

PRESS STATEMENT
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BY
THE OFFICE OF THE METHODIST BISHOP
NATAL COASTAL DISTRICT

LOCAL METHODIST BISHOP CONDEMNS CLEARANCE OF
ARMS FOR ZIMBABWE

Bishop Purity Malinga, Methodist Bishop of the Natal Coastal District, today condemned the decision by the Durban ports authorities to clear the Chinese vessel, *An Yue Jiang*, which South African Police have confirmed is carrying mortars, ammunitions and rocket-propelled grenades destined for Zimbabwe and she challenged the statement by the Defence Secretary that there was “nothing wrong with the conveyance of arms to Zimbabwe”.

Bishop Malinga recently visited Zimbabwe in the run up to the elections, as part of a local initiative to monitor the process. “The decision to clear this vessel with its cargo of arms destined for our neighbour, Zimbabwe, is disgusting”, said Bishop Malinga. “At this fragile moment in the history of Zimbabwe, the provision of instruments of war is not something that we, the people of eThekweni, should be party to. Furthermore, we are most concerned by the delay in the release of the election results, and these arms being supplied to an oppressive regime through our own port cannot bode well for the people of Zimbabwe.

We call on all Christians to continue praying for a peaceful resolution for the people of Zimbabwe, for their deliverance and freedom, and we call on our local port authority and provincial and national governments to seriously consider their role in this supply chain of death.”

The provision of arms is in direct conflict with the principles of peace and dialogue, supported by the faith community, the South African Government, as well as with the EU Common Position banning the delivery and supply of arms to Zimbabwe, as well as other African countries, in particular by China.