

Moses Mayekiso to Visit Chicago

South African trade unionist and community leader, Moses Mayekiso, will visit Chicago on March 31 to April 3 as part of his effort to link community-controlled development in the US and South Africa. Mayekiso, President of the Alexandra Civic Organization, Chicago's sister community, will be accompanied by his brother, Mzwanele Mayekiso, who has visited Chicago a number of times in recent years.

Moses Mayekiso is also General Secretary of the National Union of Metal Workers as well as President of the South African Network of Civic Organizations (SANCO). SANCO is the national umbrella body representing seven hundred grassroots civic associations in townships, rural towns and inner-city areas across South Africa.

The civic movement itself is more than ten years old, and during the repression of the 1980s was the main form of mass-based organization within townships. Founded in early 1992, SANCO takes a position alongside the liberation movements and trade unions in forging a new, non-racial democratic South Africa.

Committed to political democracy and accountability in government and in the Civic Organizations themselves, SANCO members organize for community control of development, and for the establishment of policies that enshrine as human rights, access to housing and other basic need goods. In recent months, SANCO has been engaged in a campaign to move South African banks to play a more socially-responsible role in the development of disadvantaged communities. The banks have been investing in so-called homelands and other government bodies, but fail to make affordable lending available to communities not tied to the apartheid regime. Thus far, SANCO's Code of Conduct has been rejected by



the banking system.

SANCO believes that progressive forces in the United States have much to offer their South African counterparts. On this visit, Mayekiso has expressed a desire to learn lessons from US struggles and develop new linkages through people-to-people contact with development professionals, anti-apartheid activists, the labor move-

ments and the international development advocacy network. Here in Chicago, he will be meeting with community activists, the Donors Forum, South Shore Bank, and members of AFSCME and the UAW.

To welcome the Mayekisos to Chicago, The Chicago-Alexandra Sister Community Project will host a Solidarity Reception on Thursday, April 1 at Malcolm X College, 1900 W. VanBuren in Chicago.

An African buffet will be served from 6:00-7:15. Moses Mayekiso will address the Reception during the program which will begin at 7:30. Tickets for this reception are \$15.00 each (\$5.00 for low income) and may be ordered by sending your check to CCISSA, PO Box 578066, Chicago, IL 60657-8066. Reservations may also be made by phone: daytime, Joan Gerig at 312-421-5513 or evenings, Carol Thompson at 312-327-0545. All tickets will be held at the door.



Rev. Molefe Tsele, Mary Scott Boria, Prexy Nesbitt, Toni Moore, Debra Evenson and Fassil Demissie in a panel discussion at CCISSA's February 20 conference "Southern Africa in the New World Order". Over 80 activists attended the conference at DePaul University.

Report on Sister Community Tour of South Africa

by Toni Moore

Toni "Shola" Moore participated in the U.S.-S.A. tour of South Africa from November 21 through December 7, 1992 as a representative of the Chicago Alexandra Sister Community Project. Shola is a member of the CCISSA Board of Directors.

In my estimation, the U.S.-S.A. Sister Community Tour of South Africa was successful in the following ways. 1) The tour participants had the opportunity to learn what was occurring on the ground in South Africa; 2) We had an opportunity to learn what other SCPs were doing to develop the relationship between the U.S. and S.A. communities; 3) We had a chance to foster the relationship between those in the U.S. and those in S.A.; 4) Finally, but perhaps most important, we were able to spend time in our respective sister communities and discuss the past and future of the project with sister community members.

The ten tour participants hailed from all across the U.S.-Boston, Atlanta, San Francisco, Alabama, Memphis, Seattle, Washington D.C., St. Paul, and Chicago. Three of the participants had been to South Africa the previous year. There were varying levels of knowledge about South Africa and varying degrees of experience in the anti-apartheid movement in the U.S.

As a group, we travelled to Durban, in Natal. There we met with a representative of the Inkatha Institute, the research arm of the Inkatha Freedom Party. We also spent a day touring the Indian townships and had a braai (barbecue) at the home of a politically active Indian family.

We spent a day in Pietermaritzburg and the surrounding townships, the target of much of the violence in Natal. We spoke with a representative from AFRA (Association for Rural Advancement) who discussed the problem of government land transfers to homelands. We also spoke with Peter Kerchoff of the Pietermaritzburg Agency for Christian Social Awareness, an organization monitoring the violence in the area. One of Peter's colleagues, S'khumbuzo Mbatha Ngwenya, had been murdered earlier in the year and he said this sent a sharp message of how close the violence they were moni-

toring could and would come. We also met a young musician, former teacher, who lived in the hardest hit area of violence. He had lost two family members, neighbors, property, and peace of mind to the horrible level of violence in his area.

Time Spent in Alex

After three and a half days spent in Alexandra Township (Alex), I came away with a member of impressions about Alex and the Alexandra Civic Organization (ACO). Alex is a vibrant, dynamic, impoverished, overcrowded, politically sophisticated, stable, desperate and resilient community. In the space of approximately one square mile between 250,000 and 300,000 people reside.

The township was founded in 1912, the same year as the founding of the ANC. Alex, which is northeast of Johannesburg, is surrounded by Sandton and Randburg, two very wealthy white communities. During the time I was in the ACO office, Richard Mdakane, the ACO Secretary General, was negotiating with representatives from Sandton and Randburg about the ultimate unitary, single tax based city that will include Alex. The people of Alex live their daily lives with warmth, generosity, and humanity despite the harshness, treachery and unpredictable nature of their circumstances. There continue to be thousands of people displaced because of the violence in Alex. The area nicknamed "Beruit" remains isolated and police and military trucks are seen in and about that area throughout the day and night.

The ACO is overwhelmed and overburdened with work and the responsibilities of running the township to a large extent, negotiating with the white local governments, continuing to pressure via mass actions for the rights of the people of Alex, and providing leadership in the local (CAJ), regional (CAST), and national (SANCO) civic organizations. I was impressed and awed by the level of work and organization I observed in Alex and particularly at the ACO.

I must say I came away with a much clearer understanding of why ACO does not always immediately respond to our communications. The people of both the township and the ACO are pleased to have the sister community

relationship, but it is distant and they have so many urgent, immediate issues to handle.

The new ACO offices are on the outskirts of the township and in fact, not officially in Alex. The offices are spacious and quite functional, yet there are clearly needs for better equipment (fax, copier, etc). The offices are located in the industrial area and although less a target for violence, everyone remains very conscious of security. You must be buzzed in and out of the ACO offices.

We discussed how best to regulate communications between Chicago and Alex and agreed that a quarterly report back and forth would be useful. The ACO central committee meets quarterly and produces a report which they could simply pass along to us. We in turn could issue a quarterly report for ACO. Additionally, the committees (health, education, media and housing) would continue to communicate with each other on an as needed basis.

Another concern I expressed to ACO members on behalf of the Chicago committee was how should we respond to the violence in Alex. I was told that we should continue to pressure the central government to end the violence.

Sister Community Project Evaluation

After tour participants spent time in their respective sister communities, we held a meeting with the U.S. and S.A. representatives of the project and discussed the past and future of the project. Although the ACO had at least four other commitments on the day of the seminar, Nkele Ntingane and Thabo Motloung attended the meeting. Together we reviewed some of the successes of the past (Chicago's Walkathon, the exchange visits etc). We also discussed some of the difficulties (communications, transfer of funds etc.). We talked about future activities in Chicago, continued Soweto Day Walkathons, assistance for the Advice Desk of ACO and Justice Center, continuation of book drive, media training, democratic voter education and more.

I heard repeatedly that the Chicago-Alex SCP was an example for other U.S. cities with projects. Everyone said they were going to create a brochure like ours and many were interested in

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Anti-Apartheid Calendar

- March 18** **"The South African Freedom Struggle Today" Presentation by Dennis Goldberg**, anti-apartheid activist imprisoned with Mandela, 12:20 - 1:30 PM Harold Washington College, Room 438, Lake Street, Chicago. Sponsored by Independent Voters of Illinois/ Independent Precinct Organization. Free.
- March 21** **Concert/Fundraiser for Bethel Lutheran Church Gospel Choir's trip to Africa**, Faith Lutheran Church, 41 Park Blvd. N., Glen Ellyn, IL 4PM.
- April 1** **Solidarity Reception for Moses Mayekiso** (see page 1) Malcolm X College, 1900 W. VanBuren, Chicago. 6 - 7:15 African Buffet; 7:30 Program. Tickets: \$15.00, Low income \$5.00. Send checks to CCISSA, PO Box 578066, Chicago, IL 60657-8066 or call for reservation: daytime - Joan Gerig 312-421-5513 or evenings Carol Thompson 312-327-0545. Tickets held at the door.
- April 2-4** **"Economic Sanctions and International Relations - Yugoslavia, Iraq, Haiti and South Africa" Conference at Notre Dame** in South Bend, Indiana. Registration \$55.00, students free. For more information: 1-800-233-6786.
- April 9** **Good Friday Walk for Justice Noon - 3 PM.** Beginning on the east side of Michigan Avenue between VanBuren and Congress. Sponsored by 8th Day Center for Justice, 312-641-5151.
- April 20** **"Dream and Reality - the Test in South Africa"** Dr. Allan Boesak, Member, ANC Executive Committee and Dr. Charles Villa-Vicencio. Professor of Religion and Society, University of Cape Town. 7-9 PM, Lutheran School of Theology, 1100 E. 51st Street, Chicago. Sponsored by Southern Africa Network of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Lutheran School of Theology. For more information: 312-421-5513.
- April 23** **Concert/Fundraiser for Bethel Lutheran Church Gospel Choir's trip to Africa.** St. Luke Lutheran Church, 205 N. Prospect Ave., Park Ridge, IL 7:30 PM.
- April 25** **"Apartheid As Public Policy: Some International Comparisons"** (including South Africa, the West Bank, and the United States) 7:00 PM, DePaul University, Schmitt Academic Center, Room 161, 2323 N. Seminary, Chicago. Co-sponsored by Open University of the Left, the DePaul University Social Sciences Program, Palestine Solidarity Committee and the New World Resource Center. Information: 312-384-8827 or 312-849-6421.
- May 1** **Forum on Africa** University of Illinois, Circle Campus, Circle center Room 322, 750 S. Halsted, 3rd Floor, Chicago. 9am-? Sponsored by Senator Paul Simon. For more information 312-353-4952.
- May 16** **Concert/Fundraiser for Bethel Lutheran Church Gospel Choir's trip to Africa.** Bethel Lutheran Church, 130 N. Keeler, Chicago. 4 PM.
- June 4-5** **"African World Together-A Homecoming"**. TransAfrica and TransAfrica Forum .Weekend, Washington, D.C. For more information call 202-547-2550.
- June 12** **5th Annual Soweto Day Walkathon** on Chicago's South side to benefit voter education projects in South Africa. Sponsored by CCISSA. Mark your calendar now...details to follow in the next CCISSA newsletter! For more information or to join the planning committee 312-327-0545



A New Horizons Choir member at the 5th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King Day Sing Out Against Apartheid at the South African Consulate in Chicago. The January 18th event was sponsored by Synapses and local anti-apartheid organizations.

Senator Simon Agrees to Visit Alex

In a number of recent public forums, Senator Paul Simon has said that he receives little or no advocacy communication on behalf of African issues from his constituency. Senator Simon is the Chairperson of the Senate Sub-committee on Africa. At a March meeting sponsored by the Washington Office on Africa, Simon suggested that sister-community links be established with Africa to provide vehicles for mobilizing support. When challenged on his own support for Chicago's sister community relationship with Alexandra Township, South Africa, the Senator agreed to a "high-profile visit" to Alex in the near future. The CASC will work with Senator Simon's staff to arrange this trip for him.

We urge you to write or call Senator Simon to express support for his trip and to let him know how you feel about US foreign policy toward southern Africa.

Senator Paul Simon
230 S. Dearborn, Suite 3892
Chicago, IL 60604
312-353-4952
Washington:
202-224-4651

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our annual walkathon. Some people told me that they had used our city resolution as a model for their SCP resolution in their city.

Current Situation in South Africa

The sense I came away with from South Africa is that everything is in transition and everyone is experiencing the natural accompanying confusion in this type of a situation. While the government is still the white minority Nationalist Party, the ANC and other progressive forces are almost a shadow government. They are consulted by the World Bank, businessmen, and others regularly because everyone is preparing for the near future when there is a new government. This has certain difficulties associated with it.

The ANC must behave like a government without benefit of taxes and other structures of government.

The ANC has many internal issues to deal with also—the schism between those younger people who fought during the UDF years and those who were in exile or in prison for the last couple or more decades, and differing views within the organization on the use of violence as a defensive weapon. There are also differences of opinions about market economy verses a mixed economy versus a socialist economy. How and if land will be redistributed is another major issue of contention.

There is a lot of frustration and disappointment that the last two years have not brought more actual changes in the everyday lives of South Africans than, however, there has emerged a

more realistic understanding of what this stage of the struggle entails. There is still a high level of respect and deference to the leaders, although people express their opinions, consistent with leadership or not, freely.

There is a hotly debated and constantly brewing struggle about women's rights within the context of the negotiations and the new government. Some have demanded quotas to ensure that women are represented in the negotiations and in the new government. Others, and they seem to be the prevailing side, say no to quotas now, but agree to continue to sensitize people to the issue and to include women at all levels of struggle and government.

The issue of compromise in the negotiations is another hotly debated issue on the ground in South Africa. Joe Slovo wrote an article touting the necessity to compromise about certain matters within the negotiations as long as the progressive forces do not compromise about anything critical. He proposed that a general amnesty, a sunset clause, and a compensation package for existing civil servants be permitted through compromise. There was also constant discussion about when elections would occur, the ANC saying fall 1993 and the NP saying spring 1994.

The government is transferring land to homelands at enormous rates with the obvious hope of gaining new allies and making it more difficult for the next government to resolve the vital land issues that will face them. More than half of the 1 million hectares of government land designated to be transferred to homelands is to be given to kwaZulu. If the plan is implemented, kwaZulu will become contiguous.

Many understand that this plan is intended to assist in the federalism scheme that the NP and cohorts wish to impose on the new South Africa. While we were in South Africa, Buthelezi announced a "unilateral declaration of autonomy", declaring that kwaZulu would have a new constitution regardless of what happened in future negotiations with the central government.

I am extremely thankful to have had the opportunity to represent Chicago in the U.S.-S.A. SCP tour. I do not believe that I would have understood the complexity of the South African scene without this brief peek into the communities and lives of the people we so admire for their courage and tireless efforts for freedom and justice.

Join CCISSA and the Southern Africa Response Network

CCISSA has initiated the Southern Africa Response Network to consolidate the Illinois anti-apartheid constituency into a solid, consistent voice for change in U.S. policy in southern Africa. The Network will communicate with President Clinton and our representatives to pressure the South African regime to curb township violence, halt land transfers and other moves designed to cripple a future democratic government. The network will work to end U.S. support for destabilization campaigns in South Africa and the frontline states. The network will also be activated on behalf of Chicago's sister community Alexandra Township in their struggle for decent housing, health and education for Alex residents.

CCISSA will work closely with the American Committee on Africa, Washington Office on Africa and TransAfrica in monitoring key legislation, hearings and issues that need our support.

We expect the Network to be activated approximately once a month. Network members may choose to have Action Alerts sent to them for response or to have CCISSA send letters/mailgrams in their names with copies of communications sent to them.

We hope you will join CCISSA and choose to become a part of this Response Network as we create a new era of U.S. policy toward southern Africa.

PLEASE RETURN TO CCISSA, P.O. Box 578066 CHICAGO, IL 60657

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____

Enclosed is my check for:

_____ \$25. CCISSA and Response
Network Membership

_____ I would like to get involved in
the Sister Community Project:

_____ \$10. CCISSA Membership

_____ Additional Contribution