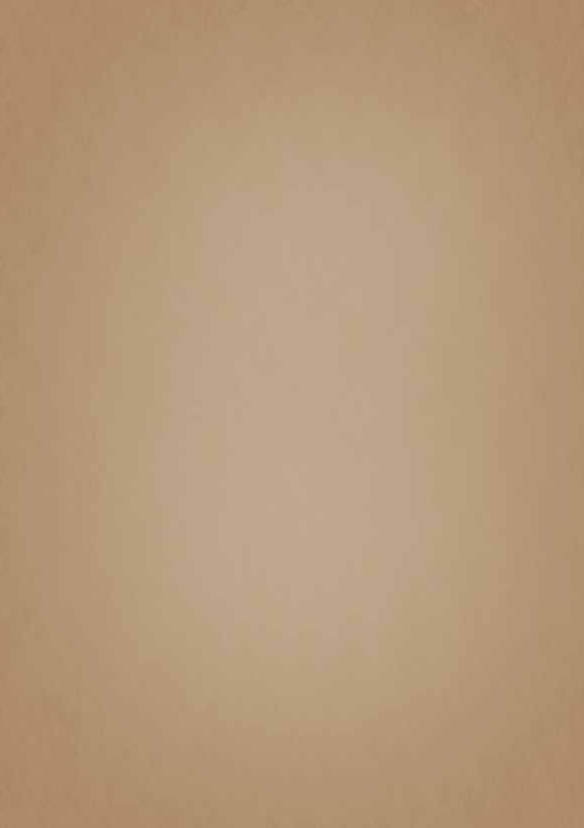
Challenges Faced by the

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Rastafari Community in South Africa

2012



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Rev. Dr. W Mabuza



**SECTION A**

**1. FOREWORD**

Chairperson

As one of the institutions established to strengthen democracy through Chapter 9 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, the Commission for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Cul- tural, Religious and Linguistic Communities has a very important and specific mandate to foster friend- ship, mutual respect and tolerance among the country’s many diverse communities.

The Commission took a resolution in its 2008 National Consultative Conference to pursue a dialogue and research of the challenges faced by the Rastafarian community throughout the country and devel- op recommendations for various government departments and other relevant institutions towards a more enabling and supportive environment for this community. The consultative process and dialogue with the Rastafarian community conducted from April 2011 until March 2012 is part of the Commis- sion’s resolve to have a better understanding of this community and share insights gathered from the process with other communities as well as with policy makers and legislators.

In navigating South Africa’s social transition towards the end of the second decade of democracy, it is important to acknowledge the importance of social cohesion and respect for cultural and religious di- versity as a basis for the very sustenance of the democratic order. The foundation for a solid democracy lies in the country’s ability to foster mutual respect and dialogue between different communities, in- cluding appreciation for religious diversity. This report provides for an important milestone in the latter journey not only in terms of understanding the complex yet interestingly rich religious and social fabric of the Rastafari religion but also the contribution that could be derived from this community towards a human rights culture within the Republic. We undertake to make sure this document does not gather dust in our archives but that it becomes an ‘active’ and a ‘living’ resource towards a more friendlier and tolerant South African society.

*Rev Dr Wesley Mabuza (Chairperson, CRL Rights Commission)*

Rev. Dr. W Mabuza Chairperson

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1. **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

The Commission for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Cultural, Religious and Linguistic Communities (henceforth the Commission) is grateful to all non-affiliated, independent Rastas and the Rastas affiliated to the Nyabinghi, Bobo Shanti, The Twelve Tribes of Israel 1 Rastafari communities in Knysna (Western Cape), Kimberly (Northern Cape), Mokomane Ga-Ramokgopa (Limpopo), Durban (KZN), Mahikeng (North West), Botshabelo and Mafora (Free State), who participated in the hearings. Their willingness to share with the Commission is appreciated. As participants, they provided insights into the challenges they face each day in South Africa simply because they choose to follow the Ras- tafarian way of life. Acknowledgements are also due to the Commission, under the leadership of the Reverend Dr Wesley Mabuza , and the CEO, Adv. PS Moreroa, who saw the need to support this project when it was initiated.



1 These are what are known as the Mansions of Rastafari.

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# SECTION B



#### INTRODUCTION

The Constitution of the Republic of South African recognises and advocates freedom for the practice of all religions and ways of life in the country. Despite this constitutional right, some smaller religions, such as the Rastafarians, feel discriminated against when it comes to practising their religion. The Commission passed a resolution at its 2008 National Consultative Conference (NCC), held at the Birch- wood Hotel, Gauteng, to further investigate this religion and to highlight the challenges faced by the Rastafari in South Africa today..

Section 15 (1) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa states that: Everyone has the right to freedom of conscience, religion, thought, belief and opinion. However, some of the country’s religions still feel that they do not have the freedom to practise what they believe. In such situations, the s Com- mission, which is a constitutional body under Section 185 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, mandated to deal with infringements of community rights of cultural, religious and linguistic practices, usually intervenes and ensures that these rights are respected and upheld.

One of the Commission’s resolutions, taken at the aforementioned NCC , noted the Rastafarian com- munity’s serious concerns pertaining to the scorn and societal errors of perception regarding their religion. Subsequently, the Commission committed itself to investigating the issue of the Rastafarian religion, its practices, and the challenges it faces, and to providing recommendations. These would be collated and forwarded to the relevant policy-makers.

In line with the 2011/ 2012 Strategic Plan, the Commission felt duty-bound to conduct research among the Rastafari communities with a view to establishing a policy position in respect of the rights of this community.

#### THE MANDATE OF THE COMMISSION

The Commission is one of the institutions established by the Constitution to strengthen constitutional democracy in the Republic of South Africa 2. It was given effect by Act 19 of 2002 3. By this Act, the Commission is mandated, inter alia, to:

1. promote respect for and further the protection of the rights of cultural, religious and linguistic communities;
2. promote and develop peace, friendship, humanity, tolerance and national unity among and with- in cultural, religious and linguistic communities, on the basis of equality, non-discrimination and freedom of association;
3. foster mutual respect among cultural, religious and linguistic communities;
4. promote the right of communities to develop their historically-diminished heritage.
5. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Section 31(1) stipulates that persons belonging to a cultural, religious or linguistic community may not be denied the right, with other members of that community – a) to enjoy their culture, practice their religion and use their language.
6. The objectives of the Commission are set out in section 4 of the Commission for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Cultural, Religious and Linguistic Communities, Act 19 of 2002. Read this with section 185(1) of the Constitution.

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#### PURPOSE AND SAMPLING

The Commission conducted this research with the purpose of collecting and collating information on challenges faced by the Rastafari community, and producing a report with recommendations. The re- port is intended to help the Rastafari community in exercising their freedom of religion, and to ensure that they do so within the confines of the law. At the same time, it is hoped that the report will serve as an educational instrument for those who would like to understand the Rastafari religion. Last, and most importantly, this report will be a source of reference. It is hoped that the recommendations will assist the relevant stake holders when they review their respective laws and policies to accommodate the multi-religious and multi-cultural society of the democratic South Africa.

Our sampling was carried out among the independent or non-affiliated Rastas and also among Rastas belonging to the Nyabinghi, the Sack Cloth, the Bobo Shanti, and the Twelve Tribes of Israel. We held seminars and dialogues with them in Knysna (Western Cape), Kimberly (Northern Cape), Mokomane Ga-Ramokgopa (Limpopo), Durban (KZN), Mahikeng (North West), and Botshabelo and Mafora (Free State).



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The round-table discussions looked at the following issues concerning the Rastafari:



**SECTION C**

**6. HISTORY OF THE RASTAFARI**

* 1. Haile Selassie

Haile Selassie was an Emperor of Ethiopia whose influence as an African leader stretched far beyond the borders of his country. Although his popularity declined towards the end of his sixty-year reign, Selassie remains a key figure in the modernization of Ethiopian civilization.

* 1. Childhood

Haile Selassie was born Tafari Makonnen on July 23, 1892, the son of Ras Makonnen, a cousin and close friend of Emperor Menilek II. Baptized Lij Tafari, he is believed to be a direct descendant of King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, two ancient rulers from the 10th century BCE. Raised as a Christian, Tafari was educated privately by European tutors.

Haile Selassie spent his youth at the imperial court 4 of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Continually surrounded by political plots, he learned much about power-wielding. Menilek no doubt recognized Tafari’s capac- ity for hard work, his excellent memory, and his mastery of detail. The emperor rewarded the youth’s intellectual and personal capabilities by appointing him, at the age of fourteen, Governor of Gara Mu- leta in the province of Harar. When he was twenty, the emperor appointed him dejazmatch 5 of the large province of Sidamo.

* 1. Regent and Emperor

Upon the death of Menilek in 1913, his grandson, Lij Yasu, succeeded to the throne. Yasu’s apparent conversion to Islam alienated the national Christian church, which favoured instead the opposition movement led by Ras Tafari (as Haile Selassie was now named). The movement joined noblemen and high church officials in stripping Yasu of the throne in 1916. Zawditu, the daughter of Menilek, then became empress, with Ras Tafari appointed regent 6 and heir to the throne.

Throughout the regency the Empress, conservative in nature and more concerned with religion than politics, served as opposition to Ras Tafari’s increasing interest in turning the country into a more mod- ern nation. The result was an uneasy decade-long agreement between conservative and reforming forces wishing to make social improvements.

In 1926 Tafari took control of the army, an action that made him strong enough to assume the title of negus, or king. This was made possible, in part, by his success in international affairs, with the 1923 admission of Ethiopia to the League of Nations, a multinational organisation aimed at achieving world peace following World War I (1914–1918) 7. When Zawditu died in April 1930, Tafari demanded the title negasa negast, king of kings, and assumed complete control of the government, also taking the throne name of Haile Selassie I, “Power of the Trinity”.

1. Court of the emperor 5 Commander
2. Acting ruler while the Empress was away.
3. The war was fought mainly in Europe. It involved, inter alia, many of the European countries and the USA.

8

* 1. Italian invasion

In 1931 the new emperor began to develop a written constitution to symbolize both his interest in modernization and his intention to increase the power of the government, which had been waning since the death of Menilek. Haile Selassie’s efforts were cut short, however, when Benito Mussolini’s (1883–1945) Italian forces invaded the country in 1935. The Italian military used superior weaponry, airplanes, and poison gas to crush the ill-fated resistance led by the emperor. After the invasion, a fascist regime 8 occupied the country and marked the first loss of national independence in recorded Ethiopian history. In 1936, Haile Selassie went into exile 9. While he was in England, he went to the League of Nations for help, but was unsuccessful.

Early in 1941, British forces, aided by the heroic Ethiopian resistance, freed the country from Italian control, enabling Haile Selassie to triumphantly re-enter his capital in May. The emperor returned to find that a great deal of his government’s independence had been destroyed, leaving him stronger, in certain ways, than before he left.

During the next decade, he rebuilt the administration; improved the army; passed legislation to regu- late the government, church, and financial system; and further extended his control of the provinces 10 by crushing uprisings in Gojjam and Tigre. In general, the emperor had gradually grown more cautious, and he allowed a few new leaders into his government.

During the 1950s, Haile Selassie worked to absorb the impor- tant Red Sea province of Eritrea into Ethiopia, which he accom- plished in 1962. Later he founded the University College of Addis Ababa, and welcomed home many Ethiopian college graduates from abroad. His Silver Jubilee 11 in 1955 served as the occasion to present a revised constitution, followed in 1957 by the first general election. Haile Selassie’s continued efforts to maintain political balance between several major politicians and exclude those new politicians who could still find a few places in the gov- ernment, eventually led opposing elements to attempt a govern- ment coup 12 in December 1960. The coup failed, but it gave a short and violent message to the unchanging Ethiopian politics and hinted at future possibilities.

*Haile Selassie.*

*Courtesy of the Library of Congress*

* 1. Pan-African Leader

In the 1960s, the emperor was clearly recognized as a major force in the pan-African movement, a movement dedicated to a united Africa. This demonstrated his remarkable capacity for adapting to changing circumstances. It was a great personal triumph for him when, in 1963, the newly-founded Organization of African Unity established its headquarters in Addis Ababa. Unlike other African leaders, once Haile Selassie had entered office, he did not have to struggle to prove his legitimate authority to his people. Rather, his control of government for more than forty years had given him enough time to demonstrate his strength.

1. A system of government under a powerful dictator who claims all authority for himself. 9 He was forced out of the country and had to remain outside it.

10 Territories controlled by the government. 11 Celebration of 25 years in power.

12 A takeover of the government by its opponents.

9

At home, Haile Selassie showed more caution than ever in his approach to modernisation. Although he was sympathetic to Western advancement, he never, throughout his long reign, advanced faster than agreed among his peers. However, by his fortieth year in power he appeared to be more concerned with adjusting to change than with enacting change himself.



By 1970, the emperor had slowly withdrawn from many of the day-to-day workings of the government and had become increasingly involved in foreign affairs. He probably made more state visits than any other head of state at that time, enjoying such trips for their own sake even when they were of little practical value. Foreign relations brought him admiration from around the world.

In 1973, Selassie was forced to abdicate 13 on September 13, 1974. The eighty-year-old Emperor spent the final year of his life under house arrest 14. His death was announced on August 27, 1975. The man who had led Ethiopia for sixty years, through some of the nation’s darkest times, did not even have a funeral service. The exact location of his grave has never been revealed.

#### RASTAFARI MESSIAH

*“...Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God. (Psalm 68:31)”*

Based on the above-quoted verse, , Haile Selassie is “worshipped as Jesus Chirst incarnate” among the followers of the Rastafari movement. The term is a combination of Haile Selassie’s pre-imperial name, Ras, meaning Head, a title equivalent to Duke, and Tafari Makonnen. It emerged in Jamaica during the 1930s under the influence of Marcus Garvey’s Pan Africanist movement. Selassie is thought to be the messiah who will lead the peoples of Africa and the African Diaspora to freedom. His official titles are Conquering Lion of the Tribe of Judah and King of Kings and Elect of God, and his traditional lineage is thought to descend from the union of King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba. These notions are perceived by Rastafarians to be confirmation of the return of the messiah in the prophetic Book of Rev- elation in the New Testament: King of Kings, Lord of Lords, Conquering Lion of the Tribe of Judah, and Root of David. Rastafari faith in the incarnate divinity of Haile Selassie began after news reports of his coronation reached Jamaica, particularly those in two Time magazine articles on the coronation, one article a week before the event and the other a week after. Haile Selassie’s own perspectives permeate the philosophy of the movement.

Not all Rastafarian Mansions consider Haile Selassie to be Jesus Christ incarnate. One example is The Twelve Tribes of Israel, who consider him a divinely-anointed king: Christ in his kingly aspect and de- fender of the Christian faith.

In 1961, the Jamaican government sent a delegation of both Rastafari and non-Rastafari leaders to Ethiopia to discuss, inter alia, the matter of repatriation with the emperor. He reportedly told the Rasta- farian delegation, which included Mortimer Planno 15: “Tell the Brethren to be not dismayed, I person- ally will give my assistance in the matter of repatriation”.

Haile Selassie visited Jamaica on 21 April 1966, and approximately one hundred thousand Rastafari from all over Jamaica descended on Palisadoes Airport in Kingston, having heard that the man whom they considered their messiah was coming to visit them.

13 He had to step down and give up his title and position. 14 He was restricted to his house by a court order.

15 As well as being a famous drummer, he was an important Rastafarian leader in Jamaica. He believed in a return to Africa.

10

Spliffs and chalices 16 were openly smoked, causing “a haze of ganja smoke” to drift through the air. Haile Selassie arrived at the airport but was unable to come down the mobile steps of the airplane, as the crowd rushed onto the tarmac. He then returned into the plane, disappearing for several more minutes. Finally, Jamaican authorities were obliged to request Ras Mortimer Planno to climb the steps, enter the plane, and negotiate the emperor’s exit. Planno re-emerged and announced to the crowd: “The Emperor has instructed me to tell you to be calm. Step back and let the Emperor land”. This day is widely held by scholars to be a major turning point for the movement, and it is still commemorated by Rastafarians as Grounation Day, the anniversary of which is celebrated as the second holiest holiday after 2 November, the Emperor’s Coronation Day.

From then on, as a result of Planno’s actions, the Jamaican authorities were asked to ensure that Ras- tafarian representatives were present at all state functions attended by the Emperor. Rastafarian elders also ensured that they obtained a private audience with the Emperor, where he reportedly told them that they should not immigrate to Ethiopia until they had first liberated the people of Jamaica. This dictum came to be known as “liberation before repatriation”.

Haile Selassie defied expectations of the Jamaican authorities, and never rebuked the Rastafari for their belief in him as the returned Jesus. Instead, he presented the movement’s faithful elders with gold medallions, the only recipients of such an honor on this visit. During PNP leader (later Jamaican Prime Minister) Michael Manley’s visit to Ethiopia in October 1969, the Emperor allegedly still recalled his 1966 reception with amazement, and stated that he felt that he had to be respectful of their beliefs. This was the visit when Manley received the Rod of Correction, or Rod of Joshua, as a present from the Emperor, which is thought to have helped him win the 1972 election in Jamaica.

Rita Marley, Bob Marley’s wife, converted to the Rastafari faith after seeing Haile Selassie on his Jamai- can trip. She claimed in interviews and in her book No Woman, No Cry that she saw a stigmata print on the palm of Haile Selassie’s hand as he waved to the crowd which resembled the markings on Christ’s hands when he was nailed to the cross. The claim was not supported by other sources, but was used as evidence for her and other Rastas to suggest that Haile Selassie I was indeed their messiah. She was also influential in the conversion of Bob Marley, who then became internationally recognized. As a result, Rastafari became much better known throughout much of the world 17.

#### RASTAS WAY OF LIFE

* 1. Marijuana/Ganja

Rastas are perhaps best known for their religious use of marijuana, which grows plentifully in Jamaica. Rastas know it as ganja, the holy herb, Iley or callie, and believe it was given by God. They use Scrip- tural support as found especially in Psalm 104:14: “He causeth the grass for the cattle and herb for the service of man”. Other texts interpreted to refer to cannabis include Genesis 3:18, Exodus 10:12, and Proverbs 15:17. In addition to ritual use, Rastas also use marijuana for medicinal purposes, applying it for a variety of ailments, including colds.

Marijuana is used primarily during the two main Rastafari rituals: reasonings and nabbing. The reason- ing is a gathering at which a group of Rastas smoke ganja during prayer and engage in discussion. The ritual begins when one person lights the pipe, or “chalice”, and recites a short prayer, while all the other participants bow their heads. The pipe is then passed around the circle until everyone has smoked. The reasoning ends when the participants depart one by one.

1. Rolled ganja and pipes for smoking
2. Bob Marley’s posthumously-released song ‘Iron Lion Zion’ refers to Haile Selassie.

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* 1. Rasta Holidays



There are several Rasta holidays, most of which center around events in the life of Emperor Haile Selas- sie. The most important celebrations are:

* + - November 2 - The coronation of Selassie
    - January 6 - Ceremonial birthday of Selassie
    - April 21 - Selassie’s visit to Jamaica
    - July 23 - Selassie’s personal birthday
    - August 1 - Emancipation from slavery
    - August 17 - Marcus Garvey’s birthday
  1. Wearing Dreadlocks

One of the most visible practices of Rastas is the habit of wearing their hair in dreadlocks. Dreadlocks have several purposes and layers of meaning for Rastafar- ians, including:

* + - the biblical command not to cut one’s hair (Leviticus 21:5);
    - the appearance of the lion’s mane, representing strength, Africa, Ethiopia, and the Lion of Judah;
    - naturalness and simplicity, which are associated with Africa;
    - the Rastas’ roots in Africa.
  1. Rasta Colors

Other than dreadlocks, the colours red, gold and green have symbolic value. Red stands for the tri- umphant church of the Rastas as well as the blood of the martyrs in the black struggle for liberation. Gold represents the wealth of their African homeland, and green symbolizes Ethiopia’s beauty and lush vegetation. Black is often also included, representing the colour of the Africans. Another important symbol is the Lion of Judah, which represents Haile Selassie as the King of Kings, Africa, and strength. Additional details concerning colours are set out as follows:

1. Red - The blood of Africa’s children shed for Africa’s freedom, dignity, and liberty;
2. Yellow - The wealth and richness of Africa;
3. Green - The luxuriance, fertility and greenness of Africa;
4. Black - The colour of the noble, ancient, and distinguished African people.
   1. Rasta Diet

The most observant Rastas follow a dietary law called Ital. Ital food is completely natural, with no canned items. Everything is free of chemicals and preservatives, and is eaten raw if possible. Old Testa- ment prohibitions against pork and shellfish are part of Ital, but most Rastafarians are vegetarians or vegans. Coffee and milk are rejected as unnatural.

Rastafarians also reject alcohol, since it is a fermented chemical that does not belong in the temple of the body. It is thought to make people stupid, thereby playing into the hands of white leaders. This is contrasted with the holy herb of marijuana, which is natural, and Rastas believe it opens their minds and assists in reasoning.

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#### MANSIONS AND HOUSES

There are three main sects or orders of Rastafari today. All agree on the basic principles of the divine status of Haile Selassie and the importance of black images of divinity. Many Rastas do not belong to a sect or the movement.

* + 1. The Nyabinghi Order

The Nyabinghi Order (also known as the Theocratic Priesthood and Livity Order of Nyabinghi) is named after Queen Nyabinghi of Uganda, who fought against colonialists in the 19th century. This is the oldest of the orders, and it focuses mainly on Haile Selassie, Ethiopia and the eventual return to Africa. It is overseen by an Assembly of Elders.

* + 1. The Bobo Shanti

The Bobo Shanti was founded by Prince Emanuel Charles Edwards in Jamaica in the 1950s. “Bobo” means black and “Shanti” refers to the Ashanti tribe in Ghana, from which this sect believes Jamaican slaves are descended. The members of Bobo Shanti are also known as Bobo Dreads.

When it comes to belief, Bobo Dreads are distinguished by their worship of Prince Emmanuel (in addi- tion to Haile Selassie) as a reincarnation of Christ and embodiment of Jah, their emphasis on the return to Africa (“repatriation”) and their demands for monetary reimbursement for slavery.

The members of the Bobo Shanti order wear long robes and turbans tightly wrapped around their dreads. They adhere closely to Jewish Law, including observance of the Sabbath from sundown on Friday to sundown on Saturday. They obey the hygiene laws for menstruating women. They live sepa- rately from Jamaican society and other Rastafarians, growing their own produce and selling straw hats and brooms. They often carry brooms with them to symbolize their cleanliness.

* + 1. The Twelve Tribes of Israel

The Twelve Tribes of Israel sect was founded in 1968 by Dr Vernon “Prophet Gad” Carrington. It is the most liberal of the Rastafarian orders and members are free to worship in a church of their choosing. Each member of this sect belongs to one of the 12 Tribes (or Houses), which is determined by their birth month and is represented by a colour.

* + 1. Rasta Expression ‘I and I’

The expression “I and I” is frequently heard in Rasta communication. The expression means that no in- dividual is more privileged than another as far as the basic truth of life is concerned. Everyone is equal. This is why Rastas often opt to use “I and me” instead of “you and me”, because they believe that all people are bound together by the one god, Jah.

13

The South African Constitution recognises and advocates freedom of practice of all religions in the country. Despite this constitutional right, some minor religions, like the Rastafari, feel that they are discriminated against in the practice of their religion.



**SECTION E**

**10. RASTAS IN SOUTH AFRICA**

#### PURPOSE AND SAMPLING

The intention of this research is for the CRL Rights Commission to collect and collate information on challenges faced by the Rastafari community in order to compile a report and recommendations. The aim of this report is to serve as a guideline for Rastafarian community in exercising their freedom of religion, and to ensure that they do so within the confines of the law. At the same time, it is hoped that the report will serve as an educational instrument for those who would like to understand the Rastafarian religion. Lastly, and most important, it is hoped that this report and its recommendations will be a source of reference, advising the relevant stake holders’ municipalities to review their respec- tive laws and policies to accommodate the multi-religious and multi-cultural society in the democratic South Africa.

Our sampling was done among the independent, or non-affiliated, Rastas and also among Rastas be- longing to the Nyabinghi, the Sack Cloth, the Bobo Shanti and the Twelve Tribes of Israel. We held seminars and dialogues with them in Knysna (Western Cape), Kimberly (Northern Cape), Mokomane Ga-Ramokgopa (Limpopo), Durban (KZN), Mahikeng (North West), Botshabelo (Free State) and Mafora (Free State).

#### METHODOLOGY

Seminars or dialogues on Rastafarians opened with a plenary session, when a short description of the Commission and what it does was given. Then followed explanations regarding the topic of the day and the objectives of the seminar discussions. After the plenary session, the attendees were divided into small groups of five each to go and discuss given topics. Then the small groups reverted to plenary to report on the outcome of their group discussions. Questions were asked and each group’s report was interrogated further. Recommendations were made based on the group reports.

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# SECTION F

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were made:

* 1. The South African Police Services
* Ganja should be legalised, not as a drug, but as a holy herb for healing and incense during the spiritual ceremonies.
* Rasta priests should be allowed to carry on them at least 100 grams of ganja for spiritual purposes, without prosecution.
* Police prejudices, discrimination, and harassment of the Rastas should end.
* Raiding the Rasta houses and plantations without search warrants should be discouraged.
* Police should stop regarding and portraying Rastas as criminals.
* There should be a moratorium on arrests involving ganja.
* The 1911 ganja ban in South Africa should be declassified .
  1. The Department of Justice
* Review of the ban on ganja in South Africa should start in earnest.
* The Department should also review all the discriminatory laws that are inconsistent with the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, especially those against the Rastas.
  1. The Department of Education
* Schools and places of work should respect and stop discriminating against Rastas, and allow them to wear dreadlocks and beards.
* Accurate education should be given to all learners at schools and to all members of the South African society about the Rastafari way.
* Schools should recognise and allow the wearing of dreadlocks by students.
* There should be life orientation workshops about the Rastafari way of life and religion.
* The Rastafari language should be recognised, as it is currently suppressed and suffers prejudice.
  1. The Department of Labour
* During the Rastafari holidays, the Rasta community members should be released from work or have special leave to celebrate their holidays, just like any other people during their religious holidays.
* The Rastafari dress code, especially in the workplace, should be respected, not looked down upon.
* Prejudices and discrimination against Rastas in the workplace should be addressed.
  1. The Department of Environmental Affairs
* The government, through the National Parks Board, should respect and recognise the Rastafari places of worship. They should therefore open up sacred places and sites for the Rastafari community to use for worship.
* Access to the places of spiritual significance, mountains and rivers should be allowed.

15

* 1. Department of Correctional Services



* + - Correctional Services facilities should also allow Rasta inmates to practise their religion in prison.
    - Correctional Services should allow Rastas in jail to be visited by a Rasta priest.
    - Correctional Services should provide the Rasta inmates with a proper Ital diet in prison.
    - The Rastas’ spiritual worker should be authenticated and trained like other chaplains.
    - Rastas arrested for carrying ganja should be treated differently from common law criminals.
    - Correctional Services institutions should not force Rasta inmates to cut their hair and beard.
  1. The South African Council of Churches
     + Tolerance of all religions, even by religious leaders, should be encouraged.
     + Interfaith prayers should include Rastas.
     + There should be life orientation workshops on the Rasta way of life and religion to combat ignorance of it.
     + All religions should be treated equally.
     + Co-operation between the Rastas and the SACC should be encouraged.
  2. The Department of Home Affairs
     + Rastafari priests should be admitted by the state as Marriage Officers and thus have powers to sanctify and authenticate documents on behalf of their members.
     + Rasta women, like Moslem women, should not be forced to remove their head scarves when being photographed for their IDs and Passports.
     + Rastafari holidays should be recognised by the state and employers just as they recognise those of other religions.
  3. The Department of Trade and Industry
     + Intellectual property relating to Rasta products and art should be protected to prevent commercial abuse and reckless misuse of the Rasta brand.
     + Commercial and food processing places should consider the Rasta Ital diet and respect it, just as they consider the diets of other religion
  4. The Department of Arts and Culture
     + Cultural restoration and an archive of research on all Rastafari matters should be established. It would occupy a central location where Rasta documents could be accessed.
     + Rastafari research centres should be established where the Rastafari ethical codes could be kept.
     + Accurate Rastafari literature of South African origin should be written.
     + The Arts and Culture Department should invest money in celebrating reggae music and artists, especially on heritage days or cultural festivals.

16

* 1. The Media in General
     + - Media should desist from stereotyping the Rasta community as a ganja-smoking community.
       - Media and broadcasters should always invite experts when discussing the Rastafari way of life.
       - The media should allow Rastas the opportunity of truly reflecting and giving proper and true in- formation about Rastafari.
       - The Rasta way of life should be portrayed as sacred, not as a fashionable way of life. The media should help address and change societal attitudes to the Rastas.
  2. Local Governments
     + - Local government should make land available for the Rastafari Tabernacle projects, economic de- velopment and the repatriation of members from abroad.



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*Addis Zemen newspaper*, 3 October 1947.



**SECTION G**

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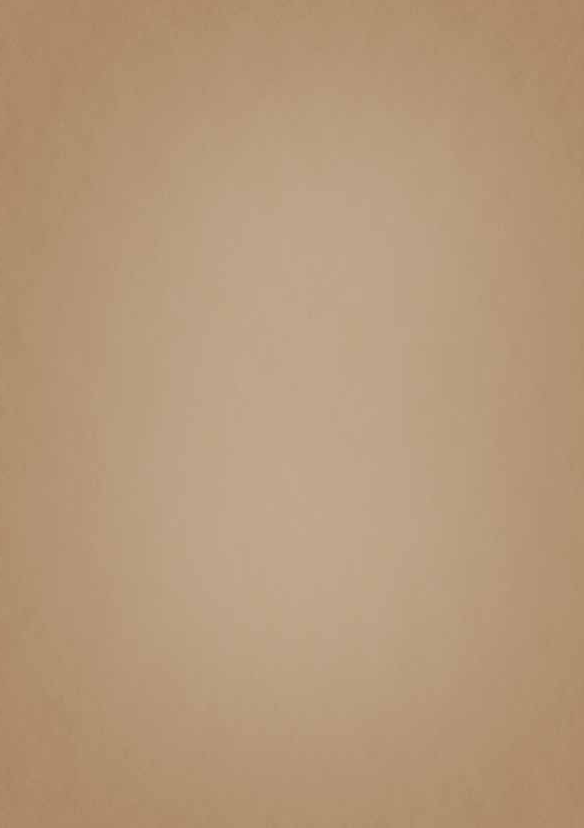




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