

5TH

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ARTSCAPE | CAPE TOWN

INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL JUSTICE CONFERENCE

Social Justice and the Sustainable Development Goal on ZERO HUNGER

Statement and Pledges



Hosted by:
**The Centre for Social Justice
and Stellenbosch University**



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REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



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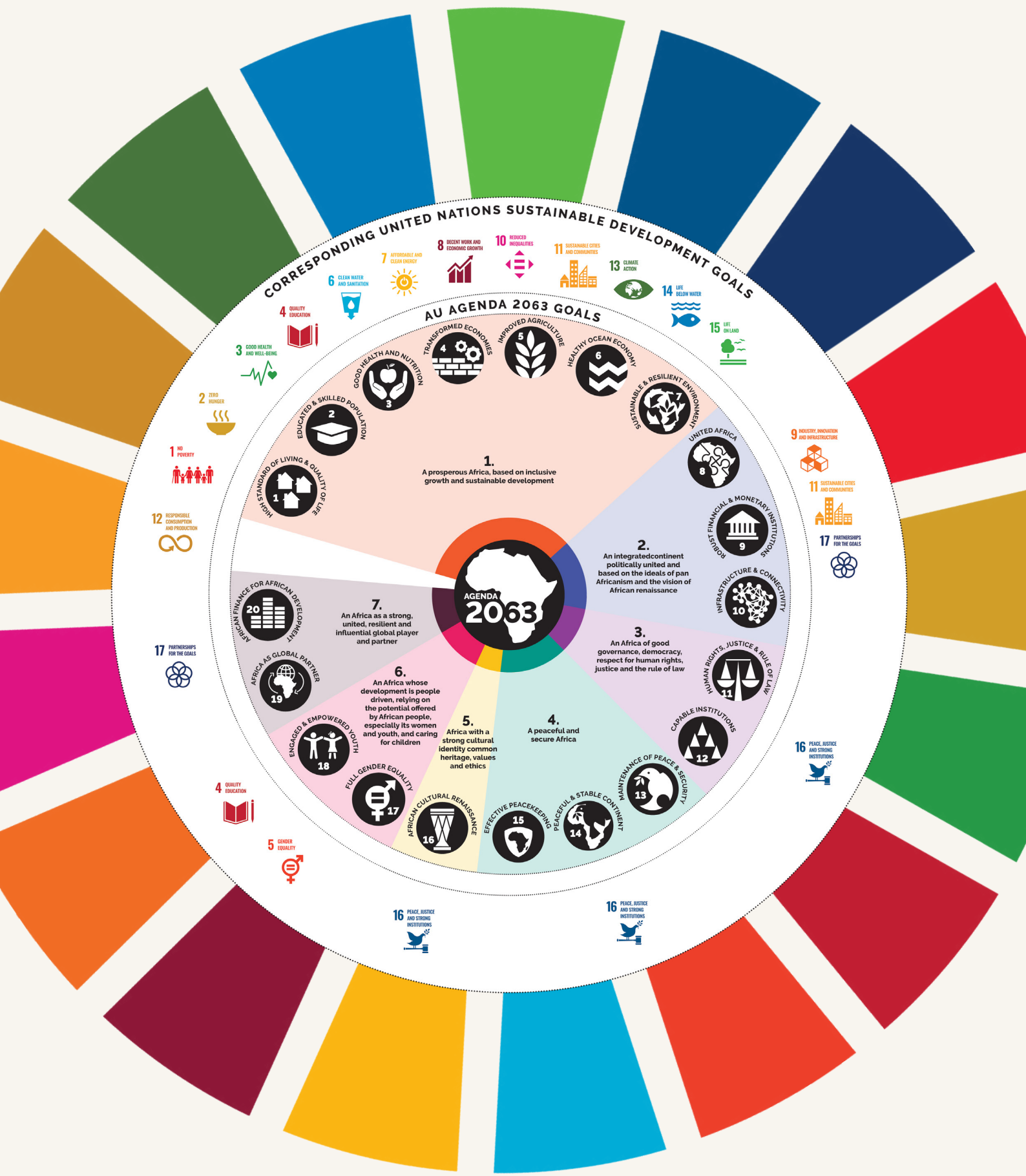


Chair in Science and
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With credit to SDG/2063 Impact Hub (CCA at SUI)

Cape Town Statement and Pledges (Statement and Pledges on Social Justice and Sustainable Development Goal 2 [Zero Hunger], adopted at the 5th International Social Justice Conference, Artscape Theatre Centre, Cape Town, South Africa on 17 October 2024)

WE THE PARTICIPANTS, drawn from international and local academics, lawyers, judges, civil society, diplomats, development agencies and state-based researchers who are involved in research on the intersection between hunger, social justice and human rights:

1

Affirm our commitment to the Global Sustainable Development Goals ("SDGs" / "Global Goals"), key for the purposes of this Statement being SDG 2: Zero Hunger ("End hunger, food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture"), noting that:

- a. Hunger remains a global crisis, with the United Nations ("UN") noting that only a fraction of UN Member States are on course to end hunger, while around 733 million people faced hunger in 2023, equivalent to one in 11 people globally and one in five in Africa;
- b. Hunger is a pressing problem in Africa, with growing food insecurity in many parts of the continent, especially among those affected by crises such as political instability, violent conflict, and the impact of climate change;
- c. Hunger is an impediment to all aspects of development, including economic and social development, while being anathema to social cohesion, the rule of law and peace, in line with the Copenhagen Declaration (1995) and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

2

Believe that the right to food and adequate nutrition is a human right, as articulated in:

- a. Article 25 of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights (1948) and Article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1996);
- b. the African Commission on Human and People's Rights' Resolution on the Right to Food and Nutrition in Africa (2019)

3

Accept that hunger is a social justice issue in that it is primarily a reality of the economically and socially deprived social classes, recognising that hunger is not about the insufficiency of nutritious food in the world, but rather about the unjust distribution of resources, resulting in the exclusion of some people from enjoying the same right to sufficient food and adequate nutrition as every other human being.

4

Reaffirm our belief that social justice – in terms of the equal enjoyment of all rights and freedoms in general, and in particular the right to food and adequate nutrition – is essential for peaceful coexistence and social cohesion.

5

Further reaffirm our enduring commitment to:

- a. the Hazendal Resolution (2019);
- b. the Boschendal Resolution (2021);
- c. the Boschendal Statement (2022); and
- d. the Cape Town Declaration (2023),

noting that our deliberations on hunger at this Conference indeed demonstrate the range of ways in which the crisis of hunger in the world today manifests the concerns expressed in these documents.

6

Register our deep concern that, despite the articulated commitment by global leaders to Zero Hunger by 2030, as per the 2023 report of the UN Secretary-General assessing progress towards the achievement of the SDGs, the world is currently lagging in its progress towards the realisation of that goal.

7

Express our specific distress at the large numbers of people globally – especially children and senior citizens, people with disabilities and refugees – still suffering hunger and its dire consequences; noting contemporary atrocities and indignities, the legacies of historic injustices, and persisting structural inequalities that complicate efforts to guarantee accessibility, affordability and adequacy of nutrition to every human being.

8

Note with appreciation the investments and commitments that many different actors in society – including civil society, academia, business, governments and multilateral institutions at different levels – are making towards achieving Zero Hunger by 2030.

9

Are encouraged and inspired by the wealth of innovative ideas, research, strategies, models and opportunities that have already been articulated, tried and tested in a range of conditions and contexts. We believe it is imperative that these efforts be recognised, scaled up and disseminated widely.

10

Appreciate the importance of embracing the following principles in the different initiatives being undertaken to achieve Zero Hunger:

- a. **Poly-dimensionality:** understanding that:
 - i. Hunger and related food insecurity result from disruptions in the food security systems, including availability; access and accessibility; utilisation; and stability/sustainability;
 - ii. Hunger cannot be dealt with in isolation from other SDGs and other social justice issues;
 - iii. Hunger is inextricably underpinned by a range of factors such as disruptions to agriculture due to climate change, land disparities, conflict, disruptions to peace, as well as non-agricultural factors such as poverty, inequality, unemployment, corruption, systemic government failure and food wastage.
- b. **Intersectionality:** understanding that:
 - i. Hunger affects different constituencies of people differently.
 - ii. A range of factors – class, gender, age, geo-social location, disabilities – influence and determine who has agency and ability to sustainably access sufficient food and adequate nutrition.
- c. **Subsidiarity:** understanding that:
 - i. Complementarity rather than competition is the essential bedrock of leveraging the range and opportunities available to the diverse actors working on Hunger at different levels and in different spaces;
 - ii. No one actor or group of actors focusing on one level of action (international, regional, national, sub-national, local) can comprehensively deal with the complexity of the crisis of global hunger.
- d. **Vertical and horizontal equity:** understanding that Zero Hunger:
 - i. is not just about “people like us”, but humanity across the globe; and
 - ii. is not just about the “here and now”, but committing to delivering a legacy of food security to the generations that come after us.

11

While recognising that achieving Zero Hunger is possible, we understand that it will take hard work and the determination to work together to challenge the status quo by confronting elite power structures and dismantling structural frameworks of injustice, and cultivating a culture of collaboration undergirded by ubuntu or shared humanity grounded in the belief that our sustainable future as humanity depends on no one falling beneath a dignity floor of rights, key among which is the justice of eating.

We therefore commit and pledge ourselves to the following, and to reporting back at the 2025 ISJC on progress made between now and then on the following actions:

I

Members of academia present pledge to:

- a. Collaborate on research and other measures to continue to strengthen synergies between and amongst the range of disciplines, actors and networks working on hunger;
- b. Collaborate on the development of appropriate and innovative research tools and methodologies to engage the multi-dimensional range of questions and challenges related to hunger; including design thinking and anticipatory impact assessments through instruments such as the Social Justice Impact Assessment Matrix (“SIAM”) and digital accountability enhancing technologies such as blockchain;
- c. Integrate, as an imperative in education systems at all levels, the human right to food and adequate nutrition through curricula, services offered at all educational institutions, and pedagogical gaming, in all sectors including business and government;

- d. Invest in the consistent use of inclusive language and accessible media, including social media, to proactively support the centring of diverse grassroots constituencies in all aspects of the work;
- e. Document, analyse, amplify and support the scaling-up of innovative and context-appropriate evidence-based models that have demonstrated success in facilitating progress towards Zero Hunger; and
- f. Invest in prospective research to help understand and mediate the consequences of interventions (policy, legislation and strategies) that might unintentionally exacerbate the experience and impact of hunger on some constituencies while benefitting others.

II

Members of civil society present pledge to:

- a. Adopt a social justice approach to engaging the challenge of hunger in the world; in particular, inculcating a mindset that characterises hunger as a human rights violation rather than an acceptable human condition;
- b. Catalyse, support and facilitate the development and implementation of people-centred policy, legislation and strategies; taking into account the inherent complexities of the poly-dimensional nature of hunger;
- c. Provide breakthrough research and innovative policymaking tools, including anticipatory impact tools that leverage granularly disaggregated (decoupled) data to catalyse, support and facilitate policy, legislation and programmes that make food sovereignty a reality for all people;
- d. Demand, facilitate and support inclusivity for all constituencies within the society in interventions addressing hunger, through ensuring meaningful access to adequate and relevant knowledge, programmes, resources and technology; and
- e. Collaborate across different sectors within civil society and with other partners, towards addressing the four pillars of the food system and related interventions aimed at combatting food insecurity: availability; access and accessibility; utilisation; and stability/sustainability, undergirded by agency and related fostering of capabilities.

III

Members of the business community pledge to:

- a. Work proactively towards reducing wastage in the food industry to the bare minimum;
- b. Anchor business processes in fair play, characterised by fair remuneration of employees, as guided by the International Labour Organisation (“ILO”) social justice guidelines, fair dealings with suppliers, and supporting social security and social assistance measures that ensure no one falls beneath a dignity floor that assures them a decent life;
- c. Invest in the complementary imperatives of eliminating hunger on one hand, and achieving food sovereignty on the other, through people-centred business strategies that foster the holistic well-being of all constituencies;
- d. Collaborate with other partners to support initiatives, policy and legislation that foster and sustain a peaceful environment for business to thrive, through engaging in tackling the persistence of food insecurity in the communities and area/s in which their businesses and/or markets are located and/or draw resources from; and
- e. Be mindful always of cultivating business practices that foster the social licence to operate in ways that are attuned to the SDGs, with special attention to Zero Hunger, and fostering self-sufficiency in communities that support the businesses.

IV

Representatives of government bodies present pledge to:

- a. Act in ways that show acceptance that governments bear the main responsibility for ensuring that no one is hungry and food-insecure in terms of their obligations under international human rights law and moral obligations under international social instruments such as the Copenhagen Declaration, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the Pact for the Future (2024);
- b. Mainstream social justice in food security and food sovereignty plans at all levels of government;
- c. Put people at the centre of all interventions addressing the experience and consequences of hunger, recognising and engaging the diversity of needs, priorities and contexts represented in the constituencies they serve;

- d. Adopt transformative policy and law reform initiatives, including anticipatory assessment tools that predict the likelihood of intended laws, policies and programmes that exacerbate hunger, poverty and inequality;
- e. Prioritise addressing the systemic causes of hunger in state interventions, as opposed to focusing on alleviating the symptoms, including identifying and mitigating inequalities relating to gender, age, disability, nationality, geographic disadvantages and climate change;
- f. Adopt a multi-sectoral approach to achieving SDG 2, recognising the complex web of relationships, issues, constituencies, levels and contexts that must be strategically integrated into food security and food sovereignty plans;
- g. Approach food insecurity as a multi-dimensional challenge that demands addressing the food security system: availability; access and accessibility; utilisation; stability/sustainability;
- h. Invest in the development, initiation, amplification and scaling-up of evidence-based, context-appropriate and people-centred strategies that facilitate sustainable progress towards achieving SDG 2;
- i. Collaborate with other partners to foster and sustain the holistic peace that is critical to the achievement of Zero Hunger by 2030 through policy, legislation, and funding programmes that foster expanded capabilities and social assistance;
- j. Integrate prospective thinking into the development and implementation of Zero Hunger initiatives, thus making anticipation and mediation of adverse consequences, especially on vulnerable constituencies, a norm in the planning and preparation of related strategies and approaches; and
- k. Dedicate adequate resources, including financial and human, to the achievement of Zero Hunger for the range of constituencies they serve.

V

Representatives of multilateral institutions and the international community present pledge to:

- a. Initiate, support, facilitate and amplify interventions such as policy, legislation and international conventions that work to create regional and global platforms of action on the range of systemic issues directly and indirectly related to hunger;
- b. Integrate prospective thinking into the development and implementation of all bilateral and multilateral strategies and initiatives designed to make Zero Hunger a reality by 2030, taking care to ensure that vulnerable communities do not inadvertently further suffer adverse consequences from initiatives that benefit others;
- c. Advocate for and support a poly-dimensional collaborative approach in making Zero Hunger a reality, working with the range of available partners to responsibly utilise available resources and impact as effectively and efficiently as possible;
- d. Champion Africa's peoples, needs, priorities, resources, actors and sovereignty in designing, supporting and implementing the range of initiatives necessary to the achievement of SDG 2 by 2030, given the still alarming current data on the levels and impact of hunger on the continent.

12

As peace-loving citizens of the world, recognising the imperative of taking personal responsibility for the achievement of SDG 2, each individual present undertakes to:

- a. Articulate a personal pledge towards a specific action to be implemented before the 2025 ISJC; and
- b. Account for the progress made towards completing this action at the 2025 ISJC.

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We therefore authorise the CSJ to collect pledges from among us and others which affirm our acceptance that hunger is a social justice issue that we pledge to tackle urgently through action, undergirded by the belief that hunger is a threat to our shared humanity and everyone's responsibility. We therefore commit to take, scale and connect actions that will end hunger by 2030.

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We further resolve to bequeath to our descendants, regardless of who they are and where they live in this world, a world where Zero Hunger is a reality and social justice thrives.

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