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## ARCHBISHOP DESMOND TUTU: 2000 RECIPIENT

*Miranda Anandappat*<sup>†</sup>

Former Archbishop Desmond Tutu received the 2000 International Freedom Conductor Award for his invaluable contributions to the collapse of the apartheid system in South Africa. His fight for the freedom and equality of all South Africans and continuing efforts to advocate for world peace, global human rights, and democratic transition through reconciliatory and restorative justice have made the Archbishop a renowned world leader.<sup>1</sup>

Archbishop Tutu was a young man living in Johannesburg, South Africa when the apartheid system of legislation was first enforced in 1948. In 1957, he quit his job as a well-loved teacher at a black high school in opposition to the substandard education system for nonwhite South African children.<sup>2</sup> These underfunded schools followed a white supremacist curriculum and denied their students the opportunities and resources that were available to white South Africans.<sup>3</sup>

Believing in the power of religion as an instrument to promote equality in South Africa, Tutu went on to study theology and was ordained into the Anglican priesthood in 1961.<sup>4</sup> After receiving his Masters of Theology in London, Tutu returned to South Africa to teach and serve as a chaplain. It was at this time he began to voice his opposition to the discriminatory government in place.<sup>5</sup>

In 1975, Tutu became the first black South African appointed as Anglican Dean of Johannesburg, a platform he used to advocate for the

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<sup>1</sup> *Archbishop Desmond Tutu*, The Desmond Tutu Peace Centre, <http://desmondtutu.worldwidecreative.co.za/timeline> (last visited Oct. 19, 2015).

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> Michigan State University, *Bantu Education*, South Africa: Overcoming Apartheid, Building Democracy, <http://overcomingapartheid.msu.edu/sidebar.php?id=65-258-2> (last visited Oct. 19, 2015).

<sup>4</sup> Peace Centre, *supra* note 1.

<sup>5</sup> *Id.*

abolishment of apartheid. In the ten years following this appointment, Tutu also held the positions of Bishop of Lesotho, General Secretary of the South African Council of Churches, and Patron of the United Democratic Front.<sup>6</sup> In response to his rising prominence in the international community, the South African government denied him a passport to travel out of the country for a time. As soon as Tutu was finally granted a limited travel document in 1982, he traveled to the United States to spread awareness of the injustices suffered under apartheid and discuss further action with state and church leaders.<sup>7</sup>

Tutu was awarded the 1984 Nobel Peace Prize for his "untiring effort in calling for an end to White minority rule in South Africa, the unbanning of liberation organisations [*sic*] and the release of political prisoners."<sup>8</sup> He was the first South African to win this award since 1961. Two years later, Tutu became the first black person to hold the highest position in the South African Anglican Church when he was selected to serve as Archbishop of Cape Town.<sup>9</sup>

Archbishop Tutu's Nobel Peace Prize and his respected religious position helped to further the anti-apartheid movement into becoming a global crusade for peace and justice in South Africa. He risked his own freedom by encouraging civil disobedience within the South African community and disinvestment in South Africa by the international community.<sup>10</sup> He traveled abroad to participate in the "Free Nelson Mandela" campaign,<sup>11</sup> but also took an active role in his home country's transition to a democratic society. The actions taken by Archbishop Tutu

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<sup>6</sup> *Desmond Tutu -Biographical*, in PEACE 1981-1990 (Erwin Abrams ed., 1997) available at [http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel\\_prizes/peace/laureates/1984/tutu-bio.html](http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/1984/tutu-bio.html).

<sup>7</sup> Charles Austin, *Bishop Tutu in City, Voices Concern*, N.Y. TIMES, Sep. 15, 1982.

<sup>8</sup> PeaceCentre, *supra* note 1.

<sup>9</sup> *Id.*

<sup>10</sup> *Id.*

<sup>11</sup> *Free Nelson Mandela!*, ANTI-APARTHEID MOVEMENT: FORWARD TO FREEDOM, <http://www.aamarchives.org/campaigns/free-mandela.html> (last visited Oct. 19, 2015).

were crucial to the 1994 dissolution of the apartheid system and the adoption of the country's liberal reforms.<sup>12</sup>

The liberation of South Africans under his guidance has made Archbishop Tutu an example of courageous leadership and integrity in both the political and religious spheres. The Archbishop continues to speak out against human rights abuses occurring in Africa and other conflict areas out of the belief that "[d]espite all of the ghastliness in the world, human beings are made for goodness . . . They have a commitment to try and make the world a better place."<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> BBC, *Profile: Archbishop Desmond Tutu*, BBC News (July 22, 2010), <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-arica-10725711>.

<sup>13</sup> *Desmond Tutu Biography*, THE ELDERS: INDEPENDENT GLOBAL LEADERS WORKING TOGETHER FOR PEACE AND HUMAN RIGHTS, <http://theelders.org/desmond-tutu> (last visited Oct. 19, 2015).

