

## **KENYA AND WORLD SOCIAL FORUM 2007: CAPACITY STATEMENT**

### **Introduction:**

The East African Social Forum, comprising Uganda Social Forum, Tanzania Social Forum and Kenya Social Forum, through their delegates to the African Social Forum held in Lusaka, Zambia, agreed to propose to the African Social Forum Council (and consequently to the World Social Forum). In making this decision, the delegates observed that East Africa has “the will, the means and the reason” to want to be host to the global event.

A technical committee was established to put together a “bid” in after receiving and reviewing the capacities of different countries in accordance with set criteria. At the Tanzania Social Forum, held in Bagamoyo from January 14-15, 2005, it was finally resolved that Nairobi be the venue should our proposal go through.

This is a statement to the with regard to Kenya:

### **Venue:**

The city of Nairobi is hereby proposed.

### **Presence of Social Movements**

Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania have a fairly good dispersal of social movement formation – national, local and sectoral. In addition, there is a vibrant civil society (NGOs, FBOs, CBOs and Trade Unions). The trade union movement has, however, lost quite a bit of its earlier vibrancy due to prolonged state interference and opportunism. Some of the prominent social movement formations (in Kenya) include:

- Muungano wa Wanavijiji (slum dwellers)
- Kenya Land Alliance (land and related issues)
- National Convention Assembly/NCEC (constitution)
- Bomas Katiba Watch (Constitution)
- Release Political Prisoners (Human Rights)
- People Against Torture (Human Rights)
- Association of Forest Evictees (Land and natural resources)
- Kenya Coalition Against Landmines (Peace and security)
- Kenya Alliance of Residents Associations (security/welfare)
- Sugar Campaign for Change (trade)
- Futa Magendo Action Network (Governance/corruption)
- Green Belt Movement (environment)
- Citizens’ Coalition for Constitutional Change (4Cs) (constitution)
- OSILIGI (land)
- Matatu Welfare Association (transport)
- Kenya Pastoralists Forum (pastoralists)
- Chemichemi ya Ukweli (active non-violence)
- National Youth Movement (youth)
- Maendeleo ya wanawake(women)

- National Council of Women of Kenya
- Association of Disabled Peoples of Kenya (disability)
- Many more.

Besides, there are many NGOs and NGO networks active in campaigns on issues ranging from environment, debt, human rights, governance, social justice to labour rights besides faith-based organizations (FBOs) and CBOs.

The biggest achievements of the Kenyan social movements and civil society organizations and networks include:

- Repeal of Section 2A of the Kenyan Constitution to re-introduce political pluralism;
- The push for a people-driven constitution-making process;
- Change of regime in 2002;
- Change of a draconian NGO legislation
- Liberating the media from official censorship.

### **Meeting Facilities**

The following meeting and exhibition facilities are available:

- Jamhuri Park International Trade Fair facility (hosts over 2 million people daily during trade fair)
- Moi International Sports Centre, Kasarani (more than 800,000)
- Bomas of Kenya (more than 600,000)
- Kenya College of Communication Technology ( 1 million)
- University of Nairobi (1 million)<sup>1</sup>
- Kenyatta University ( 2 million)
- Jomo Kenyatta University ( 600,000)
- Kenyatta International Conference Centre (500,000)
- Kenya School of Monetary Studies (300,000)
- Other smaller facilities of 200,000 and below include Nyayo National Stadium, Kenya Polytechnic, Kenya Science Teachers College, KCB Management Centre etc.

Interpretation equipment may be hired from:

- KICC
- AACC Communication Services
- More than 30 private firms
- United Nations Office in Nairobi (UNON)

Other conventional conference facilities are available as Nairobi is one of the major international meeting centres of Africa.

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<sup>1</sup> Universities can only be available during vacations.

## **Accommodation**

Nairobi is well served by many world class hotels, many of them competitively priced. It has 16 five-star hotels, twenty-eight four star hotels and many three-star and ungraded hotels - some of which are even better than graded four-star hotels. In addition, there are many hostels and inns. Should some of the universities be on vacation, then student hostels would also provide budget accommodation.

## **Communication**

### ***Air Transport***

Nairobi is Africa's third aviation hub after Johannesburg and Cairo. All the major global and regional airlines fly into and out of Nairobi. The partnership between the national carrier with KLM, NorthWest and Air France makes for a seamless connection from any continent.

### ***Road Transport***

Nairobi has a number of buses that ply between it and major towns in Eastern Africa – Arusha, Dar es Salaam, Jinja, Mwanza, Kampala, Tanga and Kigali.

### ***Rail Transport***

Currently the train services are only used nationally. However, there are indications that the services between Kampala and Nairobi might resume mid 2005. With the acceleration of East African integration, it is likely that train services between Nairobi and Dar es Salaam via Mombasa will also be reinstated soon.

### ***Hotel-Venue Transfers***

In preliminary discussions with 2 public bus companies, we have established that we can have free services between all hotels and the venue for the duration of the Forum (6 days). The cost can be covered by including US\$ 3 dollars in the registration fees.

### ***Telecommunication***

Telecommunications facilities – both fixed line and mobile telephony - are well developed.

### ***ICT***

Well developed. Jomo Kenyatta International Airport has recently installed e-mail hotspot facility. It is envisaged that a number of major hotels and conference centres will introduce this facility before end of 2005.

## **Government Support**

Kenyans elected a new government in December 2002. Unlike the previous government which was hostile to civil society, the present government having been voted in through the influence of the civil society and social movements, has adopted non-antagonistic relations with the civil society – even though it has attracted fierce criticism from progressive sections of the civil society for its rabidly neo-liberal agenda. Since Lusaka, the Kenya Social Forum has had informal discussions with a minister and key government officials who have pledged unqualified support. The minister for Planning has been part of the Social Forum process having participated in the first ASF in Bamako and in WSF in Porto Alegre 2002.

Nairobi area police chief has assured of his willingness and capacity to provide maximum security while Principal Immigration Officer hinted that they would be able to waive visa fees for all WSF participants if approached formally by KSF.

## **Security**

Kenya and Kenyans have faced the challenge of insecurity for some time. The country has been a victim of devastating terrorist attacks twice in less than four five years (1998 and 2002).

Nairobi city has also had to deal with major threat of insecurity, ranging from bank robberies to pick pocketing. However, as a result of joint efforts of the Nairobi Central Business District Association (CBDA), the Nairobi City Council and the Police, crime in Nairobi has drastically reduced in Nairobi. At recent discussions between members of KSF and the Nairobi Provincial Police Officer, the Police assured that they would go extra mile to make the Forum incidence free.

## **Staff Capacity**

Abundant. But as agreed in Lusaka, we expect TSF and USF to also second some staff and volunteers. We will do the same if we decide on Kampala or Dar.

## **Experience in Hosting Global Events**

Nairobi has been host to a number of global and international conferences and events. In the last three months it was host to two major world conferences – the United Nations Security Council Special Session and World Summit on Landmines. In May 2005, it will host World Press Institute Conference and in 2006 it will host Africities Summit.

Other major world gatherings held in Nairobi before include:

- World Women's Conference 1985
- OAU Heads of State and Government Summit 1981
- UNCTAD 1976
- World Energy Conference 1982
- UNEP Governing Council (Biannual)