Anglican Church	<i>Abed</i>
14. Rev. Rakkell TT Kafidi	Anglican Church	<i>Rakkell</i>
15. Rev. Simon Itula	ELCIN	<i>Simon</i>
16. Pastor Andreas Shiimbashike	Full Gospel Church	<i>Andreas</i>
17. Pastor John Shikongo	Foursquare Gospel Church	<i>John Shikongo</i>
18. Pastor Josef Lukas	Evangelical Baptist Church	<i>Josef Lukas</i>
19. Pastor Wilhelm Iyambo	Foursquare Gospel Church	<i>Wilhelm Iyambo</i>
20. Pastor Peter Abraham	Foursquare Gospel Church	<i>Peter Abraham</i>
21. Fr. Johannes Hausiku	Roman Catholic Church	<i>Johannes Hausiku</i>
22. Pastor Boniface Kawana	Gospel Outreach	<i>Boniface Kawana</i>
23. Rev. Shivute David Aipinge	ELCIN	<i>Shivute David Aipinge</i>
24. Rev. Tomas Uushona	ELCIN	<i>Tomas Uushona</i>
25. Rev. Gabriel Angula	ELCIN	<i>Gabriel Angula</i>
26. Rev. Ndeshipanda Ashipala	ELCIN	<i>Ndeshipanda Ashipala</i>
27. Rev. Martha T Shihomeka	ELCIN	
28. Rev. Epafras Hainghumbi	ELCIN	
29. Rev. Lamek Nambahu	ELCIN	<i>Lamek Nambahu</i>
30. Pastor Josophine Bonaha	Victory Ministries	
31. Fr. Elias Paulo Tulungameni	Roman Catholic Church	<i>Elias Paulo Tulungameni</i>
32. Fr. John-Paul Nghikevali	Roman Catholic Church	<i>John-Paul Nghikevali</i>
33. Pastor Petrus Ndeutapo	Baptist Church	<i>Petrus Ndeutapo</i>
34. Pastor Francois S Kalala	The Body of Christ Ministries	<i>Francois S Kalala</i>
35. Pastor John Heita	Foursquare Gospel Church	
36. Pastor David Nelenge	Namibia Pentecost Assembly	
37. Pastor Laban Mwashekele	Baptist Church	<i>Laban Mwashekele</i>
38. Rev. Philippus N Henok	ELCIN	
39. Rev. Dr. Gideon Niitenge	ELCIN	<i>Gideon Niitenge</i>
40. Rev Phillipus Hainane	Anglican Church	<i>Phillipus Hainane</i>

