

# **Communique**

## **for the Southern Africa Regional Civil Society Consultation**

### **to the Commission for Africa**

#### **13-14 December 2004**

We, the Southern African civil society participants of the Lusaka meeting of the Commission for Africa (CFA), having considered the *Action for a Strong and Prosperous Africa* document and participated in deliberations, express support and encouragement to the CFA process. We urge the Commission to take the African views expressed today forward to the Group of Eight industrialised countries and the EU to ensure that the process results in actions with agreed timeframes.

It is our conviction that now is the time for decisive action by Africa and developed countries, working in partnership, to address Africa's urgent development needs – within the framework of the African Union and its NEPAD development initiative.

Two days of intensive discussions brought forward many views that deserve to be brought to the attention of G8 nations and the European Union, which will feature in a coming report. However, certain key findings deserve special emphasis today:

- Africa's development challenges are interlinked and require a comprehensive, new partnership between the developed world on the one hand and African government, business and civil society on the other.
- There is a need for a new compact between Africa and the donor community. Under this compact African states agree to administer aid funds following sound principles of accountability and transparency. Donor nations agree to
  - focus aid on sustainable pro-poor growth that creates jobs and opportunities – particularly for small business and marginalized groups – alongside provision of appropriate safety nets;
  - African governments must have space to determine their own policy options and receive aid support for those policy decisions and development plans;
  - follow through on commitments to higher aid flows delivered consistently so that nations can properly plan multi-year national budgets;
  - eliminate capricious or destructive conditionalities that force African states either to liberalise or adopt economic measures contrary to development strategies adopted through democratic means.
- The G8, EU and African governments should give higher priority to HIV/AIDS, other communicable and non-communicable diseases and development of stronger health care systems.
- The G8, EU and African governments should not allow pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals to focus attention only on primary education to the exclusion of secondary, tertiary and vocational education.
- On trade, there needs to be real follow-through to protect Africa's emerging or vulnerable industries; elimination of all developed world agricultural subsidies and non-tariff trade barriers and promotion of regional trade within Africa.
- Agriculture is a vital sector that receives insufficient donor aid. Greater support is required for equitable land reform, rural development and infrastructure in line with the NEPAD Comprehensive Africa

Agriculture Development Programme. This should also include support in order to facilitate the access of small farmers and women entrepreneurs to local, regional and global markets.

- Lack of job growth, unemployment and the erosion of livelihoods are key causes of poverty in Africa. Aid must support job-creation strategies to generate sustainable livelihoods through public works programmes, micro-lending and farm support projects, among other initiatives.
- Africa's debt must be totally cancelled to free resources for development.
- Corporations often maintain substantial infrastructure and services and with the right policy encouragement could support national development by managing infrastructure, and in delivering training, education and health services. Aid donors should support the development of multi-stakeholder social responsibility forums and enforce internationally agreed codes of practice.
- Private and state enterprises are vital to African development and must be supported by building responsible enabling business environment - through improvements to commercial laws, courts, and other procedures – and an improved, more co-operative policy making mechanisms that allow business and civil society to make inputs to policies affecting the economy.
- Participants endorsed the commission's proposals to address conflict prevention, conflict resolution and post-conflict peace-building on the continent.
- Donor aid should provide support and capacity building so that civil society can meaningfully understand and participate in the African Peer Review Mechanism through a shadow peer review system. Aid should also support civil society, including faith based organisations, to engage effectively in other forms of monitoring adherence to good governance principles.
- Donor aid should offer broader support to civil society organisations, including capacity building and administrative support, while civil society organisations must abide by standards of transparency and accountability.
- Donors should strengthen corruption monitoring, enforcement and prosecution mechanisms, including civil society initiatives.
- There should be much greater emphasis in the Commission report and in aid policy to support effective management of natural resources and provision of sustainable clean water supplies for all.
- In all development plans and programmes, donors, national governments and NEPAD should give greater focus to women, the disabled and vulnerable, aged and youth.

We wish to thank the government and people of Zambia for having hosted our meeting and participating in our deliberations. We note their commitment to the CFA process through organising a national multi-stakeholder consultation. We would also like to express our thanks to the Southern African Regional Poverty Network for their successful organisation of this Southern Africa civil society regional consultation process.

Agreed in Lusaka, Zambia on 14 December 2004