

SECTION27 Press Release:

26 October 2010

FIRST NATIONAL CIVIL SOCIETY / LABOUR MOVEMENT INDABA ON BUILDING A UNITED STRATEGY FOR EQUALITY, SOCIAL JUSTICE AND SERVICE DELIVERY

On 27 and 28 October 2010, SECTION27 will be co-hosting a historic conference with the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). The conference will take place at the Birchwood Hotel. Media are welcome.

This meeting is unprecedented in democratic South Africa. It has come about from civil society's growing awareness that the fundamental human rights guaranteed by our Constitution – and socio-economic rights in particular – cannot be properly realised in the absence of economic policies that lead to decent work and the development of human capital.

As civil society, we recognise the need to participate in the debate COSATU has initiated on a new growth path for South Africa. In this conference, we plan to engage the trade union movement on how it could do more to lead and support the social justice campaigns for human rights. We do so mindful of the fact that trade unions and pro-poor civil society organisations are natural allies.

The conference is expected to have more than 350 delegates, including representatives from 44 civil society organisations and 12 COSATU-affiliated trade unions, as well as 30 national and provincial COSATU members and representatives from the Federation of Unions of South Africa (FEDUSA) and the National Council of Trade Unions (NACTU).

The focal point of the meeting will be commissions, where trade union and civil society representatives will jointly lead and participate in discussions on a social justice charter, economic policy, the rights to health and basic education, and a range of related issues.

A joint declaration, to be issued at the end of the conference, will address the parties' commitments towards a new era of collaboration and tangible, visible, sustained campaigns aimed at narrowing South Africa's horrible inequalities and realising the full promise of the Constitution.

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