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Christian Leaders (Theologians), Governance, and the Moral Dilemma of the 'Rainbow Nation': A Practical Theological Approach

Abraham Modisa Mkhondo Mzondi
South African Theological Seminary (SATS)
modisa@sats.ac.za

Abstract

The African National Congress (ANC) has been the governing party of the 'Rainbow Nation' from the first democratic election held on 27 April 1994 to date. During the same period, different Christian leaders (theologians) played diverse roles and expressed their perspectives related to governance and the moral dilemma of the 'Rainbow Nation'. Thus, the article explores distinct roles and perspectives of Christian leaders (theologians) related to governance and the moral dilemma in the 'Rainbow Nation' during the era of the past three presidents of the African National Congress, namely, Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela, Thabo Mbeki, Jacob Gedleihlekisa Zuma, and the current president of the ANC, Cyril Matamela Ramaphosa. It excludes Kgalema Motlante as he was not an ANC president but only an interim president of the 'Rainbow Nation'. The article uses a case study method to answer the question: How have theologians and Christian leaders played their roles and expressed their perspectives about of governance and the moral dilemma of the 'Rainbow Nation' in the period under review?

Introduction and Research Approach

The African National Congress (ANC) first secured its position and mandate to govern post-1994 after winning the first and historic democratic elections, held on 27 April 1994. Except in a few instances, Africa's old liberation movement, now turned into a political party, has been ruling at nation, province, and

municipality levels since 1994 to date. Through its collective leadership and culture of providing space for diverse opinions in the organisation (GGGG), the ANC subsequently managed to introduce some political stability, introduced national and municipal democratic elections, and began to address historical imbalances inherited from the long period of colonialism and, lately, apartheid. Each of the four presidents of the ANC championed a different form of governance that was accompanied by some moral dilemma. Such moral dilemmas indicate the clash between perceived ethical and unethical actions and decisions associated with each president's term of office. Nelson Mandela anchored his governance on national reconciliation, Thabo Mbeki on national transformation, Jacob Zuma on the national development plan, and Cyril Ramaphosa's governance is currently anchored on the new dawn captured through the '*Thuma mina*' drive. The article aligns with De Gruchy and De Gruchy (2004:207) that, although some Christian leaders retreated to be involved in church matters, a few have continued to address structural issues in the new dispensation as the ANC slowly assigned the political space to itself and the moral space to the religious sector (West 2018:74). The article is situated in the discipline of practical theology and intends to explore the actions and decisions of the past four ANC and country's presidents regarding matters of governance. It thus uses a case study research approach which Benbasat, Goldstein, and Mead (1987:370) define as examining

a phenomenon in its natural setting, employing multiple methods of data collection to gather information from one or a few entities (people, groups, or organizations).

The article explores the different post-1994 roles and perspectives of some Christian leaders (theologians) associated and not associated with the four presidents of the ANC (Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela, Thabo Mbeki, Jacob Gedleihlekisa Zuma, and Cyril Matamela Ramaphosa). These roles and perspectives relate to matters of the governance of the ruling party on one hand and the identified moral dilemma on the other. Hence the question, how have theologians and Christian leaders played their roles and expressed their perspectives about governance and the moral dilemma of the 'Rainbow Nation' in the period under review?

Moral Dilemma and Governance In South African Governance

Matters of political governance attract different ethical perspectives and discussions. The past four presidents governed in the context of the ANC's collective leadership that seeks to promote unity within contrasting views in the organisation. The implementation of different national policies during the tenure of each of the four presidents attracted criticism from different theologians and Christian leaders who argued that some of the policies did not benefit the poor and oppressed masses, thus creating a moral dilemma for each president's administration as is noticed below. These theologians and Christian leaders spoke from an individual and ecumenical position (Smit 2003; Coertze 2005; Tshawane 2009; Duncan 2019; Magezi 2019).

Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela (1994–1999), Governance, and National Reconciliation

Soon after his inauguration as the president of the country on 10 May 1994, Nelson Mandela embarked on a programme of promoting a new nation by establishing a Government of National Unity (GNU), consisting of the African National Congress (ANC), National Party (NP), the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), and other individuals (Gumede 2007:96). Pursuant to nation-building, Mandela appointed F.W. De Klerk of the NP and Thabo Mbeki of the ANC as his deputy presidents and appointed some members from the NP and IFP to serve as ministers and deputy ministers. Demonstrating his commitment to promote national reconciliation, Mandela also reached out and engaged traditional leaders from the Congress of Traditional Leaders of South Africa (Contralesa) established prior to 1994 (Collard 2013:262). His efforts stirred Archbishop Desmond Tutu to christen this new nation the 'Rainbow people of God' (Tutu 1995). Henceforth, the new post-1994 nation is called the 'Rainbow Nation' (see Forster 2016).

Providing a critical response to the governance of Mandela, ecumenical Christian leaders resolved at the 1995 SACC conference that, while the church accepted the legitimacy of the new government, the church should also adopt a position of critical solidarity and speak for the poor in matters of governance

and service delivery, as it supported the Reconstruction and Development Plan (RDP) and other initiatives to address past imbalances (De Gruchy 1995:19; Boesak 2005:166–167). Three years before the 1995 SACC conference, Villa-Vicencio (1992) argued for a shift from liberation theology to a theology of reconstruction to engage the post-liberation context and to speak for the poor and the marginalised in democratic contexts. As such, ecumenical Christian leaders (theologians) viewed critical solidarity as working with the new government to address past wrongs to create a new social order (Pityana and Villa-Vicencio 1995:166). Ten years later, Boesak (2005:161-165) argued for a shift from critical solidarity to constructive engagement as the church must be in solidarity with the poor not the state.

The Moral Dilemma of the ‘Rainbow Nation’

Mandela was conscious of his moral standing and authority; hence, he advocated that socio-economic and political reconstruction need to be accompanied by revisiting the moral dilemma of the ‘Rainbow Nation’. This advocacy stems from the ANC’s Commission on Religious Affairs in 1995, and the 1998 moral summit to address the moral fibre of the ‘Rainbow Nation’. Flowing from this summit, Nelson Mandela applied the RDP concept in parliament to advocate that the nation needs to focus on the ‘RDP of the Soul’ (Mandela 1999). The ‘RDP of the Soul’ promoted that the religious sector was to concentrate on the moral transformation of the nation while the government will concentrate on the socio-economic and political transformation. In addition, Mandela established an interfaith forum called the National Religious Leaders Forum (NRLF) to hold bi-annual interactions with diverse religious leaders and advance service delivery initiatives in partnership with the government. To this end, he included liberation theology clerics as members of parliament, while others held political leadership roles at the provincial level and in local municipalities (Kumalo 2009:250, 253; see also Maluleke 1997:7). These developments prompted Nolan (1995:152) to argue that the new democratic dispensation needed to take place in a form of self-criticism that focuses on its own people, nation, kings, and institutions. Villa-Vicencio, De Gruchy, and Pityana expressed concern that now Christians and their leaders faced the new dilemma of witnessing in a ‘secular state’. Such witnessing was expected from those Christian leaders assigned to important state organs. Fr Mkhathshwa, the then deputy minister of education, who later

served as the executive mayor of Tshwane Metro Municipality, was assigned the responsibility to lead and guide the spiritual transformation that began prior to and continued at the 1998 moral summit. Dr Alan Boesak contested for the ANC's Western Cape premiership (Jeppie 1999:8). Archbishop Desmond Tutu was assigned to lead and guide the work of the Truth Reconciliation Commission (TRC). A few years later, Maluleke (1998:14) insinuated that its use of Christian symbols and language was bewitching.

The above developments demonstrate that Mandela, the first post-1994 president of the ANC and the first democratically elected president of the 'Rainbow Nation' surrounded himself with influential Christian leaders (theologians) who were an intrinsic part of the struggle against apartheid. Maluleke (1997:7) later strongly cautioned that the involvement of some influential Christian leaders in the TRC and other state organs in the post-1994 era were mere political appointees instead of a planned church delegation. To this, Forster (2016) emphasised that Mandela was the messiah of the new era, Tutu the high priest, the TRC its penitentiary ritual acts, and the Constitution and the Bill of Rights sacred texts. In this period, Archbishop Tutu led and guided the TRC by employing a theology based on the *Ubuntu* worldview to emphasise that there is no reconciliation without forgiveness (see Tutu 2009). Nine years later, Maluleke (2020:219) argued that the final step of the TRC is not reconciliation but fixing broken relationships.

The presence of influential ecumenical Christian leaders (theologians) in some key state organs and the 'Madiba magic' did not prevent the emergence of scandals in Mandela's cabinet. First was the scandal of his first health minister Dr Skosazana-Dlamini-Zuma, involving the tender awarded to the renowned producer, musician, and actor Mbongeni Ngema to produce a national HIV and AIDS education show (Gevisser 2009:278). Second and worst were the Pan African Congress's (PAC) member of parliament Patricia De Lille's exposure of the arms deal in parliament (Holden 2008:38–39) and Tony Yengeni's scandal (Holden 2008:71–86). Third were the fraud charges and the jail sentence of Dr Allan Boesak (Boesak 2009:382). During this period key influential ecumenical Christian leaders (theologians) had retreated from public politics while Pentecostal-Charismatic church leaders took over and began critiquing the ruling party's governance and its 'secular state' moral basis (Kumalo 2009:250).

Thabo Mbeki (1999–2008), Governance, and National Transformation

Confronted with the nation-building governance and moral standing of the global icon and his predecessor, Nelson Mandela, Thabo Mbeki, the economist, skilfully followed his pre-determined pathway by steering away from the agenda of national reconciliation Mandela emphasised, to set a new direction for the 'Rainbow Nation'. He based his administration on national socio-economic transformation to focus on addressing the legacy of apartheid. To achieve good governance and management, he went on to implement a cost-management approach through the new policy GEAR (Gumede 2007:72-73,76); Vellem (2013:2) later argued GEAR was anti-working class and pro-capitalist.

Mbeki latter introduced the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative of South Africa (ASGISA) – intended to boost infrastructure – as policy (Callard 2013:70,168) and Black Economic Empowerment (BEE), geared to promote an economically active middle class (Butler 2013:351-352). Cyril Ramaphosa and Molefe Tsele were appointed to serve in the BEE Commission. To achieve the goals he set out in the GEAR and ASGISA frameworks, Mbeki surrounded himself with influential middle-class African individuals (Gumede 2007:308) and influential former anti-apartheid Christian leaders. He intentionally brought the three former general secretaries of the SACC closer to him. Frank Chikane was appointed as director general by the presidency; Brigalia Bam was assigned to lead and guide the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC); and Molefe Tsele was appointed as ambassador to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Mbeki also appointed the anti-apartheid former academic and theologian Makhekhesi Stofile premier of Eastern Cape Province. He opted for continuity by allowing the NRLF, established during his period as the deputy president of the ANC and of the country, to function and ensured that the 1998 moral summit (with Mandela's 'RDP of the Soul' in mind) produced tangible outcomes by establishing the Moral Regeneration Movement (MRM). He then tasked his deputy president, Jacob Zuma, to lead the movement. The mission of the MRM is "to initiate, facilitate, and coordinate societal networks and programmes to regenerate and preserve the moral fibre of our nation" (Moral Regeneration Movement).

Mbeki relied on his international foreign relations experience, gained while in exile, to concentrate on addressing continental issues and ended conceptualising the notion of 'Africa Renaissance' which was later incorporated into the New African Program for Africa Development (NEPAD) (Butler 2013:369). While focusing on continental and global issues, three notable developments occurred during his administration. First, sporadic service delivery protests in several townships emerged as community members resolved to voice their dissatisfaction about the performance of several local municipalities. Such incidents led to the formation of 'concerned residents' associations or forums'.

Second, as ecumenical Christian leaders (theologians) associated with the SACC withdrew to focus on church ministry and a few others practised critical solidarity, a new form of evangelical ecumenism emerged. Two influential evangelical leaders, Michael Cassidy of Africa Enterprise (AE) and Moss Ntlha of The Evangelical Alliance of South Africa (TEASA), initiated the establishment of the two national leadership forums intended to address matters of governance and national transformation. Moss Ntlha is an anti-apartheid activist linked to the former group called Concerned Evangelicals (CE). The *Kairos* document prompted this group to produce a document called the Evangelical Witness of South Africa (EWISA). The two leaders collaborated to organise the South African Christian Leadership Assembly II (SACLA II) held on 7-11 July 2003 at the Pretoria showgrounds. This assembly was followed by the establishment of the National Initiative for Reformation in South Africa (NIRSA).

Third was the establishment of *Kairos* Southern Africa and the South African Christian Leaders Initiative (SACLI), a forum endorsed by TEASA, SACC, AE, and *Kairos* Southern Africa. Through SACLI, several Christian leaders agreed to raise the urgency of addressing national social cohesion and accountable leadership in all spheres of government, the private sector, the church, civil society, and the family. Eventually, the emergence of *Kairos* Southern Africa and SACLI enabled the two national church bodies, SACC and TEASA, to collaborate in some joint Christian national transformation initiatives despite some contention that evangelicals (including PCCs) in the African continent primarily focus on individual morality instead of addressing structural socio-political challenges (Gifford 2009:215). Henceforth, the leaders from SACC and TEASA

collaborated in shaping and influencing the post-Mandela Christian landscape of the 'Rainbow Nation' and contributed to maintaining the pre-1994 anti-apartheid struggle heritage. Ultimately, these leaders from different church traditions were addressing matters affecting the poor on one hand and promoting the interest of the governing party on the other hand.

The Moral Dilemma and the African Renaissance

Mbeki continued with Mandela's legacy of placing influential ecumenical Christian leaders (theologians) in his leadership and instilled the spiritual transformation agenda (the 'RDP of the Soul') Mandela began. He further continued the existence and function of the NRLF and did not interfere with the ongoing task of TRC, promoted the worldview of *Ubuntu* Archbishop Tutu popularised through the TRC, by implementing the 'Batho-Pele-People First' principle across all spheres of government. Embracing *Ubuntu* resulted in Mbeki championing the 'African Renaissance' vision popularised through his 'I am an African' speech to address African socio-economic and political issues in the continent. He later positioned the 'Rainbow Nation' and his government as the strategic partner to achieve his continental dream of revitalising Africa and presenting it as a different continent in the global community. During this period, Mbeki urged the church to be a 'watchdog'. Boesak (2005:161-162) dispelled the notion that the church should be a 'watchdog' and a partner of the ANC as the struggle was over. Later, Vellem (2010:1-6) added his voice by urging Christian theologians to begin to 'read the time' in the post-1994 South Africa.

BEE, Service Delivery Protest, and Unemployment

As shown above, Mbeki promoted Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) to introduce economic transformation. However, Boesak (2005:163) critiqued that the elevation of the elite has added to increasing the gap between the rich and the poor while Manala (2010:521-523) opposed the privatisation initiatives by arguing that they are the bedrock of service delivery protests emerging in the country. The implementation of neoliberal GEAR and later ASGISA brought strict financial controls and budget surplus within the government coupled with the privatisation and downsizing of parastatals, causing many employees from these state entities to lose their jobs, resulting in increasing the rate of unemployment in the country. Vellem (2013:14,17-

18) warns that, despite the creation of a new black middle class by GEAR and ASGISA, the gap between rich and poor has widened in South Africa, making it one of the most unequal societies in the world. As a result, levels of poverty, hunger and unemployment have increased for millions of poor people (Vellem 2020:4).

HIV and AIDS and the Zimbabwe debacle

Obsessed by driving his 'African Renaissance' vision, Mbeki supported dissenting scholars who rejected the HIV and AIDS connection (Gumede 2007:187-215). He advocated that poverty, instead of HIV, causes AIDS, and finally refused to allow for the use of antiretroviral drugs (ARVs) for people living with HIV and AIDS, much to the dismay of Christian leaders. Meanwhile, Maluleke (2001) argued that HIV and AIDS need a new theological approach to minimise their impact on the country and the SADC region. And Boesak (2005:166-167) added that the church should engage issues like HIV and AIDS.

The nationalisation of resources, particularly the land expropriation process in Zimbabwe and Mbeki's subsequent quiet diplomacy, created tensions between him and Christian leaders (theologians) who called for tough action against Robert Mugabe. The tension between Robert Mugabe and the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) escalated the already existing tension between Mbeki and Christian leaders (theologians). This fact was noticed when the Anglican Bishop of KwaZulu-Natal, Rubin Phillip, lodged a high court interdict to stop the arms shipment of the Zimbabwean government being offloaded at the Durban harbour and transported through South Africa to Zimbabwe (Nakhoda 2011).

Jacob Gedleihlekisa Zuma (2009–2018), Governance, and the New Growth Path-National Development Plan (NDP)

Jacob Zuma's mission was to undo his predecessor's efforts grounded on neo-liberal policies by implementing the ANC 2007 Polokwane conference resolutions to address the results of GEAR and ASGISA and to introduce a developmental state. He resolved to (a) decentralise his government by shifting power from the presidency and (b) focus on eliminating poverty and creating equality by 2030 through the New Growth Path (NGP) (Callard 2013:39-41,58). In addition, and contrary to the position of the ANC regarding

PCCs (African National Congress 2007:4), his administration ended the relationship with previous ecumenical Christian leaders (theologians) associated with the SACC and established a new relationship with Pentecostal-Charismatic church leaders some of whom had already ordained him honorary pastor prior to his presidency in 2012 (Makhaye 2007). This shift of association led to the establishment of the National Interfaith Leadership Council (NILC) chaired by Pastor McCauley. Conradie (2013:16) vehemently attacked the formation of NILC and accused it of being a method to marginalise the SACC. Furthermore, criticism from the SACC resulted in the formation of a new forum, the National Interfaith Council of South Africa (NICSA), by merging the NRLF and the NILC. Pastor McCauley was elected the chairperson of NICSA.

The concern that Pentecostal-Charismatic Churches (PCCs) and leaders would erode the gains of ecumenical Christian leaders (theologians) associated with the SACC (De Gruchy and De Gruchy 2004:229) was now real during the administration of Jacob Zuma, who chose to surround himself with the Pentecostal-Charismatic church leaders instead of the ecumenical Christian leaders (theologians) who contributed to the end of apartheid. Jacob Zuma further appointed Mogoeng Mogoeng, an ordained lay Pentecostal-Charismatic pastor, as the chief justice of the Constitutional Court. At that time, Maluleke (2015:36,38) lamented that the executive and the judiciary were now in the hands of the leadership of two Pentecostal-Charismatic leaders (Jacob Zuma and Mogoeng Mogoeng) while Boesak (2014:1060) earlier emphasised that Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity supported capitalism and consumerism.

Zuma also allowed both the MRM with its agenda of moral transformation (the 'RDP of the Soul') to function, and tasked the minister of health, Dr Aaron Motsoaledi, to escalate the introduction of the National Health Insurance (NHI) (Collard 2013:73). His international relations agenda focused on shifting from relations with developed economies, G20 (Group of Twenty), to joining Brazil, Russia, India, China to form a new economic block, BRICKS (Brazil, Russia, China, India, South Africa) (Collard 2013:102).

Two phases characterised Zuma's governance, the first being his first five-year term and the second being his second five-year term. In the former phase, he was the people's president who was in touch with the grassroots of the ANC

and the poor, helped to conceptualise and finalise the New Growth Path-National Development Plan, and emphatically denounced his predecessor's position on HIV and AIDS and brought different stakeholders to establish the national AIDS Consortium and implemented the administration of the ARVs to people living with HIV and AIDS. In the latter phase, Jacob Zuma was engulfed with severe criticism from all sections of the 'Rainbow Nation' accusing him of maladministration and corruption.

Reflecting on Zuma's administration, Vellem (2013:14,17-18) argued that there was no material difference between Mbeki's GEAR and Zuma's NGP-NDP as both had embraced neo-liberalism and ditched the aspirations of the poor and the working class. West (2018:79) emphasised that, from the time of Nelson Mandela to the presidency of Jacob Zuma, the ANC had already demonstrated that it was not expecting the religious sector to question it on socio-economic issues, but to concentrate on moral issues conceptualised through the 'RDP of the Soul'. Hence, it was not surprising that Zuma did not expect his PCCs and AICs alliance to engage him on structural issues but to provide him with the necessary unwavering support seen throughout his presidency.

The Moral Dilemma and the New Growth Path-National Development Plan

Zuma assumed the presidency of the ANC and the 'Rainbow Nation' with a cloud of hanging ethical dilemmas, namely, the Shabir Shaik trail to accusation, the arms deal collusion, and the rape trial. Urbaniak and Khorommbi (2020:62) described him as an emblem of Christianity's entanglement with both political leadership and governance under the ANC's twenty-five-year rule. This entanglement is noticed in the Nkandla scandal that created a huge hole in Zuma's NGP-NDP agenda. The former public protector (PP) widened the hole as she recommended that he pay back the extra money used for unrelated renovation at his Nkandla home (Madonsela 2016). Later, the chief justice of the Constitutional Court penned a majority judgement that instructed him to pay back the money and lambasted Parliament for not practising proper oversight in the matter. This was after Zuma had approached the Constitutional Court to overrule the PP's recommendation that he pay back the money. Christian leaders from the SACC and TEASA supported the

recommendations of the PP and decision of the Constitutional Court and joined members of the civil society to demand that Zuma pay back the money and also called that the parliament practise proper oversight.

Meanwhile, leaders of some sections of PCCs and AICs, led by bishop Zondi of Natal, openly supported Jacob Zuma during his court proceedings. They also condemned the recommendations of the former PP that Zuma repay the money used in renovating his Nkandla home and argued that the review case and PP recommendations were like persecuting Zuma whom they believed was also battling with dark forces (Van Onselen 2014:14). These leaders then accorded Zuma Christ's experience by using Christian symbols and songs to communicate his battle with dark forces (Cloete and Bürger 2009; Van Wyk 2019:120).

During Jacob Zuma's second term as the president of the ANC and the 'Rainbow Nation', a clear line of distinction existed between the views and actions of the two Christian groups, namely, his allies in the PCCs and AICs and the SACC, Kairos Southern Africa, and TEASA leaders. The latter opposed his governance while the former approved it, on a path of eroding the gains of Christian leaders (theologians) who contributed to the political liberation of the country. The latter Christian leaders wrote two letters asking about the rise of corruption (Ntlha and Arrison 2011; Makgoba, Ntlha, and Arrison 2012). Their letters seem to suggest that they were doing theology in the current context (Tshaka 2014:6). However, Kumalo (2012) argued that the first letter was moderate and lacked the critical tone of the 'Challenge to the Church' and 'The Road to Damascus'. A few years later and speaking from his experiences of being near the governing party during the period of Nelson Mandela, Boesak (2014:1073) correctly observed that

As things stand, president Zuma is far less likely to seek wisdom from John De Gruchy and Desmond Tutu than he is to ask advice from Ray McCauley and the court prophets of Victory Chapel International.

Still from the point of view of doing theology in the current context, the sacking of Nhlanhla Nene as finance minister in 2015 caused resistance from influential ANC leaders, Christian leaders (theologians), and the public. Following the

incident, allegations were made that the Gupta brothers influenced governance and benefited from their close relationship with Jacob Zuma. Behind these allegations are Mr Siphos Maseko (former director general of the Government Communications and Information Service - GCIS) and Mr Mcebisi Jonas (former Deputy Minister of Finance). Following these allegations, church leaders of the Dominican Order of Southern Africa lodged a formal complaint in 2016 about state capture allegations with the public protector (Public Protector 2016). The latter presented the findings that showed *prima facie* evidence of corruption linked to Jacob Zuma, the Gupta brothers, Duduzane Zuma, and others (Madonsela 2016) and recommended that a judicial inquiry be established to investigate the state capture allegations.

In addition, SACC leadership initiated a process for whistle-blowers to provide information to a panel it established. The panel's findings, which reflect direct collusion and interference in governance, were published in Soweto's Regina Mundi (City Press 2017). In related developments, Frank Chikane and other senior ANC members initiated a group of elders that acted as a pressure group to have Zuma removed as president of the ANC and the 'Rainbow Nation'. Archbishop Thabo Makgoba added to these efforts and used his 2017 Christmas message to call that Zuma be recalled as ANC president and of the 'Rainbow Nation' as he was not fit to govern (Putini 2017).

Cyril Matamela Ramaphosa (2018-), Governance, and *Thuma Mina* (Send Me)

Soon after his election as the ANC president, Ramaphosa began talking about a 'New Dawn'. Maluleke (2018b) described the period before his presidency of the ANC and the 'Rainbow Nation' as ten years of nightmare. During his inaugural address on 16 February 2018, President Cyril Ramaphosa challenged the citizens of the 'Rainbow Nation' to be a part of the 'New Dawn' by concluding his speech with the '*Thuma mina*' (Send Me) song. This 2002-reworked Hugh Masekela version of a church chorus communicates a message to revive and to rebuild the country's institutions and to fight endemic corruption seen during the administration of Jacob Zuma. Contrary to Zuma, who popularly used a combatant revolutionary song, '*uMshini wam*' (My Machine Gun), Ramaphosa opted to use a mindset-changing and a self-reflecting song used in church denominations and associated it with Hugh

Masekela, the anti-apartheid activist artist raised in a Christian family (see Maluleke 2018a).

Maluleke (2018a) succinctly highlighted the religious context of the song, sung in many denominations, and mentioned that Ramaphosa deliberately used Hugh Masekela's version to evoke themes of self-sacrifice, individual responsibility and the importance of personal change in mindsets. Beckmann (2019:2-3) associated the song with Ramaphosa's leadership of a Christian youth movement on one hand while, as Butler (2013:23,26,34,50-54) adds, recapping his involvement in two Christian student activities and leaderships (SCM and BEYO/BECO) on the other.

Ramaphosa's governance attracted three different reflections. First, West (2018:79-82) had earlier argued that Ramaphosa, then deputy president of the ANC and the 'Rainbow Nation', would, as his predecessors, continue with the 'RDP of the Soul' perception that expected the religious sector not to engage in socio-economic issues by pointing to his speeches to PCC and Jewish gatherings as evidence of this continuing trajectory. Ramaphosa, then the ANC and the country's president, later used *Thuma mina's* religious appeal and ended his first Covid-19 national speech with the following phrase: '*Nkosi sikelele' iAfrika!* God Bless Africa!' using several spoken South African languages. Second, Louw (2020:2-3) argues that his governance is cooperative and intended to change the moral bases of the country. Third, Mashau and Kgatle (2020:4-7) argued that the governance of Ramaphosa will succeed if he implements the mindset displayed in *Thuma mina* and its biblical grounding of Isaiah 6:8, 'whom shall I send? And who will go for us? Here I am. Send me!'

Unlike his predecessor Jacob Zuma, Ramaphosa resolved not to lean towards one section of the religious sector. He opted to use a two-pronged approach to consult all the religious leaders. On one hand he consulted with religious leaders of other faiths; on the other he consulted with religious leaders who were part of the liberation struggle, and those from AICs and PCCs.

The Moral Dilemma and *Thuma Mina* (Send Me)

Ramaphosa's *Thuma mina* is perforated with controversies that arose prior to his presidency, namely, the 16 August 2012 Marikana massacre that occurred

while he was a non-executive director of Lonmin, the Ramaphosa 2017 campaign (CR17) debacle during his campaign to be the president of the ANC, and the Bosasa scandal pointing to his son Andile Ramaphosa awarding contracts because of being the son of the president. As for the Marikana massacre, Archbishop Seoka intervened in the debacle and later testified in a formal judicial inquiry (Nicolson 2012). Five years later, Ramaphosa apologised to the family's dead mine workers and to the 'Rainbow Nation'. His apology for the Marikana massacre did not deter Boesak (2019:111) from arguing that his apology should be accompanied by a healing process. Regarding the CR17 campaign, the current public protector, Busisiwe Mkwebane, established that Ramaphosa received a R500,000.00 donation from Bosasa, was involved in money laundering, and violated his oath of office by misleading Parliament by providing incorrect information about the Bosasa donation. In addition, Nasrec's 2017 ANC meeting 'step aside' resolution sparked internal ANC conflict and subsequent court proceedings as its national leadership was enforcing the resolution against ANC secretary-general Alias Magashule (Thinane 2021:4-5). Recently, the Supreme Court of Appeal (SCA) has dismissed Magashule's plea to appeal a judgement of the Johannesburg High Court (Polity 2022). The Constitutional Court also dismissed his appeal against his suspension from the ANC (Mahlati 2022).

Four recent developments created deep anxiety about Ramaphosa's *Thuma mina* drive. First, the first State Capture report released on 4 January 2022 (Zondo Commission 2021) and the second part released on 1 February 2022 (Matlala 2022) recommends possible criminal charges against implicated individuals. Second, a recent leaked ANC meeting audio recording has created a new moral dilemma for Ramaphosa as the Standing Committee of Public Accounts (Scopa) sent him a list of questions to be answered and the Public Protector (PP) is investigating the matter (Kumalo 2022). Third, a panel of experts that led the South Africa Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) public hearings into the Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal July 2021 civil unrest, resolved that the president and the cabinet should be held accountable for failing to contain the civil unrest that damaged property and infrastructure (Mokobo 2020). The most recent development that has raised anxiety and public outcry is the Phala Phala scandal where the former State Security Agency director-general, Arthur Fraser, laid a criminal charge of money laundering defeating the ends of justice and kidnapping against the president at Rosebank police

station, related to a February 2020 burglary, involving \$4 million at his Phala Phala game farm (Sadike 2022). The public protector is investigating the matter with the NPA. An independent panel was established to determine whether a Section 89 inquiry should be held against president Ramaphosa (Chetty 2022); the panel found that he might have violated the constitution and his oath (Ensor 2022).

Summary

The article reflected on ANC's governance from its first post-1994 president, Nelson Mandela, who emphasised national reconciliation, to the current president Cyril Ramaphosa, who is emphasising rebuilding through the *Thuma mina* 'Send me' call. Thabo Mbeki focused on national transformation and Jacob Zuma focused on national development. Additionally, several Christian leaders (theologians) who were part of the liberation struggle formed a part of the four leaders' governance while others did not. Different governance and moral issues emerged during the administration of the four presidents. Consequently, those who were not a part critiqued the governance of the four presidents. During the presidency of Thabo Mbeki, some evangelical Christian leaders joined in critiquing his governance, similarly Jacob Zuma's governance. Alongside these developments, some Pentecostal-Charismatic and AIC leaders supported Zuma while others raised criticism. Thus, the article established those various Christian leaders/theologians performed different roles in matters of governance and the moral dilemma of the 'Rainbow Nation' during the presidency of the four ANC leaders and of the country.

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