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In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

ISLAMIC UNITY CONVENTION



Re: Submissions to the National Council of Provinces

Re: The Civil Union Bill that will allow same-sex marriages

23rd November 2006

Assalaamu Alaykum, Shalom, goeie môre, good morning, molweni...

I am Magboeba Davids, a representative of the Islamic Unity Convention.

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The Creator is one; the universe is one and there is one set of universal principles that governs the voluntary actions of all mankind.

To have held public hearings in all 9 provinces, for people to voice their views on the civil union bill is a sign of our democracy in working. To be able to voice our concerns as representatives of the Muslim Community, of South Africa, as to where the bill stands to date is also appreciated. The Islamic Unity Convention wish to caution the National Council of Provinces, to heed the voices of the public and take their concerns into account, in the final decision making, and not see it as a mere formality.

The Muslim community of South Africa has a history of struggle and sacrifice for the liberation of their fellow beings, as well as this country, which is still growing. The Minister of Defence, Mosioua Lekota, reminded MP's that many gays and lesbians have fought in the struggle for liberation along with their heterosexual comrades. We echo the words of the United Christian Democratic Party, MP, Edmund PULE, in his response to the words of Mr.

Lakota, who said, "the Defense Minister gives the impression that the liberation struggle was "for sodomy and not for freedom."

The South African Government has to realise that, it finds itself in a very challenging situation where people are now battling for rights, and it appears that the focus is more on the granting of rights of a few individuals, rather than focusing on the rights of humanity.

In the contemporary context we are faced with innumerable social ills, tangibly tearing up the moral fabric of society since 'discovering freedom' in 1994. We appeal to you in the National Council of Provinces, just as parliament members have appealed to religious bodies to bring about moral regeneration, not to enact the civil union bill and further degenerate our society.

Is it more important for us as a South African society to conform to European standards by following their models and passing such a bill? Should our energies not be directed at saving a damaged society, made susceptible to negative foreign influence by our oppressive colonial history? Society is more in need of redress than the implementation of degenerative laws.

At the National Assembly we have witnessed how the legislation on the Civil Union Bill was passed, in the absence of conscientious objectors within the ANC ranks, the last minute deployment of other members, while key members of the Congress of Traditional Leaders of South Africa were also absent.

Ironically, on 1 December 2006, the world will be commemorating International Day of HIV and Aids, and South Africa intends signing a bill into law that will legalise sodomy. South Africa will be the first country on the continent and the fifth in the world that will afford same –sex couples equal status as heterosexual couples.

Maybe it will be a good day for decision making. This is a day when humanity can measure our condition regarding our HIV status and our moral values, and look at ways of improving our social condition.

We reiterate what we have said in our submissions to the portfolio committee, that the passing of such a bill will see the rapid disappearance of the sacred family order, as divinely ordained by the Creator.

Affording same –sex unions the same status as heterosexual marriages is like placing the natural order and the unnatural on the same platform. In Islamic terms, it means putting a halaal stamp on pork, in Jewish terms placing a kosher stamp on non-kosher food.

How can something be seen as sacred and non-sacred at the same time?

In addition, when we argue that we are all created in the image of God, and we need to be respected, and treated equally, we need to understand that it means "As He, the Creator willed when he created us as male and female. As He has created everything in pairs."

What messages will the joining of people of the same- sex are sending to our children? What about the rights of children? We will be denying their right to a natural mother and father.

It is their right to be raised in a healthy, natural environment, that will ensure healthy, well balanced children. What better investment can any government wish for, if it is striving towards a healthy economy.

Our recommendations:

- Calls for the protection of marriage between male and female as ordained by Devine law.
- Calls upon Parliament to give effect to the democratic beliefs of South Africans by holding a referendum to determine whether same sex marriages should be given legal recognition as such.
- To look at the fundamental rights of humanity and not of only individuals.
- When amendments are made to the Constitution, enough time must be allocated for people to respond.



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