

# SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL PEACE CHARTER

## PREAMBLE

We, the people living in South Africa, believe in the humanity, equality, and worth of all people. We strive for peace, security, and the preservation of human dignity of all persons in our country, on our continent, and globally. In fulfillment of this aspiration, we aim to promote a culture of peace, teach peace, create institutions for peace, and support peaceful relations between states and communities.

Peace is a state of being and starts with the individual. Peace must be nurtured in the family and in our communities, for this is the foundation for peaceful societies. Peace is fostered by having societies in which we accept diversity and where all enjoy human rights and have our basic needs met. Peace requires gender-inclusive structures and processes to manage conflict sustainably. To have peace in societies there must be trust, equality, equity, justice, healing and reconciliation. Peace includes truth-telling, the acknowledgement of wrongs and accountability for them. All who live in South Africa have the responsibility to protect and nurture peace so that we can create a society in which we enjoy our freedom and prosper as a country.

Peace is central to how we define our co-existence with others. The Freedom Charter calls for *Peace and Friendship in South Africa*. It notes that South Africa *shall strive to maintain world peace and the settlement of all international disputes by negotiation, not war* and that *peace and friendship amongst our people shall be secured by upholding the equal rights, opportunities, and status of all*.

The South African Constitution declares that *South Africa belongs to all who live in it, united in our diversity*, and that we seek to *heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice, and fundamental human rights*. We are also committed to the implementation of the international and regional peace norms and frameworks of the United Nations, African Union and the Southern African Community.

To promote a culture of peace the South African National Action Plan on Women Peace and Security calls for a Peace Charter.

**ACCORDINGLY, ALL WHO LIVE IN SOUTH AFRICA PLEDGE TO:**

- 1) Commit to peace and to resolve disputes non-violently;
- 2) Reconcile differences between individuals, communities, and societies peacefully;
- 3) Respect that we are equal in our diversity and desist from violating the rights of others regardless of nationality, race, colour, sex, gender, age, class and cultural and religious beliefs;
- 4) Protect the right to life as sacrosanct for all;
- 5) Regard women, men, gender-nonconforming persons and children in South Africa and elsewhere as having the right to peaceful co-existence and to meaningfully participate in the promotion of peace;
- 6) Create safe environments for everyone;
- 7) Display compassion, forgiveness, solidarity, unity and responsibility;
- 8) Hold each other accountable to practice peace at all times and to facilitate mediation, restoration, healing and justice in our communities;
- 9) Respect the bodily integrity of all;
- 10) Respect the inherent dignity of everyone and the right to have their dignity protected.