

# SACLA – Daily Reports From Tracks

## Thursday

### Church Leaders Track

**Estimated number of delegates for the day: 333**

**Objectives for the day:**

To start focusing the group to move towards special united action.

**Processes used (e.g. speakers, small groups, etc):**

Mostly small groups. We also invited the youth track to join us and enter into dialogue with senior leaders – a profound event.

**Recurring and/or emerging themes in terms of the overall theme for the day, the giants as dealt with or other inputs:**

Unity in action  
Repentance  
Aids

**Important conclusions so far:**

The greater Church is ready to work together.

**Emerging commitments or action steps:**

These are being developed and will be documented on Friday.

**Any special moments and/or testimonies that came to your attention:**

Youth Catholic with senior leadership.

There was an agreement for no report from the Listening group for the Church Leaders Track.

Nevertheless, yesterday had four sessions.

1. Report from listening group on Wednesday's events.
2. Bible Study in group.
3. Interest discussion on issues touched on Wednesday.
4. Visit by the Youth Track.

The overriding "memory" of the day was what the youth told the leaders what was lacking in Church leaders, namely:

Integrity  
Accessibility  
Accountability  
Godliness

### Education Track

**Estimated number of delegates for the day: 180**

**Objectives for the day:**

To workshop the constraints, opportunities and challenges posed by the Draft Policy and Religion and Education to the Church and Youth Organisations.

**Processes used (e.g. speakers, small groups, etc):**

- Keynote speaker: Mr Paul Faller
- Small group discussions
- Report back

**Recurring and/or emerging themes ( both in terms of the overall theme for the day and the giants/ as dealt with):**

We must demonstrate Christian love, and deal with sensitivity with other faiths.

**Important conclusions reached so far:**

The SACLA council will be asked to approach the government for an extension of two months in order to allow churches to fully understand and respond constructively to the proposed policy.

**Emerging commitments or action steps:**

The draft policy on religion and education must be responded to by Christian leaders and their churches. A draft response will be drafted for consideration by the track.

## **Science, Technology and the Environment Track**

**Estimated number of delegates for the day: 30-35**

**Objectives for the day:**

To look at bridging the divides by having speakers who have practical experience share this as a basis for personal reflection, joint action/commitments, and planning together.

**Processes used (e.g. speakers, small groups, etc):**

- Talk by Lance Nel on using churchology in his business to develop systems that support them in God's service.
- Talk by Prof Phuti Ngope on his way to interpret political plans and scientific knowledge to fulfill his mission as a Christian.
- Talk by Steve Mitchell on practical steps to get sustainable development on the agenda of the Church.

**Recurring and/or emerging themes in terms of the overall theme for the day, the giants as dealt with or other inputs:**

- Christians can make a substantial difference to poverty and exclusion through technicalities (such as ICT) to provide new and effective services.
- The Giants have a spiritual dimension and Christians need to use prayer and discernment when introducing appointments what will fell these giants
- Integrated approaches are more effective than fragmented efforts.

**Important conclusions so far:**

Sustainable development is a concept that is biblical and requires new ways for Christians to work in the "public square" in a marketplace.

The Church will have to find positive engagement with a generation of environmentally concerned young people who are being taught that Christian theology is responsible for the destruction of the environment.

**Emerging commitments or action steps:**

- Networks.
- Your regional groups.
- Strengthen Christian environmental institutors/groups.

**Any special moments and/or testimonies that came to your attention:**

One delegate indicated that Lance's talk had given him a new vision for his work. "The fire had gone out, but now I have new insight and energy."

Another delegate indicated that in future his personal and other work in science will be informed by Archbishop Njongjokulu's plea for a heart for victims of HIV/Aids.

## **Civil Society, Social Development, Health and Medicine Track**

**Estimated number of delegates for the day: 125**

**Objectives for the day:**

To get down to some serious work regarding building unity and helping one another find these kingdom values so necessary to do our work.

**Processes used (e.g. speakers, small groups, etc):**

1. Speaker: Stephen Carpenter.
2. Storyteller: Eva Seobi.
3. Workshops again in our four groups.

**Recurring and/or emerging themes in terms of the overall theme for the day, the giants as dealt with or other**

**inputs:**

Unity and values, two things needed so much in the Church today.

**Important conclusions so far:**

Again the plight of the poor came to the fore, maybe it shouldn't have been the Goliath of poverty, but rather the Goliath of affluence, arrogance and supremacy. There were no poor at SACLA.

**Emerging commitments or action steps:**

Our commitment is to be part of the Church's journey to seek those values that will transform not only individual Christians, but also communities to a better, healthier SA.

**Any special moments and/or testimonies that came to your attention:**

Stephen Carpenter's speech really left us all in a feeling of pain, but also hope. Our groups drafted some wonderful commitments and values, which we compiled into a special declaration.

## Politics and Government Track

**Estimated delegates for the day: 70**

**Objectives for the day:**

- 1 Find places where we can work in unity despite our diversity.
- 2 Identify overall goals related to the seven giants.
- 3 Identify specific actions that Christians can take in the political sphere to achieve these goals.

**Processes used:**

- Speaker to stimulate ideas (Dr Molefe Tsele).
- Small-group development of goals, objectives and strategies.
- Group sharing of plans.

**Recurring and/or emerging themes:**

1. Division within the Church is not new, but dates back to its earliest days. But the Church has achieved its impact by being able to unite at the foot of the cross around core beliefs.
2. Next to theological doctrine, political ideology is the greatest source of division within the Church.
3. The absence of unity is not a tragedy. We must learn to see our diversity as a resource, as Jesus pointed out in the parable of the different parts of the body.
4. Our touchstones should be what we have in common: our common humanity, nationhood, creeds, values and vision.
5. The church *is* a political force. But politicians often attempt to divide opponents in order to weaken them. We must not allow our differences to be exploited to divert us from our shared objectives.
6. Christians need to be selective, to make strategic decisions about what issues to engage and what policies to advocate. Some ways of framing issues are unlikely to win broad support.

**Important conclusions reached so far:**

7. Doctrine divides, service unites. Our unity is best sought in shared action – particularly in response to the challenges presented by the seven giants – not in doctrinal debates.
8. Churches must encourage individual Christians to take advantage of opportunities to participate in public policy formation and should provide information to enable them to do so.

**Emerging commitments or action steps:**

We should engage in public campaigns for political action to promote:

- The decommissioning of weapons and the establishment of gun-free zones.
- Judicial and correctional reforms, including more effective rehabilitation of juvenile offenders, recognition of victims' rights, de-glamorisation of gangsterism, and parole policy reform.
- Greater openness to church-based prison ministries.
- A balancing of the right of free speech with the need to protect children and families from excessive exposure to violence, pornography and blasphemy in the media.
- The establishment and resourcing of community policing forums to assist law enforcement.
- School guidance programmes that can educate youth on drugs, theft, the value of human life, and self-respect.
- The introduction of a Basic Income Grant.
- Local partnerships with government agencies to combat poverty and unemployment.
- Clear acknowledgement by government of the link between HIV and Aids.
- The formulation of a co-ordinated national strategy for prevention and treatment of HIV/Aids.

- Family building teams for housing construction as an alternative to private contractors.
- Proper civil and town planning.
- Diminished corruption in public housing construction and allocation.

Participants also called for a wide range of actions within churches or by churches in co-operation with non-profit and business organisations to respond to the challenges presented by the seven giants.

**Any special moments or testimonies that came to your attention:**

Several of the participants expressed appreciation for the process used and, in particular, the scope provided for all track members to articulate their concerns, irrespective of their backgrounds.

One participant said she came hoping only to explore possible conflict resolution strategies for use in local government, but found the experience much richer than she expected. She felt she had benefited enormously from the diversity of views expressed and the opportunity to interact with people from a variety of traditions.

## **Arts Entertainment and Media Track**

**Estimated number of delegates for the day: 80 - 100**

**Objectives for the day:**

Create and promote unity among the various delegates and, in addition, further the aims and objectives of the Church through the media, arts and entertainment.

**Processes used (e.g. speakers, small groups, etc)''**

A talk was given by Errol Naidoo on the purpose of unity. This set the tone for the day's proceedings and was followed by a panel discussion on the biblical response to it. The groups then presented their work through drama or song.

A number of delegates communicated their sense of not being able to find their niche in the group. They prayed for, and ministered into, this situation.

**Recurring and/or emerging themes (both in terms of the overall theme for the day and the giants/ as dealt with):**

A recurring theme seemed to be a desire to work together. Ordinary Christians are frustrated with the Church's inability to draw people together to face the many problems in the nation.

**Important conclusions reached so far:**

The need for Christians to ignore the barriers of denominationalism, race, ethnicity, religion and gender, and to work together to further the kingdom of God through M, A & E

**Emerging commitments or action steps:**

There is a strong desire on the part of individual delegates to get to know those from different regions and to be able to network with other Christians in media.

There is also a strong desire to continue, through the year, the process started at SACLA.

**Any special moments and / or testimonies that came to your attention:**

One special moment was when a young lady shared her experience of wanting to commit suicide because of her lack of purpose and destiny.

## **Transformation Track**

**Estimated number of delegates for the day: 500**

**Objectives for the day:**

- Create an understanding of the barriers to unity.
- Discover new ways to bridge the barriers.
- Commit to new steps towards unity.

**Processes used (e.g. speakers, small groups, etc):**

Speakers, panels, small groups.

**Recurring and/or emerging themes in terms of the overall theme for the day, the giants as dealt with or other inputs:**

- Aids.
- Racism.
- Poverty.
- Bridging barriers first within yourself and then between you and others. Unity should start first between ethnic groups, then denominations, then gender, then families, with effect in the marketplace.

**Important conclusions so far:**

Make every effort to reconcile with anybody with whom you have a difference or indifference. I chose to forgive in order to walk in freedom.

**Emerging commitments or action steps:**

- Repentance for unforgiveness towards others who have hurt us.
- Repentance towards Aids survivors.
- Small groups: individual commitment to action against the different giants discussed.

Touching testimony by Aids survivors. Whole track praying for Aids survivors, and the Church confessing indifference.

**Youth Leaders in High Schools and Churches Track**

Report to come

**Business and Labour Track**

**Estimated number of delegates for the day: 70**

**Objectives for the day:**

In small groups: tackle the giants, come up with some kind of response from business.

**Processes used (e.g. speakers, small groups, etc):**

- Open space.
- Technology.
- Facilitating groups.
- Six thinking hats.
- Speakers: energize the group.

**Recurring and/or emerging themes in terms of the overall theme for the day, the giants as dealt with or other inputs:**

- What next?
- What next?
- What next?

**Important conclusions so far:**

In repentance, we meet Jesus. He invites us to do more than repent – to live our repented lives in the marketplace, our pulpit in the world.

**Emerging commitments or action steps:**

We challenge business and labour to engage the poor in real ways so as to come to creative and sustainable business solutions.

**Any special moments and/or testimonies that came to your attention:**

The group firstly wanted us to enter into I.D. repentance, which paved the way for us to have meaningful engagement of the giants!

**Justice, Safety and Security Track**

**Estimated number of delegates: 80–100 (97 delegates gave details for attendance of the track)**

**Objectives for the day:**

- 1 Review the judicial system of South Africa with respects to the inherent Judeo-Christian ethic and value system that is evident within the Constitution and much legislation at a foundational level.
- 2 Focus on the family crisis, moral degeneration and collapse of family structures by firstly examining the biblical view of family, the foundational core of society as God intends and planned it. Go on to examine legislation pertaining to family law as it now stands in South Africa; trends in recent legislation that should be of dire concern to all believers, e.g. the attempts to redefine family, erosion of parental authority, etc.
- 3 Review the process of mediation in domestic and other disputes to intercept unnecessary legal procedures that could be avoided were mediation to be sought before legal processes are embarked on. The biblical foundations of mediation and the responsibility of the Church to actively engage in this process to resolve conflict and facilitate peace in society.

#### PROCESSES:

Four papers were delivered to lay a basis for discussion on the issues set for evaluation.

**Judge Deon van Zyl:** *Biblical Principles in the Judicial System of South Africa* – defined the law of South Africa (as much of the modern law of Western society) as being founded in the Natural Law as defined by the Cicero, and further developed by Greek and Roman, influences in law. That is, Socrates BC469 to 386, followed by Plato and Aristotle, followed by Christian values and a process of modernising. He said that the responsibility to uphold Christian values and basic human rights is everybody's responsibility. There is a substantial residue of Christian values and principles in South African law, and the Church should participate responsibly in the process to preserve and strengthen the judicial system in the national interest.

**Dr Graham Cato:** *Biblical view of Family* – God was a Father before he became the Creator of all things. His motivation for creation stems from His motivation as a father, as does His role as King by which He governs His universe to establish order and security for the human family that He has created. The value of family as God designed it cannot be negotiated. It's the way He made it to be. To violate this is to violate the universal laws that God put in place to govern His creation. People do not break the Law of God, the Law of God breaks (damages) people. The Christian legislator needs to recognise the universal law of God in the processes of law making and in particular with reference to the preservation of God's instituted family. Legislation that is formulated in opposition to God's universal law will not help to preserve families, communities and nations.

**Prof Francis Bosman:** *Family Law* – Expressed deep concern at the rate at which current legislation on the family and the rights of children is degenerating to a situation of social breakdown and chaos. She cited several pieces of legislation designed to bring order out of moral behavioral patterns that have violated all biblical norms, e.g. same sex marriages; children of 14 years old have access to condoms and abortion, etc (dissertation available). She called for debate on these issues by the Church. The Church should engage actively in debate to contribute constructively to the national inputs into legislation. There is no credible voice being heard on these issues coming from the Church to represent the interest of the biblical family unit and thus counter the moral and social decay. She said: "If the moral conduct of the Church was biblical it would impact society, and the legislation will be changed accordingly. Laws are merely a reflection of where society is at!" The Church must engage constructively in this process.

**Reg Joubert:** *Mediation* – The role of Christians in mediation is mandatory, Jesus is our mediator and as believers we are called to mediate in conflict and work out reconciliation between people as "peace-makers". Mediation can go a long way to resolving the crisis of unresolved conflicts leading to legal processes that overburden the legal system in South Africa. Accountability of Christians to church elders and other authorities should be entrenched and used in the process of mediation. We do not sin in a vacuum. Sin violates the fabric of society at a family level, and this impacts on the community and ultimately on the nation. Family conflict can be resolved through mediation and the Church is a primary institution through which mediation can be exercised by counsellors and others to resolve conflict and bring peace.

#### RECURRING THEMES:

The discussions again emphasized the need for:

- **Moral reform of the Church. Biblical governance of God's house and discipline within the Church needs to be exercised to bring about moral reform and the fear of God that will establish God's order in homes, which will affect communities and ultimately the nation. This is an issue of leadership at local church level.**
- **Effective equipping Proper training and equipping of the saints (Ephesians 4) to an understanding of biblical view of God's world and recognise civil responsibilities.**
- **Effective mobilisation of the Church. The capacity of the Church needs to be harnessed strategically to address issues. There is a need for proper planning and strategies that will be implemented in a disciplined and calculated manner to achieve results. The battle is firstly spiritual (Ephesians 6) and therefore calls for precision and discipline. Placard-wielding, mob protests with Bibles and Scriptures cannot and will not bring change. There must be credibility and discipline in arguments that are tabled to overthrow the agenda of the powers of darkness and then human agents that support the agenda of the enemy.**

These appear to be the fundamental keys to addressing the “giants” we are facing in South Africa and to bring about the essential transformation of society that will ensure a future for our children and provide God with the necessary platform to unfold His agenda in Africa.

## **Children’s Ministry and Family Issues Track**

**Estimated number of delegates for the day: 142**

**Processes used (e.g. speakers, small groups, etc):**

Speakers  
Small Groups

**Recurring and/or emerging themes in terms of the overall theme for the day, the giants as dealt with or other inputs:**

Crime  
Violence  
The value of marriage and strong family life in preventing crime and violence

**Important conclusions so far:**

The church needs to address the building of biblical marriages and family as a preventative measure to violence and crime

**Emerging commitments or action steps:**

To engage our families in coming towards an understanding of the giants facing us to teach our children, in the framework of a biblical marriage, how to respond to these giants.

**Any special moments and/or testimonies that came to your attention**

A time to pray for brokenness and for God's healing in small groups, a response to the input on abuse and domestic violence. We had a heartfelt plea from delegates to remember the true meaning of marriage, a God-ordained institution.

## **Tertiary Students and Young Adult Track**

**Estimated number of delegates for the day:**

**Objectives for the day:**

To break the walls of barriers that have separated us for so long, such that we cannot even deal with the giants collective.

**Processes used (e.g. speakers, small groups, etc):**

Speaker  
Drama  
Small Groups  
Personal Reflection.

**Recurring and/or emerging themes in terms of the overall theme for the day, the giants as dealt with or other inputs:**

- 1 The need to work together as a Church to address all giants.
- 2 We need to change our attitudes and mind-set, starting with individuals and the Church, then to the community.

**Important conclusions so far**

- To encourage networking and form alliances to work together.
- Personal commitment.

**Emerging commitments or action steps:**

Farm, local, regional and national networking that will communicate, consult and share information on regular bases.

**Any special moments and/or testimonies that came to your attention:**

Speaker’s message on violence and family crisis.

Speaker: Dr Tony Campolo  
Theme: Unity  
Activities: Drama (breaking down the dividing walls)  
Giants: Family crisis, violence

### **3.3.1 Highlights**

1. Power and love does not work together.
2. God has power but he does not use it because love and power does not happen at the same time.
3. The Lord came for the first time with love, and the second time He will come with power.
4. Most violence is not physical but verbal.
5. It is time black and white recognise their equality.
6. The question is: are we ready to do this for men and women?
7. Our families should be led in prayer