

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa Report (CD-ROM)

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About this Publication:

In order to cross the “historic bridge” between oppression and democracy, the newly democratic South Africa had to find ways to come to terms with its past. “We could not,” wrote the Most Reverend DM Tutu, Chairperson of the Commission in the Foreword to the Final Report, “make the journey from a past marked by conflict, injustice, oppression and exploitation to a new and democratic dispensation characterised by a culture of respect for human rights without coming face to face with our recent history”. The Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act sought to balance the political requirement for amnesty with the need to deal sensitively and effectively with the experiences of South Africa’s many victims. It did so by creating the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and charging it with the task of providing “as complete a picture as possible” of the period that began with the Sharpeville massacre in 1960 and ended with the inauguration of President Nelson Mandela in May 1994. Amnesty would be granted in certain circumstances and upon individual application. Victims would be given the opportunity to tell their stories. And throughout its life, the Commission would be guided by the spirit of reconciliation, of national unity and of ubuntu – the concept that people are people through other people. For two and a half years, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission tackled this formidable challenge. Hearings were held throughout the country. Reparations and rehabilitation were considered for thousands of victims. The task of hearing amnesty applications began. In October 1998, the Commission presented President Nelson Mandela with a five-volume report – probably one of the most significant documents ever to be produced in South Africa. In its pages, one can read of pain and suffering and of courage and hope. One can read of the corruption that results from too much power and of the desperation that is the result of no power at all. And one can read of the violence, the terror and the intolerance of a society at war with itself. A modified Commission, led by the Amnesty Committee, continued to work on outstanding matters. Amnesty hearings continued and further work was completed. In March 2003, the Commission presented President Thabo Mbeki with two further volumes, representing its final work and recommendations.

Contents Include:

- Volume 3 reflects the perspective of victims, according to the region in which the violations occurred
- Volume 4 contains reports on institutional and special hearings
- Volume 5 contains conclusions, findings and recommendations
- Volume 6 consists of an account of the work of the Amnesty Committee, and reconsiders the findings and conclusions of the Reparations and Human Rights Violations committees as well as the final Recommendations of the Commission
- Volume 7 is a list of names of all victims of human rights violations who approached the Commission with summaries of the violations they suffered
- Judgments of the Amnesty Committee are a full and verbatim set of the judgments of the Committee

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Of Interest and Benefit to:

- Human rights practitioners and organisations
- Historians
- Researchers
- Social scientists
- Academic

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- Full searchability - an ideal research toolpas