

Tutu sets retirement plans, thanks South Africans

News in the [August 24, 2010](#) issue

Nobel Peace Prize laureate Archbishop Desmond Tutu has announced his intention to wind down his public engagements when he turns 79 this October.

"I think I have done as much as I can, and I really do need time for other things that I have wanted to do," Tutu told a July 22 media briefing at St. George's Cathedral in Cape Town. He also thanked South Africans for their contribution to the world, including their "panache" during the World Cup games.

Tutu became the first black general secretary of the South African Council of Churches in 1978, and then in 1986 the first black Anglican archbishop of Cape Town, a post from which he retired in 1996. Awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1984, he chaired South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which investigated human rights violations in the apartheid era.

The archbishop said the time had come to devote himself to quiet reflection, his family and reading, although he will honor all existing engagements. "I will shut up, but sometimes I might not be able to resist," said Tutu, who is known for his pronouncements on issues of peace and justice the world over.

In fact, in an article published July 20 in the *New York Times*, Tutu said that it was "deeply distressing" that President Barack Obama had decided "to spend less than he promised to treat AIDS patients in Africa." Tutu wrote that he was "saddened" that Obama chose to cut U.S. contributions to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, a global financing organization. —Ecumenical News International