



CENTRE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE (CSJ) | FACULTY OF LAW

7TH SOCIAL JUSTICE SUMMIT

"Social Justice, Food Security and Peace: Pathways to Equality, Solidarity, Sustainability and Climate Resilience"

DATE: 17 October 2025

VENUE: Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC), Cape Town, South Africa

PRESENTED BY: Centre for Social Justice, Stellenbosch University and partners including the United Nations and the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation in the Presidency

"In an interconnected world, the challenges faced by one nation affect all nations. Through solidarity we seek to advance a unified effort and mutual support among member nations."

By advancing equality we seek to ensure fair treatment, opportunities and advancement for all individuals and nations.

This must be irrespective of their economic status, gender, race, geographic location or other characteristics.

*Sustainable development is about meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs."*¹ – President Cyril Ramaphosa

1. Introduction

No Nation can be free if it cannot feed itself, fuel itself and defend itself, yet no nation is an island hence the importance of global solidarity in the advancement of social justice.

The Social Justice Summit (SJS), in its 7th iteration, hosted by the Centre for Social Justice (CSJ) at Stellenbosch University will convene policymakers, legislators, political parties, judiciary, traditional and religious leaders, civil society and academia

¹ President Cyril Ramaphosa: G20 High Level Opening Session, (2024) available at <https://www.gov.za/news/speeches/president-cyril-ramaphosa-g20-high-level-opening-session-25-sep-2024> (accessed 09-07-2025)



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to foster high-level dialogue on food security as a cornerstone for social justice, equality and sustainable development. Scheduled for **Friday, 17 October 2025** and under the theme **“Social Justice, Food Security and Peace: Pathways to Equality, Solidarity, Sustainability and Climate Resilience”**, the Summit leverages the country’s G20 leadership to champion the African agenda and global cooperation. The Summit will take place at the Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC).

South Africa’s G20 Presidency commenced on 1 December 2024 and builds on the legacies of Indonesia, India and Brazil, which prioritised sustainable development and poverty alleviation. The Summit aligns with the G20 Development Working Group (DWG) priorities, including mobilising finance for development, promoting social protection floors and addressing global public goods (GPGs) to enhance resilience. By integrating these priorities, the Summit aims to accelerate progress toward Sustainable Development Goal 2 (Zero Hunger) and the African Union’s Agenda 2063.

As a platform for intersectoral collaboration, the Summit will bridge constitutional commitments and policy outcomes, positioning food justice as a transformative driver of social cohesion, regional food security and global solidarity. This aligns with South Africa’s National Development Plan (NDP) 2030, which similarly prioritises the elimination of poverty and reduction of inequality, with explicit commitments under Chapter 11 (Social Protection) and Chapter 6 (Inclusive Rural Economy) to address hunger and improve food systems.

2. Background

Global progress toward Sustainable Development Goal 2 (Zero Hunger) remains significantly off track, with undernourishment affecting 713 - 757 million people in

2023, or one in 11 globally and one in five in Africa.² Hunger continues to rise in Africa, remains stagnant in Asia, and shows progress in Latin America and the Caribbean. Additionally, 2.33 billion people (28.9% of the global population) faced moderate or severe food insecurity in 2023.³ Economic access to nutritious foods is a critical barrier, with 2.8 billion people – over one-third of the global population – unable to afford a healthy diet in 2022, particularly in low-income countries (71.5%) compared to high-income countries (6.3%).

In South Africa, despite robust frameworks like the National Development Plan (NDP) 2030, food insecurity persists due to structural barriers, necessitating urgent intersectoral action. According to the 2023 General Household Survey, over 23% of South African households experience inadequate or severely inadequate access to food. The Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), places food insecurity at over 63% when mild to severe levels are included.⁴

The Summit builds on the 2024 Social Justice Summit’s focus on food security as a national imperative, integrating lessons from the G20’s interventions, such as Brazil’s Global Alliance against Hunger and Poverty and Indonesia’s adaptive social protection framework. In our context, the Summit will explore the role of public policy, legislative frameworks and multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder cooperation in achieving food

² The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (2024), available at <https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/d5be2ffc-f191-411c-9fee-bb737411576d/content> (accessed 25-06-2025)

³ The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (2024) available at <https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/d5be2ffc-f191-411c-9fee-bb737411576d/content> (accessed 25-06-2025)

⁴ “General Household Survey (GHS) (2023)” (2024) StatsSA available at <https://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P0318/P03182023.pdf> (accessed 25-03-2025)

security. By bringing together the diverse stakeholders, the Summit will also facilitate the development of policies that promote equitable food systems, support small-scale farmers, strengthen social protection measures and advance sustainable agricultural practices. The Summit will also continue to propel forward the conversation on accountability for constitutional governance, which includes the advancement of equal enjoyment of all rights and freedoms, essentially advancing social justice through transformative governance and civil society action, incorporating the role of business and development partners. It will explore GovTech solutions, such as digital platforms for supply chain transparency, to enhance food governance.

As was the case in the 6th Summit, deliberations will take into account the reality that food insecurity disproportionately affects marginalised communities, including women, children and rural populations, acknowledging the overlapping social, economic and environmental factors that contribute to hunger and malnutrition. This requires, among other things, integrating an intersectional approach to the hunger and food security challenge, so as to tailor policies and strategies to the circumstances of all social groups.⁵ In line with South Africa’s broader commitment to achieve the Sustainable

⁵ An intersectional approach to hunger acknowledges how food insecurity is compounded by overlapping inequalities relating to gender, race, disability, geography and socio-economic status. An intersectional lens enables a more nuanced understanding of vulnerability, ensuring that strategies are tailored to the lived realities of different communities and responsive to structural barriers that perpetuate inequality. The South African Constitutional Court in *Mahlangu v Minister of Labour* recognised and utilised an intersectional lens to address the systemic disadvantage suffered by domestic workers in South Africa. See *Mahlangu v Minister of Labour* 2021 1 BCLR 1 (CC) paras 49, 75–76; See also Atrey (2021) *International Journal of Discrimination and the Law* 173.



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Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), the summit aims to bridge the gap between constitutional commitments and policy implementation outcomes.

The Summit will also be informed by the understanding that South Africa has constitutionally committed itself to attain social justice, a commitment that has been affirmed by the constitutional court in several cases, among them *Government of the Republic of South Africa v Grootboom*.⁶

⁶ *Government of the Republic of South Africa and Others v Grootboom and Others* (CCT11/00) [2000] ZACC 19

3. Key Summit Objectives

The Summit seeks to achieve the following objectives:

3.1. Strengthening Policy and Legislative Frameworks

- Assess South Africa’s current legal and policy landscape in relation to food and nutrition security.
- Explore legislative reforms to enhance food security policies at national and regional levels.
- Identify gaps and challenges in the implementation of existing food security policies.

3.2. Promoting Regional Cooperation and Multilateralism

- Examine the role of South Africa within the African Union and the G20 in advancing food security.
- Enhance collaboration between South Africa and neighbouring countries to ensure regional food security.
- Develop policy recommendations to support sustainable agricultural development and food sovereignty.

3.3. Advancing Inclusive and Sustainable Food Systems

- Address the structural causes of food insecurity and propose equitable solutions.
- Highlight the role of smallholder farmers, cooperatives, and social enterprises in food production.
- Promote climate-resilient agricultural practices and sustainable resource management.

3.4. Fostering Social Solidarity and Public Participation and Alignment with South Africa’s G20 Priorities

- Strengthen partnerships between government, civil society, private sector, and academia in addressing food insecurity.
- Elevate community-led initiatives that address food justice and advocate for the right to food.
- Enhance mechanisms for citizen engagement in food security governance.
- Ensure that discussions contribute to South Africa’s G20 presidency priorities, particularly in fostering inclusive economic growth and social justice.
- Position food security as a central theme in global development discussions, advocating for international solidarity and cooperation.

3.5. Exploring the role of emerging technologies and digital governance tools (“GovTech”) in transforming food governance

- Assessing how digital platforms, data science and predictive analytics can improve food supply chains, strengthen accountability in social protection systems and enhance transparency in agricultural subsidies and land reform.
- GovTech has the potential to revolutionise food system monitoring, targeting, and delivery – especially when embedded within rights-based, participatory and inclusive governance models.

3.6. Fostering constitutional and legal accountability regarding the right to food and nutrition security

- Assessment of the performance and adequacy of the legal framework so far as it advances the right to food and nutrition security.
- Review the performance and adequacy of the polycentric accountability framework, that includes parliament, the courts, Chapter 9 institutions and social accountability.
- Examine the role of international law, international obligations and global governance.
- Consider opportunities that may lie in breakthrough technologies and gov tech for fostering transformative constitutionalism and related governance.

4. Expected Outputs and Outcomes

The Summit will result in tangible outputs and long-term outcomes aimed at shaping policy, fostering partnerships and enhancing food security initiatives.

4.1 Outputs

- **Summit Declaration on Social Justice, Food Security and Peace:** A policy document outlining key recommendations and commitments from stakeholders.
- **Policy Briefs and Research Reports:** Evidence-based analyses on food security, legislative frameworks, and best practices.
- **Regional Food Security Action Plan:** A roadmap for strengthening South Africa’s role in promoting regional food and nutrition security.

- **Public Engagement and Media Awareness:** Increased visibility and advocacy for food justice through media campaigns and public discussions.
- **Commitment from Policymakers and Legislators:** Actionable policy proposals for legislative reform and improved governance structures.

4.2 Outcomes

- **Enhanced Policy and Legislative Reforms:** Strengthened national and regional policies on food security.
- **Increased Regional Cooperation:** Stronger partnerships among SADC countries for collaborative food security initiatives.
- **Sustainable and Equitable Food Systems:** Greater support for small-scale farmers, local food producers, and sustainable agricultural models.
- **Improved Social Protection Mechanisms:** Strengthened safety nets for vulnerable populations facing food insecurity.
- **G20 Advocacy for Social Justice, Food Security and Peace:** South Africa's leadership in global food security discussions, influencing international policies and cooperation.

5. Conclusion

The Social Justice Summit serves as a vital platform to address pressing social justice issues. Following up on a groundbreaking dialogue in 2024, the partners have decided to continue engaging on food security through the lenses of peace, equality, solidarity, sustainability and climate resilience. By bringing together policymakers, legislators, and other key stakeholders, the Summit will contribute to shaping inclusive policies, fostering regional collaboration and reinforcing South Africa's leadership on the global



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stage. As the country takes centre stage in the G20, this summit will play a crucial role in ensuring that social justice remains at the heart of development efforts, promoting a future where no one is left behind in the pursuit of food security and human dignity.