

Hosted by the Law Trust Chair in Social Justice



Social Justice

Inaugural Social Justice Summit and International Conference

SUMMARY REPORT



Stellenbosch University
29 August – 31 August 2019



INTRODUCTION

The Law Trust Chair in Social Justice hosted the inaugural Social Justice Summit and International Conference from 29 August – 31 August 2019 in Stellenbosch. Approximately 250 stakeholders, many of them leaders from our society, academia, business, the media, a former President, former politicians and senior public servants attended this groundbreaking inter-disciplinary social justice gathering.



The overarching theme “Leveraging the Sustainable Development Goals and the Global Human Rights Agenda to Advance Social Justice” unpacked diverse thematic areas including Land, Economic Inclusion and Wellbeing, Education, Data Analytics and African Futures, Access to Justice and the Rule of Law, Peace and Social Cohesion, Health, Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability, Politics and Democracy and Gender and Other Intersectional Exclusions.

The ceremony was opened and the scene for social justice set, with the national anthem performed by the Certificate Programme Students of Stellenbosch University (SU) and Makupula Secondary School Choir.



PURPOSE

Nationally, continentally and globally, we are faced with interwoven challenges. At the continental level, Africa’s development agenda is encapsulated in the African Union’s (AU) Agenda 2063, which set out a programme to create the “Africa we want”.

Globally, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set by the United Nations provide a useful outline of societal challenges to focus on – with its global drive to “end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity”.

The first-day summit was focused on South Africa and unpacked the various dimensions of social justice, the pathways available to address social injustice and to leverage the opportunities presented by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the National Development Plan (NDP) and the Constitution.

The two-day academic conference, a South African first, addressed the question: To what extent can academia advance the global Social Justice Agenda? Current social justice research, linked to the SDGs and the global Human Rights Agenda was presented and discussed at parallel roundtable sessions.

BACKGROUND

Pope Paul IV said it so eloquently: “If you want peace, you must work for justice”. Nelson Mandela’s generation’s gift to South Africa was freedom and democracy. What will our gift to future generations and ourselves be? The Law Trust Chair in Social Justice at Stellenbosch University believes that the greatest imperative of our time is social justice as a basis for sustainable peace.

What often seems impossible is often possible if pursued purposefully, impact consciously, and with a commitment to join hands with like-minded patriots and global citizens to ensure that the constitutional and universal declaration’s promises of equal enjoyment of all human rights for all is realised for all. As long as there is injustice somewhere there cannot be sustainable peace.

“Every generation has its great challenge. Ours is climate change and social justice. The two must be addressed together. We must treat them both as an emergency.” – Prof Thuli Madonsela

“An injury to one is an injury to all. As long as there is injustice somewhere, there can’t be sustainable peace anywhere. We are here today because, like the UN, we believe that no one should be left behind as society and the world progresses into the future. We are here to decide as part of the summit where we are in South Africa with regards to social justice. If we work together, then poverty will be nothing against us; it will be history. It will take all of us to build a society where there is a place for everyone in all areas of our lives,” said Prof Thuli Madonsela.



Well-known political journalist and programme director, Cathy Mohlahlana, pointed out that the Law Trust Chair in Social Justice has taken the first step in achieving the objective of bringing national and international academia, policy makers and civil society voices together in the sharing of ideas for advancing social justice as a national and global imperative. The sentiments among speakers highlighted a general frustration with the tardiness in dealing with economic and social ills that still haunt South Africa after 25 years of democracy.

THE SOCIAL JUSTICE M-PLAN

THE SOCIAL JUSTICE M-PLAN

Prof Thuli Madonsela shared the Musa Plan for Social Justice (Social Justice M-Plan) with those in attendance. The Social Justice M-Plan aims to place social justice and equality at the centre of fixing South Africa's multiple concurrent crises. It takes as its inspiration the Marshall Plan that served to rebuild Europe after the Second World War. In a South African context, the "M" stands for Palesa Musa, a woman who was arrested as a youth in 1976 and has lived through all our tumultuous times.

Prof Thuli Madonsela:

"I wanted to give (South Africa's M-Plan) the face of someone who reminds us where we came from, where we are and where we still need to be."

The Social Justice M-Plan seeks to coordinate systematic and integrated academic, business and broader civil society input to support government efforts towards breaking the back of poverty and inequality. It is also an avenue for giving effect to Stellenbosch University's social impact objective. The Social Justice M-Plan aims to mobilise evidence and data, boost civil society and mobilise resources behind a shared quest for social justice.

KEY RESULT AREAS OF THE SOCIAL JUSTICE M-PLAN

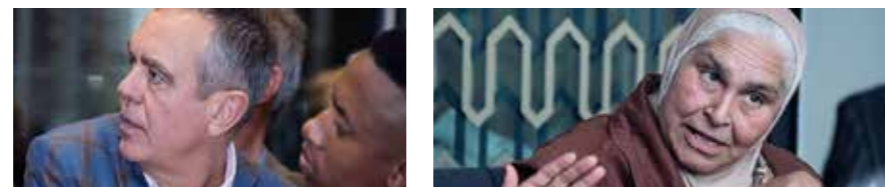
1. Catalyse social justice and SDG 16-responsive law and policy reform through leveraging data analytics
2. Foster social accountability and social cohesion through legal, human rights and democracy awareness and empowerment initiatives
3. Mobilise societal, corporate and international support and resources towards accelerated reduction of poverty and inequality by 2030
4. Encourage leadership amongst all participants so as to contribute to a capable state



THE THEORY OF CHANGE UNDERPINNING THE SOCIAL JUSTICE M-PLAN

The Social Justice M-Plan moves from the premise that despite numerous transformation policies and resource investments since the dawn of democracy, the poverty and inequality gap has been increasing due to the exponential impact of structural accumulated socio-economic advantages and disadvantages among historically privileged and oppressed groups respectively; and misaligned policy responses. The theory of change behind the Social Justice M-Plan is that poverty and inequality are systems problems and require a systems approach to change.

Prof Madonsela: "it is not a one-size-fits-all because people don't come in one size."



OBJECTIVES ACHIEVED

- Bring national and international academics, policy-makers and civil society voices together in the sharing of ideas for advancing social justice as a national and global imperative
- Identify the nature of social justice
- Explore the pathways available to address social injustices globally
- Leverage opportunities presented by the SDGs, national constitutions and development plans in national and international contexts
- Share information on research that is undertaken
- Source information for the Social Justice hub at Stellenbosch University
- Form an alliance that works in a coordinated way to advance social justice

SUMMIT WELCOMING ADDRESS



In his opening address, Prof Wim de Villiers, Rector and Vice-Chancellor of Stellenbosch University, pledged the full support of the institution. He stressed the importance of the Social Justice M-Plan and said that it needed a strong coalition that sought to end poverty and drastically reduce structural inequality.

We strive to be "relevant to the people of our country, continent and the rest of the world, making meaningful contributions that will take humanity forward"....to become a "transformed and integrated academic community that celebrates critical thinking, promotes debate and is committed to democracy, human rights and – very importantly – social justice"

In focusing on the role of higher education in advancing social justice, he stressed Stellenbosch University's commitment to advance knowledge in service of society. "This is aligned with the Association of African Universities' view that "development goals will only be achieved if we have a flourishing higher education sector."

"Societal challenges can't be solved in isolation. We have representatives from all of these sectors here. We must all do our part – universities, the rest of civil society, the state and also businesses [...] We have made a commitment to be a force for good in the transformation of South Africa into a place of opportunity for all, a place of shared prosperity and a place where there's sustainable peaceful coexistence," said Prof de Villiers.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS



Minister in the Presidency Jackson Mthembu delivered the keynote address on behalf of President Cyril Ramaphosa who was away in Japan. Mthembu's first words were to pledge to work together with all involved in the Social Justice M-plan: "We are a government not afraid of new ideas." In commending the Stellenbosch University for elevating this issue in our national discourse." He called for "a social compact on social justice".

"We commend Stellenbosch University for elevating this issue around social justice in our national discourse. We need more of these engagements. This summit and conference is timely for us to have a microscopic look at the justice in terms of the distribution of wealth, opportunities and privileges within our society. As we commemorate 25 years of our democratic dispensation, it is more compelling for us to examine the way in which human rights are manifested in the everyday lives of people at every level of our society".



"Leaving government as the sole proprietor of the social justice project is limited. Everyone has to do his or her part. It is important to elevate the voice of the poor to plot the way forward. We look forward to seeing how this summit will help come up with more solutions to help alleviate poverty and inequality".

METHODOLOGY AND SUMMARY

Keynote plenary

“Advancing Social Justice as a National and Global Imperative”



This panel brought together a strategic mix of personalities, representing a wide range of interest groups, from top academics to business and even a former President. Pali Lehohla (Former Statistician-General, and Research Resident Advisor, 22 ON SLOANE), Prof Jonathan Jansen (Distinguished Professor, Faculty of Education, Stellenbosch University, former President FW de Klerk, the late Ben Turok (Director of the Institute for African Alternatives (IFAA) and Editor of New Agenda), Busisiwe Mavuso (CEO, Business Leadership South Africa) and Nicky Newton-King (CEO of the JSE) all supported the Social Justice M-Plan and came to a mutual understanding of the precariousness and complexity of inequalities in our country. All agreed with the late Ben Turok’s description of the country being in a kind of national stalemate or paralysis in many areas of public policy and where national politics and economic decision-making are concerned. Many continuities from the legacies of apartheid have not been addressed.

After reading a formal statement, De Klerk apologised for apartheid and emphasised that being white was not a licence for preferential treatment. Jansen talked about the deficiencies in our education system, while Lehohla gave examples of failed social policy and highlighted the exclusion of any reference to poverty or inequality in the economic policy presented by Finance Minister Tito Mboweni. According to Lehohla: “unemployment and poor education contribute to 66% of poverty”. Both Newton-King and Mavuso were critical of the indecisiveness of the government in dealing with the problems in state-owned enterprises and the public service, but emphasised their commitment to social transformation.

Newton-King: “We have to question whether capitalism is the right model to deliver social justice at the moment [...] business needed a social license to operate”.

All agreed that “it is possible to come to a strong consensus”.



LUNCHTIME KEYNOTE ROUNDTABLE



Passionate discussions centred on the promises contained in our Constitution and how to realise them.

An informal lunchtime conversation moderated by Prof Thuli Madonsela shared ideas around advancing social justice as a national and global imperative.



This unusual panel included such diverse personalities as Mshai Mwangola (Chairperson, Board of Trustees, Uraia Trust, Member of the Board, The Elephant); Helen Zille (senior policy fellow, South African Institute of Race Relations and former Premier of the Western Cape); Prof Adam Habib (Vice-Chancellor, University of the Witwatersrand); Prof Pierre de Vos (Claude Leon Foundation Chair in Constitutional Governance, University of Cape Town); Ashraf Garda (Chief Driver of the Champion South Africa movement and media host); Dr Wilhelm Verwoerd (South African political philosopher, Stellenbosch University and social activist) and Siki Mgabdeli (financial journalist, media presenter and producer).



THEMATIC SOCIAL JUSTICE ROUNDTABLES

Moderated by well-known media personalities and journalists such as Karyn Maughn, Siki Mgbadeli, Solly Moeng and Ashraf Garda, these parallel sessions aimed to unpack key issues within diverse thematic areas, identified by experts in the various fields. Key individuals, identified beforehand, acted as rapporteurs for each thematic area at the end of the day.



Poetry/prose presentation and closing

Dr Azille Coetzee (Postdoctoral researcher, SARChi Chair in Gender Politics, Stellenbosch University and author) closed the day with a moving excerpt from her acclaimed memoir *In my vel:'n Reis*

“Njabulo Ndebele argues that Afrikaner whiteness became more unreflective and morally sterile as apartheid wormed its way into the centre of its moral fibre. Ndebele urges white South Africans to write a new chapter in world history by declaring that the dignity of the white body cannot be separated from the dignity of the black body. Ndebele argues that white South Africans now have the opportunity to redeem the shameful heart of whiteness by participating in the restoration of the dignity of the black body. Ndebele writes: ‘Putting itself at risk, it will have to declare that it is home now, sharing in the vulnerability of other compatriot bodies. South African whiteness will declare its dignity as inseparable from the dignity of black bodies.’”



Summit outcome

In a declaration adopted at the end of the first day’s summit, delegates expressed their concern about ongoing poverty in South Africa, the inequality still experienced by women, and a deterioration in social cohesion in our country. They called for accelerated change and committed to joining hands to reverse disparities in all sectors of society. Those attending the conference the following two days resolved to form a coalition of universities, researchers and civil society that would work in a coordinated way to advance social justice.



REFLECTIONS



Summit There was consensus that we:

1.

Commit ourselves to join hands in advancing the constitutional promise, human rights and Sustainable Development Goals in a manner that redresses imbalances of the past while ending poverty and ensuring no one is left behind regarding full participation in all aspects of the economy and social life;

2.

Commit to reverse racialised, gendered and other inherited and emerging disparities in the economy, education, health, science, environment, technology, infrastructure, and all areas of life; and

3.

Agree to the proposed Social Justice M-Plan to accelerate change focusing on

- policy reform through data analytics to ensure inclusive social impact;
- mobilising society towards social accountability and social cohesion;
- everybody showing leadership and contributing to a capable state; and
- resource mobilisation from society and international friends to fund accelerated social change.



Inaugural Social Justice Summit Declaration

29 August 2019

Hazendal Wine Estate



We the participants at the Inaugural Social Justice Summit gathered here at Hazendal Wine Estate, among us stakeholders from government, business, the community, legal profession, academia and the media:

- reaffirm our commitment to the Constitution and the vision it has for South Africa to emerge from the ashes of colonialism, apartheid, patriarchy, xenophobia and related injustices of the past;
- believe that South Africa belongs to all its people and that the country has enough room and resources for all to rise to the level of great potential of all persons and improved quality of life in a society based on human dignity, the achievement of equality and expanded frontiers of freedom for all without discrimination on any of the grounds in the Constitution, the African Charter on Human and People's Rights and the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, among others;
- note with deep concern chronic levels of poverty and inequality marked by patterns of socio-economic exclusion for many and extreme racial, gender and age disparities in socio-economic opportunities in South Africa, primarily along the contours of the unjust laws and policies that sought to create a system of white privilege and black disadvantage under colonialism and apartheid;
- further note the persistent gap regarding equal enjoyment of all rights and freedoms by women, compounded by the intersection of gender and factors such as disability, age, urban rural divide, township-suburb divide, nationality, sexual orientation and other forms of human diversity that have been historically leveraged to oppress and exclude on the basis of difference;
- further note the escalation of fractured relationships and deterioration in social cohesion, particularly on grounds of race and class as well as ceaseless patterns of violence, particularly against women, children and older persons mostly in isolated rural residences such as villages and farms;
- further note that the TRC did great work in exposing physical and psychological abuses in the security sector but did not deal with social, economic and psychological impact of apartheid and that other efforts since then have not adequately addressed the systemic impact of past injustices;
- believe that as long as there is injustice somewhere there can't be sustainable peace anywhere;
- further believe that the Constitution offers a transformative framework for healing the divisions of the past by redressing power and resource imbalances in society and promoting social cohesion;
- further believe that there is a need for a more accelerated pace in advancing social justice leveraging opportunities created by the Fourth Industrial Revolution, focusing on poverty and inequality and that this requires a social compact on social justice with all hands on deck between government, business, society and the international community; and
- are convinced that an integrated action plan that seeks to provide a systems approach to change, focusing on policy reform, public participation in strengthening democracy, including eradicating corruption, sharing resources and promoting social cohesion and resources mobilisation, is needed.

We, thus hereby:

- commit ourselves to join hands in advancing the constitutional promise, human rights and Sustainable Development Goals in a manner that redresses imbalances of the past while ending poverty and ensuring no one is left behind with regard to full participation in all aspects of the economy and social life;
- commit to reverse racialised, gendered and other inherited and emerging disparities in the economy, education, health, science, environment, technology, infrastructure and all areas of life; and
- agree to the proposed Social Justice M-Plan to accelerate change focusing on
 - policy reform through data analytics to ensure inclusive social impact;
 - mobilising society towards social accountability and social cohesion;
 - everybody showing leadership and contributing to a capable state; and
 - resource mobilisation from society and international friends to fund accelerated social change.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

The two-day conference was directed by well-known political journalist Karyn Maughan and drew high-level academics from several national and international universities.



Opening address

Professor Hester Klopper (Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Strategy and Internationalisation, Stellenbosch University) opened the conference proceedings and emphasised “that social justice entails moving from apathy to empathy and that empathy should lead to action”.



Keynote address



University of the Witwatersrand Vice-Chancellor Prof Adam Habib pointed out the key dilemmas faced by South Africans in achieving social justice, including the trust deficit between the 1% of the rich and the poor. In keeping with the theme of the conference, he touched on the many ways in which South African universities could be the driving force behind achieving both equality and sustainable growth. According to Professor Habib, the value of pragmatism should not be seen as the enemy of social justice: “We operate in a world that exists, not the world that we wish existed. We need to deal with the problems of the present while considering the potential of the future”. He emphasised that the poor will not engage successfully until the elite put something concrete on the table.

Plenary

Leveraging the Sustainable Development Goals and the Global Human Rights Agenda to Advance Social Justice



This plenary was moderated by Prof Sakhela Buhlungu (Vice-Chancellor of the University of Fort Hare). Acclaimed academics included: Prof Sandra Liebenberg (HF Oppenheimer Chair in Human Rights Law, Stellenbosch University); Prof Christof Heyns (Professor of Human Rights Law and Member of the UN Human Rights Committee); Prof Ingrid Woolard (Dean, Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences, Stellenbosch University); and Dr Nomafrench Mbombo (Western Cape MEC for Health). Diverse topics dealt with land reform; greater convergence of economic, social and cultural rights and the SDGs; universal health coverage (UHC) and national health insurance (NHI); freedom from violence and the right to life; and reducing income inequality in South Africa.



POSTER PRESENTATIONS

Poster presentations focusing on social justice approaches to education, mental health, early childhood development and understanding youthful drug use greeted the delegates during lunchtime.



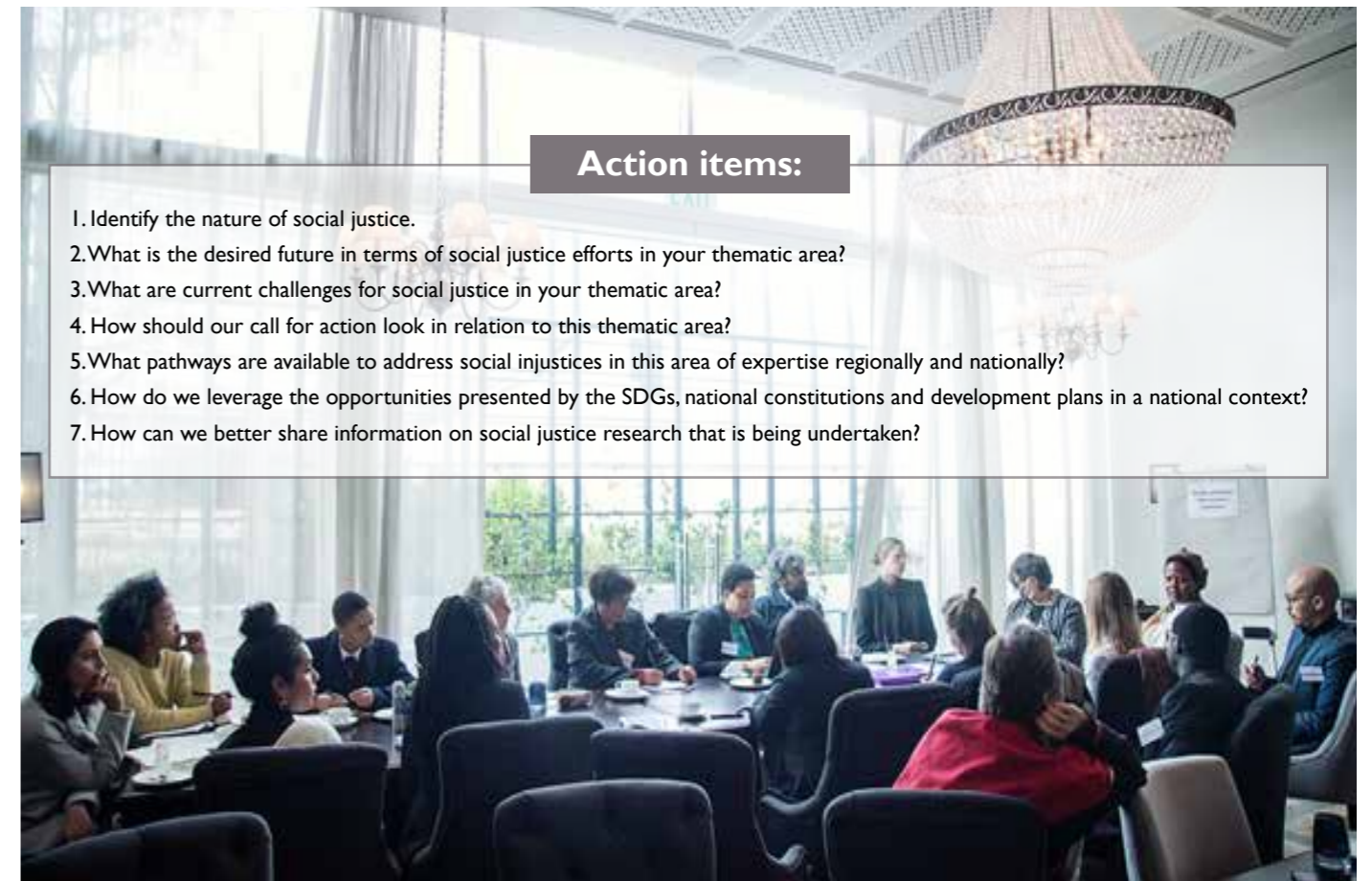
Parallel panels

Academic papers of 15 minutes each were presented on thematic areas centred around the SDGs. Rapporteurs were identified from each group to report back on conference proceedings on day two relating to information sharing and alliances formed.



Action items:

1. Identify the nature of social justice.
2. What is the desired future in terms of social justice efforts in your thematic area?
3. What are current challenges for social justice in your thematic area?
4. How should our call for action look in relation to this thematic area?
5. What pathways are available to address social injustices in this area of expertise regionally and nationally?
6. How do we leverage the opportunities presented by the SDGs, national constitutions and development plans in a national context?
7. How can we better share information on social justice research that is being undertaken?



<p>Employment & inclusive economic development</p> <p>1 NO POVERTY</p> <p>8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH</p>	<p>Food security & health</p> <p>2 ZERO HUNGER</p> <p>3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING</p>	<p>Environment & sustainability</p> <p>11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES</p> <p>13 CLIMATE ACTION</p>
<p>Resources & infrastructure</p> <p>6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION</p> <p>7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY</p>	<p>Safety, security & good governance</p> <p>16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS</p> <p>17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS</p>	<p>14 LIFE BELOW WATER</p> <p>15 LIFE ON LAND</p>
<p>9 INDUSTRY INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE</p> <p>12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION</p>	<p>Education for all</p> <p>4 QUALITY EDUCATION</p>	<p>Social & Gender Justice</p> <p>5 GENDER EQUALITY</p> <p>10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES</p>

Resolution adopted by the Inaugural International Social Justice Conference 2019

Hazendal Wine Estate



Leveraging the Sustainable Development Goals and the Global Human Rights Agenda to Advance Social Justice

The Participants,

Mindful of the reality that as long as there is injustice somewhere there cannot be sustainable peace and that the greatest imperative of our time is social justice as a basis for sustainable peace, whilst acknowledging the inherent worth, value and dignity of the national environment,

Recognising the constitutional responsibility to advance equality, human dignity, freedom and social justice,

Concerned about the systemic disparities that continue to pervade society and the resulting deterioration in social cohesion and environmental sustainability,

Note that socio- economic disparities is primarily as a result of the intersecting grounds of race, gender and class, as well as ceaseless patterns of violence and environmental abuse, and within a common understanding of the psychological and emotional trauma of a large majority of our people,

Acknowledge the important role of academia and civil society in advancing the Global Agenda for Social Justice

Welcoming the initiative of the Law Trust Chair in Social Justice, Faculty of Law at Stellenbosch University in leveraging the SDGs as a catalyst for social justice change,

1. *Decide* to give life to the constitutional promise of social justice and to draw on the lived experiences of the people,
2. *Encouraged* by the commitment and willingness of participants to join hands to continue with research and dialogue, even where we disagree, to ensure that the constitutional and universal declaration's promises of equal enjoyment of all human rights for all, is realised for all,
3. *Invite* academia and civil society to expand our common understanding on how to reduce poverty and inequality so that we can move the social justice discourse forward in a manner that is in line with the constitutional objectives of a united South Africa anchored in shared humanity and prosperity,
4. *Agree to:*
 - explore the pathways available to address social injustices globally;
 - leverage opportunities presented by the SDGs, national constitutions and development plans in national and international contexts;
 - share information on research that is undertaken;
 - source information for the Social Justice hub at Stellenbosch University;
 - form a coalition of universities, researchers and civil society that works in a coordinated way to advance social justice;
 - focus on a multi-sectoral approach for a cohesive future; and
 - endorse the Social Justice M-Plan.
5. *Request* the Law Trust Chair in Social Justice, Stellenbosch University, to convene yearly social justice conferences.

1st Plenary Meeting
31 August 2019

DAY 2: WELCOMING KEYNOTE

“As universities, we create a wealth of knowledge and the idea is to then share it with society. I use *wealth* here very deliberately and as an acronym for what we in fact do, what our research focus is at the university and how we apply that. The **W** in the **WEALTH** acronym is for **w**ater, the **E** for **e**nergy, specifically renewable energy, including water, energy and agriculture, because with agriculture comes food security, **L** is for **l**and, **T** for **t**echnology and **H** for **h**ealth.”

– Prof Eugene Cloete (Vice-Rector for Research, Innovation and Postgraduate Studies at Stellenbosch University)



Outcome

Academia was pulled into the social justice arena and persuaded of the need to mobilise research and evidence in the quest for ideas and alternatives.

This was codified in a resolution. As a result, the Law Trust Chair's database on social justice practitioners, centres, research and publications is growing and the number of participants in the social justice hub and thematic think-tanks is increasing.

1. Agreed to:

- explore the pathways available to address social injustices globally;
- leverage opportunities presented by the SDGs, national constitutions, and development plans in national and international contexts;
- share information on research that is undertaken;
- source information for the Social Justice hub at Stellenbosch University;
- form a coalition of universities, researchers and civil society that works in a coordinated way to advance social justice;
- focus on a multi-sectoral approach for a cohesive future; and
- endorse the Social Justice M-Plan.

2. Requested the Law Trust Chair in Social Justice, Stellenbosch University to convene yearly social justice conferences.





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“We operate in a world that exists, not the world that we wish existed. We need to deal with the problems of the present while considering the potential of the future”

– Prof Adam Habib



Report prepared by Prof Thuli Madonsela and Marna Lourens

