

STATEMENT OF SACBC JUSTICE AND PEACE COMMISSION CALLING ON THE GOVERNMENT TO CONVENE A JOB SUMMIT TO DISCUSS UNEMPLOYMENT CRISIS

We have taken note of the recent unemployment figures by Statistics South Africa, as well as the recent research findings on unemployment by the University of South Africa (UNISA) and Momentum.

We are deeply worried about the levels of retrenchment and unemployment in our country. All the sectors of our economy are shedding jobs and expanding the ranks of the unemployed at an accelerated and alarming rate. In the mining sector alone, more than 70,000 mine workers have lost their jobs in the past two years. We feel the pain of the thousands of South Africans who are unemployed and those who are victims of retrenchments.

The current retrenchment and unemployment trends demand a decisive and strategic action to reverse the escalation in the job crisis. We therefore join the calls for a job summit to discuss the ongoing retrenchments and the measures to expand job creation in the tough economic climate. The summit should be convened as a matter of urgency.

We also demand a moratorium on all retrenchments in all sectors, while awaiting the outcomes of the job summit.

The job summit should not shy away from discussing and pursuing job creation through macro-economic reforms and mitigation of the current political uncertainties. Our country needs a macro-economic framework that it is increasingly labour-absorbing and equitable in its distribution patterns.

We believe that efforts to cushion the effects of unemployment crisis on vulnerable families should be strengthened through expanded and sustained access to social protection. We therefore condemn the delays in the implementation of the unemployment insurance amendment bill which has been sent back to the Parliament for corrections.

For further information, kindly contact:

Bishop Abel Gaba.

Phone number: 053 831 1861 or 053 831 1862.

Email: dagabuza@gmail.com

Archbishop William Slattery: Cell: 0834685473