

ALLIANCE PARTNERS AND CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS PREPARE FOR THE WORLD SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

This weekend, the African National Congress, its Alliance partners and other progressive civil society organisations held an important workshop to discuss our preparations for the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD).

It was attended ANC leadership from national, provincial and local level as well as comrades from COSATU, the SACP, SANCO, COSAS, SACC, SASCO, the ANC Youth League and ANC Women's League as well as numerous progressive NGO's. The Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, Mohammed Valli Moosa, briefed the workshop on the latest developments in the preparations for the WSSD. COSATU's Deputy General Secretary also addressed the workshop on emerging perspectives at the Global Civil Society Forum.

The meeting welcomed the WSSD as an important forum for the advance of the cause of social justice and poverty eradication, especially in Africa.

Achieving these goals requires that popular forces engage in a determined effort to transform the fundamentally inequitable relations that characterise our current world order. This means that progressives, both within government and in civil society, should coordinate their efforts to ensure that the WSSD does indeed address the important issues of poverty and underdevelopment.

In this vein the Alliance will be engaging in all forums of the WSSD including the UN intergovernmental conference, the Global Civil Society People's Forum, the Local Government Session as well as the conference of the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

We believe that, given its influence and prestige in all these forums, the progressive movement in South Africa will be well placed to advance the cause of people-centred development at the WSSD.

To support these efforts, the Alliance calls on all our people to join a National Day of People's Action for Sustainable Development on 31 August 2002.

On that day we will be joining civil society groups and progressive organisations from South Africa and around the world to march in solidarity with the struggle for sustainable development around the world.

The march will be held in Johannesburg and will highlight the following issues:

- 1) The WSSD should agree on clear programmes to eradicate poverty and underdevelopment, especially in Africa;
- 2) Peace, democracy and national liberation as a fundamental condition for sustainable development;
- 3) Sustainable development is not possible without a fairer world economy, especially of the countries of the South.

Outside of Johannesburg, our structures at local level will mobilise to hold local summits on sustainable development on 31 August. These will aim to address the problems of poverty and underdevelopment at a local level and mobilise our people to actually make these things happen where they live.

The Alliance is keenly looking forward to the Civil Society Global Forum, which will be an essential element of the WSSD process. This will be an historical opportunity for our movement to engage with global progressive movements around the issues of sustainable development and the demand for a fairer world order.

The workshop discussed logistical questions, especially in relation to the Forum. We are confident that all teething problems have now been overcome and look forward to our participation as an alliance in this important event. The workshop agreed to establish an Alliance coordinating committee composed of senior national leadership to ensure our coordinated participation in the WSSD and give maximum support to civil society processes.

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