

On the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the Program Combating Racism (PCT) of the World Council of Churches an international conference takes place in the conference-centre 'Kaap Doorn' from June 14-17, 2009.

No celebration of the anniversary, but a conference to contemplate what answer the World Council and the Councils of churches worldwide have on the contemporary forms of racism. The Program Combating Racism can be the inspiration for this. This program became mostly visible in the battle against Apartheid in South Africa. In the Netherlands as well a broad movement developed under the banner of ecumenism. In 1994 the Apartheid in South Africa came to an end: a radical social change. There is every reason to give thanks for that during the worship that precedes the conference. Sam Kobia, general secretary of the World Council will attend the worship.

Discrimination

Racism and discrimination did not end with the abolishment of Apartheid in South Africa. In 2007 4.247 complaints were made at the anti-discrimination offices in the Netherlands, half of which were on discrimination based on skin colour, race or descent. In Europe people who look 'different' are being checked more often on their identity. In the world was an annoyed reaction to the European legislation on unrecorded, of which the detention of foreigners is a part.

Exclusion

Everywhere groups of people suffer from discrimination and exclusion: Roma in Europe, Dalits in India, Afro Americans in Latin America, Aborigines in Australia and also ethnic Africans which have settled in South Africa. This may involve physical violence and may be recorded in structures and legislation.

Search for answers

The church has another position than forty years ago. People do not commit as easily to broad movements anymore. Yet during the conference will be looked for answers the ecumenical movement could give in a final declaration. The opening worship is open for everyone and takes place on Sunday June 14th at the 'Maartenskerk' in Doorn at 16.00 h.

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