

SOUTHERN AFRICA SOCIAL FORUM

“Another Southern Africa Is Possible”

09-11 November 2003, Lusaka, Zambia

Concept of SASF

Introduction

The Southern African Social Forum (SASF) is a continuation of the Africa Social Forum (ASF) that takes place annually, since Bamako (2002), as a prelude to the World Social Forum (WSF) that was initiated in Porto Alegre (Brazil) in 2001. The latter is an annual event that is deliberately organized to coincide with the World Economic Forum (Davos). The timing is meant to signify civil society opposition voices to the high level one-sided deliberations between the world leaders and international financial institutions.

Following the Bamako Forum and the Addis Ababa Forum, a process of consultations have taken place around Africa to find a way of effectively exposing the current social, political and economic injustices for better government and state action. A forum creates a platform for various interest groups of civil society to discuss issues together pertaining to social, political and economic justice. In addition, a forum increases solidarity in the sub-region and Africa as a whole before going to the global forum, in this case, in preparation for the next World Social Forum to be held in, ...January 2004 Mumbai, India.

The need to host a Southern African Social Forum (SASF) arose from the second African Social Forum held in Addis Ababa, 5-9 January 2003. Participants resolved to establish sub-regional forums as a way of getting diverse views on Africa's socio-economic and political issues from a wider constituency prior to Africa Social Forum (ASF) and World Social Forum (WSF). Each sub-region was designated to form its own Steering Committee of at least five persons. Six persons that represented mass movements in their constituencies were selected as members of the Southern Africa Regional Steering Committee (SARSC).

Why host a Sub-Regional Forum?

The Southern African Social Forum (SASF) is intended to be an annual platform aimed at providing space for consolidating civil society perspectives on the sub-region's burning socio-economic, political and cultural issues prior to the African Social Forum (ASF).

The Southern African Social Forum (SASF) will take stock of various political, economic, legal and social developments of the sub-region and devise means by which governments and civil societies tackle these issues for a better Africa.

Where Will the Forum be Held?

The Southern African Social Forum (SASF) will be hosted in Lusaka, Zambia, 09-11 November 2003, at the Mulungushi Conference Centre.

During the Lusaka Forum, the Regional Coordinating Committee will choose the next venue for next year's SASF.

What is Expected From the Forum?

Overall Objective

*Reaffirm that the Southern African Social Forum (SASF) is an open meeting place for reflective thinking, democratic debate of ideas, formulation of proposals, free exchange of experiences and interlinking for effective action, by groups and movements of civil society that are opposed to neoliberalism and domination of the world by capital and any form of imperialism, and are committed to building a planetary society directed towards fruitful relationships among Humankind and between it and the Earth.*¹

Specific Objectives

As African people with similar problems, the Southern African Social Forum (SASF) will provide space for advocacy for a better quality of life and development for all. The Forum will more specifically:

- i) Provide the sub-regional a platform for social activists to strengthen popular democracy and mobilization
- ii) Critically challenge the status quo of abject poverty, gender inequality and discrimination, high level corruption, social insecurity, unconstitutional governance, HIV/AIDS pandemic, etc.
- iii) Build a regional solidarity network around issues of social, political and economical justice
- iv) create a loose coalition that will guarantee effective participation in the future Southern African Social Forum (SASF), the Africa Social Forum (ASF) and the World Social Forum (WSF).

¹ *This is based on World Social Forum principles, January 2003*
(www.worldsocialforum.org).

What Will Happen At The Forum?

Under the overall banner of “***Another Southern Africa is Possible***” the main activities of the Forum shall include the following:

- i) Opening plenary session with a a Guest of Honour on the first day, 9th November 2003
- ii) Plenary Keynote Speeches by renowned civil society activists for each theme, in order to guide the Forum’s activities. The plenaries will take place silmutaneously
- iii) Activities organized by participants on sub-themes: conferences, workshops, roundtables
- iv) DemonstrationsMarching
- v) Exhibitions
- vi) Markets of cultural wares
- vii) Concert with musicians Southern Africa
- viii) Community events

Themes

Overall topic “***Another Southern Africa is Possible***” is based on themes “Another Africa is Possible” for the Africa Social Forum, and “Another World is Possible” for the World Social Forum.

The sub-themes include: 1) *Labour*; 2) *Debt*; 3) *Gender*; 4) *Trade*; 5) *Education & Culture*; 6) *HIV/AIDS*; 7) *Land & Environment*; 8) *ICTS*; 9) *Peace and Security*; 10) *Agriculture & Food security*; 11) *Governance*.

Who is Organizing the Forum?

The Southern African Social Forum (SASF) is organized through loose coalitions of interested civil society organizations and individual activists operating within the Southern Africa comprising ... countries.

- i) Regional Coordinating Committee. Comprise representatives from the host country Zambia (4), Southern Africa Steering Committee (6) and thematic networks (3). The Committee meets regularly to guide the process of the SASF. A planning meeting was held in May 2003, which drew up a road map for the SASF process.

- ii) Host Committee is a coalition of local civil society organizations and individual activists, interested in the objectives of Africa Social Forum and the World Social Forum. It meets an average of three times per a month to implement the resolutions of the May 2003 SASF Planning Meeting. The Committee members carry out the SASF secretariat work on voluntary basis. It also has established task oriented committees: *Logistics Committee, Information and Media Committee, Resource Mobilization Committee.*
- iii) Host NGO. Women for Change are the focal point for the activities of the Southern African Social Forum (SASF) by providing office space and base for the secretariat, meeting place, and custody of the resources fundraised.

Who Participates?

Participation in the Southern African Social Forum (SASF) is open to:

- i) Organizations of social nature (i.e. generic and women's organizations working on a variety of issues)
- ii) Individuals with special interest to contribute to SASF objectives
- iii) Foundations supporting civil society activities on socio-economic, political, legal and gender issues that affect African societies.

How Do You Participate?

A. Application

- i) Download an application form from the website [www...](http://www.wfc.org.zm)
- ii) Write to the Secretariat for a Participation Application Form
- iii) Apply for Accommodation Form (optional)
- iv) Send all application forms and inquireies to:

SASF Secretariat: Women for Change

E-mail: wfc@zamnet.zm and sararoy@zamnet.zm

Website: www.wfc.org.zm

Physical Address: Plot 1801 Nchenja Road, Northmead, Lusaka

Postal Address: P.O. Box 33102, Lusaka, Zambia

Telephone: +260-1-224309

Fax: +260-1- 260-1-224296

“Another Southern Africa Is Possible”

PARTICIPATION APPLICATION FORM

SOUTHERN AFRICA SOCIAL FORUM
“Another Southern Africa Is Possible”

09-11 November 2003, Lusaka, Zambia

Please return the form by email or fax to:

SASF Secretariat, Women for Change,

E-mail: wfc@zamnet.zm and sararoy@zamnet.zm; Fax: +260-1- 224296

1. PERSONAL DETAILS

Name: _____

Your Position: _____

Country: _____

Address: _____

Tel: _____ **Fax** _____

Do you need a visa? Yes/No If yes, fax a copy of your passport)

2. PARTICIPATION AT THE FORUM

Which theme(s) are you interested in? _____

Are you organizing an activity? Yes/No

If yes: Send an abstract (500 words max.)

Which theme? _____

What activity? _____

No. of participants _____

Duration: _____

Equipment required (subject to availability) _____

3. ACCOMMODATION

Do you need accommodation? Yes/No

Do you want SASF to book for you? Yes/No

If yes, what type? Hotel/ Guesthouse/home; single/sharing (*circle*)

NB: Participants are responsible for payment of all bills.

4. TRANSPORT

What mode? _____

Date of Arrival _____ **Date of Departure** _____

If by Road: Border of entry _____ **Arrival Station** _____