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**UNITED NATIONS  
NON-GOVERNMENTAL  
LIAISON SERVICE (NGLS)**



**SERVICE DE LIAISON  
NON GOUVERNEMENTAL  
DES NATIONS UNIES (SLNG)**

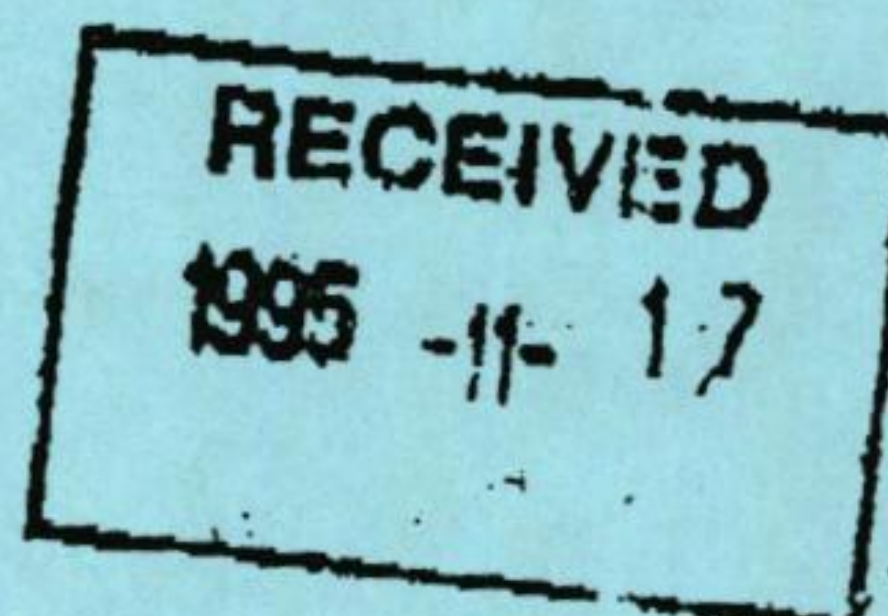
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Rams Ramashia  
President  
National Coalition of NGOs  
South Africa  
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17 November 1995

Dear Rams Ramashia,

I am writing to you to follow-up on our telephone conversation today. At a consultation held in Geneva on the preparations for the upcoming ninth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD IX), which will be held in Midrand, South Africa, April 27 to May 11 next year, a great deal of interest was expressed in holding a meeting for NGOs in parallel with the main meeting. The draft proposal (attached) suggests two kinds of meeting, both to take place just before UNCTAD IX, at the site of the conference. I am writing to you so that we might work together to ensure that this opportunity is used in a way that is as helpful as possible to the South African NGO community.

The Geneva consultation was organized by us, the UN Non-Governmental Liaison Service (NGLS) together with UNCTAD. NGLS is an inter-agency programme of the UN, supported by a dozen or more programmes in the UN system and a variety of bilateral donors. It aims to foster and support greater dialogue and cooperation between the UN system and NGOs. Our four broad programme areas are: human development, environment and development, the global economy, and Africa's recovery and development. NGLS is not a funding agency. It organizes events, and publishes a regular newsletter and other outreach materials, in order to build stronger interaction between NGOs and the UN.

A brief summary on UNCTAD's work is attached.

The idea of holding parallel NGO meetings in South Africa met with a great deal of interest at the UNCTAD-NGO consultation. Zaida Harneker, from IRED-South Africa, Thabi Shange from Philisisizwe Association for Development (Johannesburg) as well as Nancy Kachingwe from MWENGO (Harare) thought that NGOs from the region would welcome the opportunity to learn more about the issues of the global economy, to share experiences, and to develop some joint strategies for follow-up work.

Correspondence for the Coordinator should be addressed to the Geneva Office

NGLS is an inter-agency project of the United Nations Development Programme

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We are asking you for comments on this preliminary proposal, and hoping to move ahead on some of the very practical issues that such an undertaking gives rise to. A key concern is to secure funding in time to be useful, so we need a working proposal on these lines to start circulating among potential donors very soon. We are consulting with UNCTAD at the same time, so the proposal remains very much at a provisional stage for now.

To give you an idea of what we can do from here, NGLS could offer :

- liaison with UNCTAD as required, including ensuring documents are circulated, etc.
- contact with NGOs from other regions (including sending invitations, etc.)
- help in the planning the meetings
- one staff liaison in Geneva during preparations, and two staff on site during the session
- management of the travel fund for NGOs from outside of the region
- orientation for NGOs at UNCTAD IX proper
- help to develop strategies for interaction with UNCTAD and member governments
- coordination of fund-raising efforts

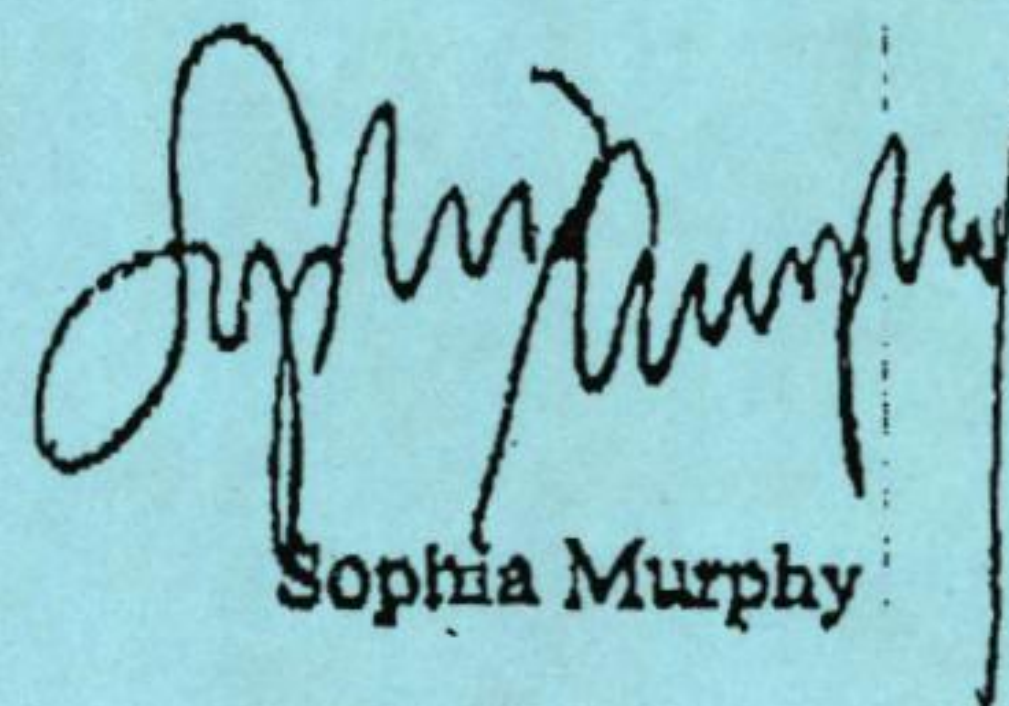
There are many things that we cannot, of course, do. The most important is ensuring that the programme makes for an event that is useful in your work in the region. From there the list stretches to logistical coordination on site, although we will be able to talk with UNCTAD here about meeting rooms, interpretation and so on. It might be useful to hold a conference call in early December, to go through a to-do list, clarifying roles and assumptions. We need to involve a South African NGO, or coalition of NGOs, with the capacity to plan a meeting for 100 or so people, coming from around the world.

So, ideas, feedback, a sense of what kind of time and resources (eg. staff, etc.) are available on your side would be invaluable to move ahead with getting funding from here. As would an idea on what fund-raising might be possible with the South African government, or foundations in the region, or your partners. Comments on the budget, on whether the proposed meetings look useful; anything, whether major or minor, would be important. I am sorry to put pressure on you for a swift response, but we need to approach potential donors well before the New Year if we are to be able to clear a response in time.

Looking forward to hearing from you, and to working with you!

With very best wishes,

Yours sincerely,



Sophia Murphy

CC: Sibongile Mkhabela, TNDA  
Zelda Harneker, IRED-South Africa  
Thabi Shange, PAD  
Nancy Kachingwe, MWENGO