

Action for Southern Africa (ACTSA) Strategy and Programme of Work: 2011

In 2011 ACTSA's overall goal will be to maintain and increase solidarity between Britain and Southern Africa in support of democracy, development, justice and rights.

We support a region free from poverty, based on justice, equality, human rights and dignity for all. We do this through partnership and solidarity with the people of the region.

We will inform people in the UK and internationally on Southern Africa and involve them in support of development of the region through campaigning, lobbying, publications, briefings, media work and delegations to and from southern Africa.

We will seek to influence decision-makers in Britain, Europe and internationally on policies that affect Southern Africa.

This programme and strategy of work is divided into 3 sections;

A. Country specific campaigns, activities, **B.** Major regional themes, **C.** How we work and develop ACTSA. Together with the motions approved at the ACTSA AGM 2010 it will provide the framework for ACTSA's plan for 2011.

ACTSA is a small organisation and cannot do everything. We will be flexible and prepared to adapt to developments from the region. At this stage we anticipate the areas from this Strategy and Programme of Work that will demand the most time from ACTSA staff will be; Zimbabwe, Swaziland, HIV/AIDS, Gender, Sustaining and Developing ACTSA.

A. Country Specific campaigns

1. Zimbabwe

ACTSA supports and campaigns for democracy, rights and development for Zimbabwe. We do this in solidarity with the people of Zimbabwe and the southern African region; based on the values that underpinned our predecessor organisation the Anti-Apartheid Movement of support for democracy, rights and justice. It is Zimbabweans who must lead and decide their future. Zimbabweans must be able to freely elect and hold their leaders to account. They have told us that to achieve this they want and need international solidarity.

We are guided by key partners including the **Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU)** and other leading civil society groups. Based on their input ACTSA will campaign for international support to assist reconstruction and recovery of Zimbabwe. ACTSA will seek to influence the policy of the UK Government and European Union towards Zimbabwe and monitor what they do and also the response of the wider international community. We will continue to work as part of the Zimbabwe Europe Network to maximise our ability to influence European policy on Zimbabwe.

The situation in Zimbabwe did not suddenly arise. (See ACTSA position paper on Zimbabwe on the ACTSA website www.actsa.org also available from the ACTSA office) The problems the country now faces are rooted in the history of Zimbabwe, in the failures and policies of the Mugabe/Zanu PF government and also those of international institutions. To provide effective support for the people of Zimbabwe we need to understand how and why Zimbabwe's political and economic crisis developed. The UK must play its role in addressing inequality and injustice from colonial rule especially on land and support an effective, transparent and equitable solution to land rights. 2010 marked the second anniversary of the Global Political Agreement and although this has brought some stability, Zimbabwe still faces many major challenges. 2011 may witness a referendum on a new constitution for Zimbabwe and elections. It is vital the processes for these enable the people of Zimbabwe to freely express their will.

The Zimbabwean diaspora have a crucial role to play in the reconstruction of their country. ACTSA supports the right of the Zimbabwean diaspora to work and receive an education in their country of residence and not to lose those rights if they return to Zimbabwe. ACTSA will monitor the situation of Zimbabweans living in Britain and where necessary work with our partners to defend these rights

The NEC recommends that ACTSA:

- continue to support democracy, rights, justice and development for Zimbabwe
- monitor the situation in Zimbabwe closely and provide regular updates and information
- deepen solidarity and support work involving trade unions and other civil society activists in Britain and Zimbabwe, especially through the ZCTU, working closely with the TUC and affiliated unions
- monitor and engage in lobbying, advocacy toward the UK government, EU and international organisations on Zimbabwe
- work with like minded organisations in the UK, across Europe and internationally to further these objectives.

Motion Approved at 2010 AGM.

This AGM notes:

1. Teachers in Zimbabwe have again become targets of political violence intended to silence them in the country's ongoing constitutional revision public outreach process.
2. "Operation Vharamuromo," Shona for "Operation Close Your Mouth" is intended to suppress non-ZANU-PF views.
3. The Progressive Teacher's Union of Zimbabwe (PTUZ) has appealed to the leaders of the three parties in the national unity government in power since early 2009 to protect teachers as the public comment process continues.
4. The PTUZ is also providing the affected teachers with professional counselling and with basic commodities.

This AGM believes:

1. That the continuing harassment and violence suffered by trades unionists and civil society activists is of grave concern.
2. Further financial support and political engagement with Zimbabwe must be predicated on a cessation of political violence and of arbitrary and politically motivated arrests.

This AGM resolves for ACTSA to:

1. Continue to campaign for European sanctions against those involved in human rights violations to be retained until our Zimbabwean and southern Africa partners advise otherwise.
2. Develop further solidarity and links between democratic organisations in Britain and Zimbabwe including within the trade union movements.

Dignity! Period

ACTSA will continue to raise the situation and issues confronting women in Zimbabwe. We will raise the needs and priorities of women. We will continue to call for the dignity of women in Zimbabwe to be upheld. We will in conjunction with the ZCTU, especially the ZCTU Women's Advisory Council, review our Dignity!Period campaign in Zimbabwe which has provided, at the request of the ZCTU, much needed sanitary protection to the women and girls of Zimbabwe.

The NEC recommends that ACTSA:

- continue to support the rights of Zimbabwean women and in particular their rights to dignity and freedom from violence

- review the Dignity! Period campaign with ZCTU and decide its future direction and emphasis in the changing political and economic context
- depending on the outcome of the review, organise events and activities to raise money for and promote awareness of the campaign.

2. Swaziland

ACTSA supports the Swazi people in their struggle for democracy and development. Swaziland has the highest HIV prevalence rate in the world. It bans political parties and seeks to repress any opposition from civil society, including the trade union movement. Despite this Swaziland has largely avoided international scrutiny. ACTSA will work to strengthen solidarity, increase awareness of the situation in Swaziland and encourage people to campaign and take action in support of democracy and development. ACTSA has a good relationship with the Swaziland trade union movement, the Swaziland United Democratic Front, the Swaziland Democracy Campaign and the NGO Swaziland for Positive Living (SWAPOL). We also have a strong relationship with the Congress of South Africa Trade Unions (COSATU) which is active on Swaziland and work closely with British trade unions on the country.

The NEC recommends that ACTSA:

- work to increase awareness of the struggle for democracy, human rights and justice in Swaziland in Britain and Europe
- campaign in support of democracy in Swaziland
- continue to develop links with the Swazi Trade Union movement, United Democratic Front, SWAPOL and other respected civil society organisations in Swaziland, regionally and internationally
- highlight the impact of HIV and AIDS on Swaziland
- support development in Swaziland which benefits the poor and marginalised.

3. Angola

Angola has emerged from one of Africa's longest wars. The legacy of colonial rule and civil war is one of devastation and destruction. Angola faces great challenges. It is a country of great potential. This is the key time and opportunity to ensure Angola's great resources benefit all, poverty is reduced, democracy built and rights upheld. It is domestic policy decisions and actions which are likely to be crucial. It is vital though that the international community does not turn its back on Angola, but instead looks to support its future development and contribute to the consolidation of peace and democracy.

The MPLA is the dominant political power and in September 2008 received over 80% of the vote in the parliamentary elections, which had a turnout of 87%. The constitution was subsequently changed so that the President is elected by the parliament.

Concern has been expressed by some organisations over the government's actions toward those raising issues of human rights and challenging government policy and actions. We will continue to highlight these issues in the Angola Monitor.

The NEC recommends that ACTSA:

- continue to inform its membership and wider constituency on Angola and lobby to ensure support internationally and nationally to consolidate democracy and promote development which benefits all Angolans
- continues to produce the Angola Monitor quarterly in both English and Portuguese
- consider means of deepening solidarity between people and groups in Britain and Angola e.g. link to the All Party Group on Angola if possible.

4. Mozambique

Mozambique is regarded by many as one of the success stories of southern Africa. It has endured a war of liberation and then a civil war fomented and sustained by Rhodesia and then apartheid South Africa. In terms of human development it is the second poorest (to DRC) in the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC). Its economy has been growing at over 8 per cent.

The NEC recommends that ACTSA:

- continue to support proposals for deepening solidarity between Britain, Europe and Mozambique
- support any proposed event on solidarity between Europe and Mozambique to the best of our ability.

5. Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)

The DRC is the largest and poorest country in the Southern African Development Community (SADC). It was not historically a frontline state in the struggle against apartheid. ACTSA therefore has not really focused on DRC. There are also a considerable number of aid and development agencies who work in and on DRC. ACTSA has limited resources and cannot do everything. ACTSA has produced up to date country profiles for each SADC member including DRC.

- The 2010 AGM agreed ACTSA should undertake a scoping exercise to establish who is doing what on the DRC; does ACTSA have something additional to offer?; to publicise what is happening there, to seek to work with others; any additional work to take into account ACTSA's resource constraints.

B. Major Regional Themes

6. HIV/AIDS

HIV/AIDS remains a critical issue for the people of southern Africa. It is the most affected region in the world by the pandemic and its impact is experienced by people, families, communities and the state. ACTSA will continue its campaigning, including lobbying, advocacy and public information work on HIV/AIDS.

We welcome the evidence that the pandemic has plateaued, albeit at extraordinarily high levels, and evidence that infection rates are beginning to fall. We also welcome improvements made across southern Africa in providing treatment to those who should receive it. However, we also recognise more needs to be done to ensure all who would benefit from treatment can access it, noting the international community must support governments in the region to achieve this.

In southern Africa, women are disproportionately affected by the pandemic; gender equality and women's empowerment are fundamental to reducing women's vulnerability to HIV and AIDS. Vertical transmission (also known as mother to child transmission) has been largely overlooked by UN and large agencies in the fight against HIV/AIDS. We will highlight that this transmission can be largely prevented if there is effective leadership and action internationally and nationally.

Effective action on HIV/AIDS requires breaking the silence and stigma that still surrounds it; strong national leadership by government based on including all key stakeholders including civil society groups; timely action and response internationally by donors and by the corporate sector.

The NEC recommends that ACTSA:

- campaign for universal access to prevention, treatment and care, noting this was due to be achieved by 2010 (Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 6b)
- campaign to get the international community to increase its support for HIV/ AIDS e.g. through a focus on the Global Fund set up to fight AIDS, TB and Malaria
- campaign for the rights of children with the target to halve infant HIV infections by 2014

- campaign for the rights of women, particularly in the area of sexual reproductive health, to be fully addressed, recognising that, “AIDS in Africa has a woman’s face.”
- campaign for world leaders and the UN to prioritise vertical transmission
- continue to build partnerships and coalitions in the UK and Europe as well as across southern Africa on HIV/AIDS

7. Gender and the advancement of women

Gender and the advancement of women are at the core of eradicating poverty in southern Africa. ACTSA has worked hard to ensure that gender is given priority in debates around HIV, trade and the larger development agenda. We have our campaign on Dignity for Zimbabwean women and gender is a major focus of our work on HIV/AIDS. We will push for practice to go beyond rhetoric, ensuring that gender and the advancement of women are key features of all our campaign work.

ACTSA has been at the fore of a campaign for the establishment of UN Women’s Agency. We welcome it is now being set up. We welcome the appointment of Michelle Bachelet to head UN Women. It is vital that the head of UN Women is able to challenge the status quo at the UN and internationally. ACTSA will campaign with others to ensure that UN Women is properly resourced and has significant influence within the UN and wider so it makes a positive and real difference for women and girls in southern Africa and around the world.

The NEC recommends that ACTSA should:

- continue its work campaigning for the UN Women’s Agency to be properly resourced; well led, effective and visible, mobilising public opinion and influencing decision takers
- mainstreams gender into all ACTSA’s work, promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women
- build links between our work on HIV and AIDS, trade and gender and campaign on violence against women
- work with women’s organisations campaigning for the same objectives.

8. Climate Change

Rapid man-made global warming will have the greatest impact on the most vulnerable in southern Africa. ACTSA recognises climate change as a developmental, social and economic issue which involves needs, rights and responsibilities. ACTSA has a position paper on Climate Change and Southern Africa. We will campaign to ensure the voice of those with the least resources are heard and that actions and solutions address the root causes of climate change and do not contribute to deepening poverty in Southern Africa. In 2011 South Africa will host a climate change summit (formally the Conference of the Parties COP to the Kyoto Climate Change Treaty) to assess progress in meeting the challenges posed by climate change. This meeting could offer the best opportunity to achieve a comprehensive, fair and binding international agreement on tackling the causes of man made global warming and dealing with its impact.

We will communicate the impact on the region of measures proposed to tackle climate change. We will engage with civil society including the trade union movement in Southern Africa and in the UK in these debates to inform and if necessary develop our position on Climate Change.

The NEC recommends that ACTSA:

- In dialogue with and guided by partners, key contacts in southern Africa and the UK develop its campaign and advocacy work on climate change linking it with poverty and rights
- Further develop its advocacy position on climate change and Southern Africa in the run up to the climate conference in South Africa (28 November- 9 December).

9. Trade Justice

Trade injustice remains one of the critical barriers to development. Fair trade can assist countries in their development and reduce dependency on international aid. ACTSA has worked to highlight the injustices of unfair trade and campaigned against the EU pressuring countries to sign Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) which force liberalisation of trade on them. Most southern Africa countries have signed an Interim EPA although South Africa and Namibia have refused. The context is one of a growing food crisis and increasing food poverty. We will aim to influence decision makers to ensure that the eradication of poverty and sustainable growth is central to trade negotiations and consider the impact of business speculation on food poverty.

The NEC recommends that ACTSA:

- continue to campaign with partners in southern Africa, UK and Europe to increase awareness of these issues and to build support for the campaign for trade justice
- keep a watching brief on trade negotiations between the EU and southern Africa and respond to developments
- promote fair trade of southern Africa goods and encourage local groups, members and supporters to promote fairly traded southern African products.

10. Corporate Accountability

Corporate accountability and the social impact of transnational companies is a critical issue in development. ACTSA calls for companies to be transparent, accountable and to exercise their power and wealth to: support ending poverty, reduce inequality and discrimination and promote human rights and development. ACTSA has a history of holding companies to account, most notably through successful action taken against Cape plc. ACTSA though has limited resources.

The NEC recommends that ACTSA:

- should keep a watching brief on corporate accountability, transparency and social responsibility
- in close consultation with the trade union movement in the region and Britain should explore best and worst practice case studies from the region with a view to publicising these.

11. Land

The ownership and control of land was a major issue in the struggle for national liberation and against colonialism and imperialism. It is still a major issue with poverty seemingly endemic, increasing food insecurity, vulnerability and a world wide food crisis. It is clearly a major issue in Zimbabwe. The question of land holding in Zimbabwe was never satisfactorily addressed in the independence settlement and enabled President Mugabe to present his government as being targeted by the west for seeking to right an historic injustice. It is clearly an issue across southern Africa not just Zimbabwe. It needs to be addressed effectively by national governments, SADC and the international community, who cannot simply ignore their responsibility for this legacy. We now have a position paper on Land in Southern Africa: Justice Denied? and will keep this under review.

The NEC welcomes:

- ACTSA has a position paper on Land in Southern Africa and notes our position paper on Zimbabwe includes a section on land

The NEC recommends that ACTSA:

- continue to highlight the urgent need for sustainable development, the right to land and the right to food
- develop relationships with key partners, organisations in southern Africa to have a dialogue on the land issue.

C. Sustaining and Developing ACTSA

12. Renewing and Developing Solidarity

In 2010 South Africa held a most successful World Cup. It has demonstrated what can be achieved in Africa. It defied and overcame those who sought to portray a very negative stereotype view of the country, region and continent. This is a cause for celebration. There is legacy, some tangible; of improved infrastructure and facilities, perhaps more important is the non tangible legacy of transcending division, of not just proclaiming unity but demonstrating it and of hope and optimism. The 2010 World Cup was never going to be a panacea to solve the many challenges South Africa faces of poverty, gross inequality, of creating decent jobs, homes, health services and education for all, of capacity to deliver.

Motion Approved at 2010 AGM: “This AGM:

1. Congratulates the government and people of South Africa on the success of the World Cup.
2. Notes the importance of sporting events in building links and solidarity between countries and their peoples.
3. Requests the NEC to investigate the possibilities for using the Olympic Games in 2012, the Commonwealth Games in 2014 and the Cultural Olympiad to build solidarity between the UK and the countries of Southern Africa.”

On 8 January 2012 the African National Congress (ANC) will celebrate the 100th anniversary of its founding. It is the oldest liberation movement in Africa. ACTSA has a relationship with the ANC due to the contacts made by our predecessor organisation the Anti-Apartheid Movement and that ACTSA moved into what was the ANC London Office in 1994.

Motion Approved at 2010 AGM:“This AGM:

1. Notes that 2012 sees the 100th anniversary of the founding of the African National Congress;
2. Congratulates the ANC on its successes during the last 100 years both as a liberation movement and subsequently as a party of government;
3. Believes that the coincidence of this anniversary year with the Olympic Games in the U.K. and the start of the Cultural Olympiad may create opportunities to mark the centenary in ways that bring its significance to the attention of a wider audience, and encourage wider support and understanding for the achievements and needs of Southern Africa as the region still works to overcome the legacy of apartheid;
4. Instructs the NEC to investigate how best to mark this significant anniversary.”

13. Grassroots Development

Our ability to campaign and to maintain our core levels of financial support depends upon retaining and expanding our supporter base of individuals, groups and affiliates.

We will do this by looking at ways to recruit new members and supporters, and then how we can retain all supporters and members – by communications including ACTSA News, appeals, website, and email bulletins. We will provide more opportunities for people to actively get involved in our campaigns – including campaign cards, invites to events, e-actions. ACTSA has active groups, including ACTSA Scotland and ACTSA Bristol and will continue to encourage the establishment and development of ACTSA groups.

We will work to encourage as many organisations as possible to affiliate to us for 2011. We will also look to invite organisations not yet affiliated to us. We will provide opportunities for affiliates to actively campaign with us and ensure they receive regular information about our work.

ACTSA will continue to work closely with affiliated and partner organisations on joint campaigns and individual projects recognising our common roots and shared aims.

Local Authority Action for Southern Africa (LAACTSA): We will ask LAACTSA what practically they plan to do to strengthen local government and local delivery of services in southern Africa and how we may assist them.

Community Heart: ACTSA has a Memorandum of Cooperation with Community Heart and continues to develop our relationship and partnership.

Canon Collins Trust (CCT). We will maintain our good relationship and willingness and wish to cooperate with CCT.

Building on our links and work to date, we want to build and deepen the work we have done with Unite, Unison, PCS and the TUC and develop our relationships with other unions, such as the teaching/education unions. We will continue to develop links with the National Union of Students, and secure funds for another youth and student delegation to southern Africa and further develop their support for all of our campaigning agenda.

ACTSA will aim to increase our support in the student constituency.

We will ensure our database is accurate and up to date.

The NEC recommends that ACTSA:

- nurture its base to retain and actively seek to increase the number of supporters and members
- continue to improve its communications with supporters
- provide materials for its supporters to get involved in ACTSA campaigns
- develop its work with trade unions, maintain and if possible increase the number of trade union affiliates
- increase its profile amongst students and youth
- organise delegations to and host delegations/visitors from southern Africa to increase support for ACTSA's aims and objectives
- explore how we further develop how we use digital media.

14. Raising funds

ACTSA's principal source of income is from our membership and maintaining and increasing this support is a priority. There are other sources of income, the trade union movement, Government funds, trusts and foundations and the corporate sector and for and in 2011 we will be looking at how to increase income through these fundraising streams.

The NEC recommends that ACTSA:

- explore the possibility of applying for charitable status or establishing a charitable arm
- review and apply the fundraising strategy
- prioritise the consolidation of core funding through members, affiliates and supporters
- send out regular direct mail appeals throughout the year
- hold an annual fundraising dinner
- raise institutional funding to support several speaker tours, events, publications etc
- make funding applications to government, foundations, trusts, corporate sector for defined education/campaigning projects, in line with our ethical funding policy to support this strategy and programme of work
- seek to increase the level of sponsorship/income obtained from "events" such as ACTSA runners in London Marathon and volunteers at Workers Beer Company bars at festivals
- improve ways to raise money online and through email communications.