



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SACOFF MOURNS THE TRAGIC LOSS OF 13 LEARNERS IN THE SEBOKENG SCHOOL TRANSPORT CRASH

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The **South African Community of Faith-Based Fraternalists & Federations (SACOFF)** expresses its profound sorrow, heartbreak, and solidarity with the families, schools, and communities affected by the devastating road accident that claimed the lives of **13 learners in Sebokeng** on Monday morning.

This tragic incident, which occurred while learners were being transported to school along the **R553 near Vanderbijlpark**, has once again shaken the conscience of the nation. Thirteen young lives—full of promise, potential, and purpose—were taken far too soon in what should have been a routine journey to education and hope.

SACOFF extends its deepest condolences to the bereaved families, loved ones, educators, classmates, and communities who are now faced with unimaginable grief. Our hearts break with every parent who sent their child to school in faith, only to receive the most devastating news imaginable.

A NATIONAL MOMENT OF MOURNING

This tragedy is not merely a local incident—it is a national wound.

As a faith-based movement representing churches and faith communities across South Africa, SACOFF stands united in grief with the people of Sebokeng, the Vaal region, and the nation at large. We mourn not only the loss of innocent lives but the erosion of safety and accountability that continues to place our children at risk.

SACOFF President, Pastor Bert Pretorius, said:

“The death of even one child is a tragedy beyond words. The loss of thirteen young learners is a national calamity that should move every South African to deep reflection and urgent action. Our prayers are with the families whose hearts have been shattered. May God grant them supernatural strength, comfort, and peace in this darkest hour.”

A CALL FOR ACCOUNTABILITY AND URGENT ACTION

While investigations are underway, SACOFF strongly calls for:

1. **A full, transparent, and expedited investigation** into the circumstances surrounding the crash, including the roadworthiness of the vehicle, driver credentials, and compliance with learner transport regulations.

2. **Immediate national review of scholar transport systems**, including stricter enforcement of safety standards, driver vetting, vehicle inspections, and ongoing monitoring.
3. **Clear accountability** where negligence or non-compliance is found, to ensure justice for the families and to prevent future loss of life.
4. **Psychosocial and trauma support** for affected families, surviving learners, educators, and first responders, who are carrying deep emotional scars.
5. **Collaborative action between government, civil society, and faith-based organisations** to ensure that child safety becomes a non-negotiable national priority.

A CALL TO COMPASSION AND UNITY

In moments such as these, South Africa must come together—not in blame, but in responsibility; not in silence, but in action.

SACOFF calls on churches and faith communities across the country to:

- Hold moments of prayer and remembrance for the victims and their families
- Offer practical support to affected households
- Stand as voices for justice, accountability, and safer communities

We further urge parents, schools, transport providers, and authorities to work together to ensure that no family ever again has to bury a child due to preventable circumstances.

OUR COMMITMENT

SACOFF commits itself with our Disaster Relief Partner – Mahlasedi Foundation to:

- Supporting affected families through pastoral care and counselling
- Engaging government and civil stakeholders on learner transport safety
- Advocating for ethical governance and child protection
- Promoting a culture where the dignity and safety of every child is non-negotiable

As Scripture reminds us:

“The Lord is close to the broken-hearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.” —
Psalm 34:18

May God comfort every grieving heart, strengthen every broken family, and guide our nation toward justice, healing, and responsible action.

ENDS

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