# INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF CHRISTIAN CHURCHES

**(IFCC)**

*Office of the General Secretary*

## PRESS STATEMENT FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**To: All Editors and Media Houses**

## IFCC CALLS FOR A HALT OR A SUSPENSION TO THE CRL RIGHTS COMMISSION, SECTION 22 COMMITTEE CONSULTATION PROCESS

**Johannesburg, 12 November 2026:** The Executive Board, National Leadership and Member Churches of the International Federation of Christian Churches (IFCC) call for the suspension or disbandment of the current consultation process being conducted by the Section 22 Committee of the CRL Rights Commission. We believe this process serves no constructive purpose and is instead causing division and fear in the religious sector.

This call must not be construed as reluctance for accountability by the IFCC Leadership. When this process began in 2014, the CRL Rights Commission summoned a number of churches to appear before it and open their books and processes on governance and accountability. IFCC complied.

IFCC remained engaged until 2018, when the matter came before Parliament's Portfolio Committee. Parliament rejected the CRL's recommendation that a council be established to register and license all religious leaders, bishops and pastors, and recommended instead that the religious sector regulate itself. The sector as a whole rejected state regulation, and the process came to an end.

In 2025, CRL Chairperson Ms Thoko Mkhwanazi-Xaluva restarted the process, and IFCC leadership was among the first to be consulted.

> *"We warned and advised the Chairperson to change the approach: to be inclusive, to move away from recommendations for state regulation, and to allow the consultation to be led by the sector itself. That advice was not taken into account," said Ps Giet Khosa, General Secretary of IFCC.*

Despite this, IFCC chose to engage with the consultation process of the Section 22 Committee, even though we did not agree with how the committee was formed. That process was flawed and left many stakeholders behind. The framework the committee is using for consultation is equally flawed.

In both private and public consultations with the Section 22 Committee, IFCC Leadership made it clear that we do not support state regulation of the religious sector, the current framework, the lack of inclusivity in the process, or the recommendation of a council to license religious leaders.

IFCC's position has been consistent since 2014: build the capacity of umbrella organisations such as IFCC, and encourage independent churches to belong to a recognised body. Those who commit crimes in our sector must be dealt with under existing laws: arrested and prosecuted. We support good governance, accountability and ethical leadership, but we do not believe state regulation is the answer.

This position is consistent with the view expressed earlier this year by Parliament's Portfolio Committee on Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA), which stressed that the religious sector, and not the Commission, must lead the process of developing a code of ethical conduct for the sector.

On 28 October 2026, a dialogue was held in KwaZulu-Natal, attended by key stakeholders in the religious sector. The special guest, Dr Zweli Mkhize, Chairperson of the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on COGTA, stated:

> *"I want to make it clear: there is no instruction from Government, the President of the country, the Speaker of Parliament, the Portfolio Committee in Parliament, or the African National Congress, the majority party in Parliament, to regulate the Church. If anyone says it comes from them, it is not true."*

These remarks come against the backdrop of growing rejection of the process initiated by the CRL Commission under the CRL Act and currently being conducted by the Section 22 Committee.

The majority of political parties represented in Parliament have released statements distancing themselves from the process. They stated that they have never supported state regulation of religion, as it is against the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, which guarantees freedom of religion. They went further to affirm their support for the right of religious communities to exist and practise their faith without state interference. In addition, the majority of pastors have rejected the proposals put forward through this process.

In light of these developments, IFCC leadership believes there is no real purpose for the Section 22 Committee to continue. We therefore call on the leadership of the CRL Commission and the Section 22 Committee to abandon this process and allow Parliament to take over and guide all stakeholders.

IFCC calls for a process that brings everyone together for meaningful discussion on the way forward.

**ENDS**

**Issued by:** Ps Giet Khosa, General Secretary, International Federation of Christian Churches (IFCC)

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