

Special Collection: 'Engaging development: Contributions to a critical theological and religious debate', *HTS Theological Studies* Volume 72, No. 4 (2016)

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The invitation to contribute to the special collection on 'Engaging development: Contributions to a critical theological and religious debate' was extended to scholars from the fields of theology and religion as well as social scientists known for their expertise on development and its challenges. This South African initiative contributes to the critical theological and religious studies reflection on the meaning of development as public discourse and practice. The relevance has significance beyond the South African context and therefore international and African contributions are included. This special collection critically engages with the question of the meaning of development as public discourse and practice in a diverse environment. South African contributors focus particularly on the post-apartheid dispensation discussing the following concerns: the response of the academy and ecclesial leadership; problems of power and powerlessness amidst the increasing poverty and inequality in the post-apartheid society; and the relevance of critical discourse on and alternative frameworks for development. African scholars and scholars from other parts of the world in turn reflect on the significance of these concerns for Africa and beyond, specifically the ways in which the discourse on development should be broadened and the role of religious actors be appreciated and criticized within such a broadened framework of understanding. This special collection provides a starting point for future critical reflection on the significance of a South African and broader African contribution to the global discourse on development in which theological scholars and scholars of religion can collaborate with social scientists in an inter- and transdisciplinary way.

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