



Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference Parliamentary Liaison Office



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Roundtable Discussions

The Run-up to Local Elections, 8 July 2016

In collaboration with the Hanns Seidel Foundation we hosted a roundtable discussion titled: "The Run-Up to Local Elections". Four guests speakers were invited, Mr Kevin Mileham – DA Shadow Minister of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs, Mr Xolani Sotashe – ANC Western Cape Mayoral Candidate, Mr Bernard Joseph – EFF Western Cape Chairperson, and Professor Cherrel Africa – UWC Deputy Dean EMS Faculty and Professor of Political Studies.

The aim of the discussion was to provide the three major political parties in South Africa – the Democratic Alliance, the African National Congress, and the Economic Freedom Fighters – an opportunity to speak to their respective parties' 2016 local election manifesto in the hope of addressing the issues faced by the electorate. The large crowd of more than 70 engaged robustly with the parties, often asking difficult questions and raising community challenges that the political parties should address once elected. Professor Africa summed up the importance of the local elections best when she reminded all that not voting in the elections was not an option.



L-R: Fr Peter-John Pearson (Director, CPLO); Mr Xolani Sotashe; Mr Bernard Joseph; Prof Cherrel Africa; and Mr Kevin Mileham

South Africa's International Obligations: The Domestication of the Paris Agreement, 19 July 2016

This roundtable was held in collaboration with Project 90 by 2030 and Youth @ SAIIA (South African Institute for International Affairs) at Wits University, Johannesburg. The speakers for the event were Mr Alex McNamara from National Business Initiative; Mr Teboho Tenyane and Ms Mpilo Shabangu representing SAIIA @Youth and; Ms Zandi Matonda from, Truter, Crous & Wiggill. Through this series of roundtable discussions held in Cape Town and Johannesburg, burning issues that most civil society organisations are concerned with when considering ways to domesticate the Paris Agreement (and international legal instruments at large) were discussed; chief amongst concerns is the extent to which civil society actors are included in the process.



At Wits, Johannesburg, engaging discussion with youth participants on the Paris Agreement and the way forward for South Africa

African Exposure and Training (AFEXT) Week, 24 – 29 July 2016

Twelve delegates from eight African countries attended this year's AFEXT course, held from 24 – 29 July at Ikhaya Lodge, Cape Town. The countries represented were Senegal, Liberia, Ivory Coast, Guinea, Benin, Central African Republic, Madagascar and Mozambique. In addition, a representative of the Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of African and Madagascar (SECAM), the Church's continent-wide coordinating body, attended.

As with last year's course, all the presentations were interpreted into French, the home language of all the participants (with the exception of the Mozambican delegate). Topics covered included the theological basis of policy advocacy, the constitutional context of CPLO's work, how to draw up and present a submission to a parliamentary committee, how to plan a roundtable discussion, and how to research and write a briefing paper. The delegates were also taken on a tour of Parliament and to Robben Island.

As with all the annually held AFEXT courses, since their inception in 2008, the aim is to promote the establishment of Catholic Parliamentary Liaison Offices or similar structures in as many African countries as possible. Of the countries represented this year, only Liberia has taken a firm decision to open an office, but we are hopeful that others will follow in due course, and will join Bishops' Conferences in Namibia, Zambia, Kenya, Uganda, the DRC, South Sudan, Lesotho, Zimbabwe and Swaziland in carrying out this important part of the Church's mission in the world.



One of the activities in the training week included visiting Robben Island.

Intergenerational Poverty, 28 July 2016

The Roundtable brought together a multiplicity of perspectives. There were five guest speakers, Ms Musa Ngcobo-Mbere, Chief Director for Early Childhood Development from the Department of Social Development, Mr Elroy Paulus, Advocacy Manager at Black Sash, Mr Kevin Roussel, Executive Director at Catholic Welfare & Development (CWD), Ms Venessa Padayachee, National Manager of Advocacy and Lobbying of the National Institute for Crime Prevention and the Reintegration of Offenders (NICRO), and Ms Jacqueline Hoorn, Regional Supervisor at NICRO. Our first speaker, Ms Ngcobo-Mbere, outlined how the newly approved National Integrated Early Childhood Development Policy serves as a means of preventing and eradicating poverty. Our second speaker, Mr Elroy Paulus, brought into relief the challenges and determinants of intergenerational poverty in South Africa. Mr Kevin Roussel unpacked the multi-dimensional nature of poverty, the persistence of poverty, the relationship of poverty and how one transforms communities, while our fourth speaker, Ms Venessa Padayachee, who based her presentation on a case study on a farming community in Paarl-East, reflected upon the invisible and cumulative effects of incarceration on intergenerational poverty. The Roundtable provided an important opportunity for civil society to contribute to debates on intergenerational poverty in South Africa and how South Africa intends to deal with this intractable scourge in terms of policy.



Standing: L-R: Mr Gerald Moore (Research Assistant, CPLO); Mr Kevin Roussel; and Ms Lois Law (Researcher, CPLO). Seated: L-R: Ms Musa Ngcobo-Mbere; Ms Jaqueline Hoorn; Ms Venessa Padayachee; and Mr Elroy Paulus.

The Green Paper on International Migration, 17 August 2016

About 35 people attended this Roundtable. Most of them were people from the faith sector working on issues pertaining to refugees, migrants and displaced persons. The aim of the discussion was to get a sense of shared insights on the Green Paper and to achieve a measure of coherence around responses to the Paper. One presentation dealt with the broader African Union process with regard to the free migration of people in Africa and the possible impact of this on local legislation, as well as the need for conceptual coherence between the two policy processes. The next presentation dealt with issues in the Green Paper, especially with regard to labour and possible long-term visas for workers falling outside the scarce skills category for people from the Southern African Development Community countries. It also noted that the key contest in the paper was between development and security. The third input dealt with general points for further interrogation in the Green Paper. The regional office of Jesuit Relief Services also presented a first response to the Paper. There was long and insightful discussion after each presentation. The various organisations present were asked to share with each other whatever submissions they might make to the parliamentary Portfolio Committee.



Backrow, L-R: Mr Gushwell Brooks (Jesuit Relief Service), Fr Peter-John Pearson (CPLO), Sr Maria Lurdes (Department of Pastoral Care for Migrants and Refugees), and Fr Ivaldo Bettin (Department of Pastoral Care for Migrants and Refugees). Frontrow, L-R: Sr Therese Musao (Scalabrini Sisters), Dr Jinnah Zaheera (Wits University African Centre for Migration and Society), Mr Sergio Carciotto (Scalabrini Institute for Human Mobility in Africa), Mr David Cote (Lawyer's for Human Rights), and Mr Lindokuhle Mandyoli (CPLO)

Segregated Spaces: 18 August 2016

Hosted at the Parish Centre next to the CPLO offices, this event focused on the subject of the persistence of racially-defined residential spaces in the post-Apartheid era. Two speakers led the discussion, the Western-Cape MEC for Human Settlements, Bonginkosi Madikizela, and Ndifuna Ukwazi researcher, Gavin Silber. The discussion was quite robust but was engaged in a good spirit. In planning the discussion, the aim was to discuss the wider issue of segregation in all South African spaces, but because of the nature of the panel of speakers, much of the discourse focused on issues of land use and spatial planning in the city of Cape Town. One of the most important outcomes of the discussion was that CPLO had provided a safe space for political leadership to meet and engage thoroughly with citizens, and to account to them satisfactorily about decisions that affect their lives.



L-R: Mr Gavin Silber, Mr Bonginkosi Madikizela, and Fr Peter-John Pearson

The Local Government Elections: What Now...? 25 August 2016

In collaboration with the Jesuit Institute and the Sisters for Justice, this discussion focused on the results of the municipal elections. The discussion was held in Trinity Hall, Johannesburg, and the panellists were Prof Steven Friedman (Universities of Johannesburg and Rhodes, Director of the Centre for the Study of Democracy) and Mr Ebrahim Fakir (Electoral Institute for the Sustainability of Democracy in Africa, Manager of Governance Institutions and Processes). Mr Fakir took the podium first and began by stating that the recent elections have ushered in an era of substantive uncertainty. He refuted the grand narrative that the ANC was on its last legs as a relevant political party, demonstrating that the ANC largely maintained its grip on the areas it governed. The 2016 local elections revealed three stories: a story of continuity, a story of consolidation, and a story of change. Mr Fakir hailed South African voters as the real winners of the elections,

saying that the voters demonstrated sophistication in terms of how they voted. Prof Friedman began by agreeing with Mr Fakir that the ANC was not in freefall; the party maintained its relevance and would continue to do so for some time despite it having no assurance of winning the next elections. However, the ANC's loss of support now forced commentators to re-analyse South African electoral politics. Prof Friedman went on to discuss factionalism within the ANC and said that it spoke significantly to socio-economic developments in South Africa. He refuted the claim that Mr Jacob Zuma was the ANC party, and said that the factional battles currently playing outweigh more than the controversy surrounding Mr Zuma. In all, the event was well attended by members of civil society and the religious sector, and the discussion itself was insightful, fresh and objective.



L-R: Prof Steven Friedman, Fr Anthony Egan (Moderator, Jesuit Institute), and Mr Ebrahim Fakir

Post-Election Analysis: Following the Trends, 26 August 2016

CPLO and the Hanns Seidel Foundation hosted a roundtable discussion entitled: 'Post-Election Analysis: Following The Trends'. We invited two guest speakers, Dr Zwelethu Jolobe – senior lecturer in Political Studies at UCT, and Dr Alain Tschudin – executive director of Good Governance Africa. The discussion was well-attended and a crowd of more than 40 participants engaged enthusiastically with the speakers' analyses of the local election results.

The aim of the Roundtable was for the speakers to present quantitative analyses of the trends that emerged from the elections. According to Dr Jolobe, the important battlegrounds in this election were Johannesburg, Tshwane, and Nelson Mandela Bay. The strength of the DA, in these three metros, was its ability to get voters out to polling stations, while the ANC had failed to do the same. It was not necessarily the case that ANC supporters had switched to the DA. Additionally, Dr Tschudin stated that most of the electorate do not base their vote on services delivered or economic development, but rather on party loyalty. As a result, the 2011 and 2014 elections suggest that the DA has steadily increased its voter percentage, whereas the ANC is seeing a steady decrease in its share of the vote.



L-R: Dr Zwelethu Jolobe, Fr Peter-John Pearson, and Dr Alain Tschudin

The Local Government Elections and the Future of Politics in South Africa, 14 September 2016

The CPLO co-hosted a post-election Roundtable with PACSA (Pietermaritzburg Agency for Community Social Action) in Pietermaritzburg on 14 September. Mr Ralph Mathekga was the first speaker. Mr Mathekga highlighted the tense political environment leading up to the election, and noted that the 2014 campaign hadn't really stopped, merely continued on into the 2016 campaign. This resulted in the local election being fought largely on national issues. He noted that some ANC leaders appeared to blame the electorate for the party's losses. Mr Mathekga also spoke about the coalitions now in place in some of the metros, and how these can render efficient decision-making very difficult. He was impressed by the EFF's decision not to enter into formal coalitions with the DA, but rather to support it on an item-by-item basis. He called this a "pay as you go" coalition. Dr Lubna Nadvi of the UKZN political science department was the second speaker. She had spoken on the election results in KZN specifically, and she had much to say about the factions and divisions in the ANC in that province. It seems that, although KZN is the ANC's strongest province in terms of numbers, it is also the place where internal divisions run deepest. She highlighted the number of political assassinations that had taken place as evidence of such divisions. The Indian community has abandoned the Minority Front, which effectively ceased to exist in these elections, while the IFP gained at the expense of National Freedom Party, which had failed to register in time. She did not think that this signaled a major resurrection for the Inkatha Freedom Party. Independent candidates had won 2.23% in KZN, which Dr Nadvi thought was a significant number, especially since it was much more than parties such as the ACDP, COPE, and Al Jama had managed, and not a lot less than the EFF's 3%. Interestingly, she mentioned that the national EFF leadership has removed a large part of its KZN leadership from office, following these results. This seems to have brought with it the prospect of two EFF factions in the province. Dr Nadvi ended on a positive note, stressing the health and strength of our electoral institutions, and the active involvement of civil society.



L-R: Mr Ralph Mathekga, Adv Mike Pothier (Research Co-ordinator, CPLO), and Dr Lubna Nadvi

The Green Voter's Guide, 17 & 21 September 2016

In collaboration with Heinrich Böll Stiftung and Environmental Monitoring Group, CPLO hosted the first event in a series of roundtable discussions entitled, "The Green Voter's Guide" in Braamfontein, Johannesburg on 17 September. The speakers for the event were Ms Nomvula Mofokeng from the Department of Water Services, Policy Development and Regulation in the City of Johannesburg; Mr David van Wyk, head researcher at Bench Marks Foundation; as well as Mr Stephen Law who is director at Environmental Monitoring Group. Mr Law kicked things off by giving his experience regarding developing a Green Voter's Guide - looking at environmental issues with an everyday gaze, for the recent local government elections; Ms Mofokeng gave valuable insight into the state of water in the country, focussing on the Gauteng region and the resulting water shortages in the area; the presentations were concluded by Mr van Wyk who shared thought-provoking research on the drastic impact of Acid Mine Drainage in the Witwatersrand region. The presentations opened the gates for an enriching discussion on environmental justice in Johannesburg and the greater South Africa. The second event in the series took place in Cape Town on 21 September. This roundtable

discussion brought together a multiplicity of perspectives. There were three speakers, Mr Stephen Law, Executive Director, Environmental Monitoring Group, Ms Annabel Horn, Task Manager, Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning, Western Cape Government, and Dr Robyn Pharoah, senior researcher, Research Alliance for Disaster and Risk Reduction (RADAR). Our first speaker, Mr Stephen Law shared his research on the party manifestoes and analysis of the 2016 local government elections. Our second speaker, Ms Annabel Horn, examined the important intersection between water, sanitation and social justice at a local government level. Our third speaker, Dr Robyn Pharoah, shared her insights on disaster risk management at a local government level and how this impacts upon social and environmental justice. The roundtable discussion generated robust debate and discussion. It aimed to stimulate and contribute to public discourse on how citizens and local politics respond (or should respond) to environmental justice issues. The final event will be held on 7 October 2016 in Durban with the focus of the discussion being spatial planning and land use in relation to local government.



Standing: L-R: Fr Peter-John Pearson, Ms Palesa Ngwenya (Environment and Energy Researcher, CPLO), and Ms Amanda Luxande (Sustainable Development Programme Manager, Heinrich Böll Stiftung). Seated: L-R: Dr Robyn Pharoah, Mr Stephen Law, and Ms Annabel Horn.

Boston College Visit, 29 July 2016

Prof Stephen Pope brought a group of post-graduate students from Boston College to South Africa as part of an exploration around issues of 'race, religion and reconciliation'. They visited the CPLO for a discussion on the role and importance of religion in shaping public policies that enhance reconciliation and turn around the effects of centuries of racial privilege. CPLO staff also recalled the role of religion in the struggle against apartheid. The Boston College delegation spoke of racism in the USA and the #blacklivesmatter campaign.



Students from Boston College with the CPLO staff.

Lunch meeting with Mr Jackson Mthembu MP: Chief Whip of the Majority Party, 20 September 2016

At this luncheon which was hosted in collaboration with the Hanns Seidel Foundation (HSF), Mr Jackson Mthembu - Chief Whip of the Majority Party in Parliament, the African National Congress (ANC), was the main guest. The purpose of this luncheon was to give members of civil society, the religious sector, and the diplomatic corps an opportunity to engage with the chief whip on issues that relate to the functioning of Parliament, his role in the institution, and the country's democracy in general.

Mr Mthembu began the discussion by accentuating the need for co-operation between political parties in ensuring the competent functioning of Parliament. He said that overall the above was not a great challenge as there is general consensus in the Chief Whips Forum regarding the programme for a specific day's plenary meeting. The Chief Whips Forum, Mr Mthembu explained, is where all the chief whips of the different political parties gather to devise the programme for Parliament. He praised the Forum as a wonderful and efficient mechanism that has worked for Parliament since the advent of South Africa's democracy. However, Mr Mthembu noted that the fifth Parliament differed from its predecessors insofar as it was now a great display of theatrics; he likened Parliament to a daytime soap opera. Despite the drama, more South Africans were taking an interest in the workings of the institution, and this was good for South African democracy. Overall, Mr Mthembu assured the guests that despite the spectacle shown on television, Parliament continued to function efficiently, as was evident in portfolio committees (he cited as an example the recent vociferous questioning by members of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts to the Anti-Corruption Task Team). Overall, it was a well-attended event in which civil society and its representatives engaged on South Africa's democracy and on how the political system can be strengthened and further consolidated through the existing democratic institutions.

Other Events & Visitors

Visit by Mgr Ottmar Dillenburg, 20 July 2016

Mgr Ottmar Dillenburg, the international director of the Kolping Society, visited the Catholic Parliamentary Liaison Office and was accompanied by the delegate for Africa, Mr Volker Greulich and Fr Christian Frantz, the local chaplain. Kolping is involved in development work throughout the world and in advocacy with political institutions on behalf of the poor.



Standing: L-R: Adv Mike Pothier and Ms Karen Morris (Programme Co-ordinator, CPLO). Seated: L-R: Fr Christian Frantz; Fr Peter-John Pearson; Mgr Ottmar Dillenburg; and Mr Volker Greulich.

CPLO underwent an evaluation recently and is immensely grateful to all friends and colleagues who participated in the process.



Fr Peter-John Pearson and Mr Jackson Mthembu