



DECLARATION OF THE CONFERENCE ON THE FUTURE OF ADULT EDUCATION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA 31 JANUARY — 03 FEBRUARY, 1989 HARARE ZIMBABWE

Introduction

The African Association for Literacy and Adult Education (AALAE) in conjunction with the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE) and the Zimbabwe National Council for Adult and Non-formal Education (ZNCAE) organised an international conference on 'The Future of Adult Education in Southern Africa' in Harare, Zimbabwe, from 31 January to 03 February, 1989. This conference was the culminating point of AALAE's programme 'initiative in South Africa and Namibia' which has the following objectives:

- (i) To bring to the attention of adult educators in South Africa and Namibia AALAE as the pan African vehicle for NGOs and other organisations active in adult education.
- (ii) To enable adult educators under apartheid to meet and exchange experiences with those from independent Africa, as well as those from further afield.
- (iii) To explore areas of possible mutual exchange, cooperation and solidarity.
- (iv) To explore the desirability and practicability of a cooperation and mechanism for NGOs and other organisations active in adult education *inside* South Africa and *inside* Namibia.
- (v) To develop a mechanism for the active participation of South African and Namibian NGOs in AALAE.

The conference brought together 191 participants from 45 countries of Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Latin America and Europe. At least 30 of those were from *inside* South Africa and Namibia, and the Liberation Movements *outside*. The conference adopted the following resolution as a call and guide to follow up action by the participants, their organisations and the wider world.

1 **Preamble**

1.1 This was the first conference which brought together close to 200 adult educators committed to the struggle against apartheid from inside South Africa and Namibia, and adult educators from the Liberation Movements, the Frontline States, the rest of Africa, as well as participants from Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean, North America and Europe.

Participants came together as a result of the changing attitude to South Africa which now provides space for selective boycott. The Conference noted the inherent problems in a selective boycott but nonetheless recognised the need to distinguish between aggressor and victim. The Conference also believed that the problems associated with a selective boycott can be minimised if AALAE undertakes the initiatives in close consultation with the Liberation Movements and their allies inside South Africa and Namibia.

The Conference affirms that the resolutions which follow should be interpreted as a guide and summons for action for participating individuals and organizations.

2 **Role of AALAE**

The Conference recognises AALAE as a rich and dynamic point of encounter for adult educators on the African continent and that adult educators who are committed to the struggle for a non-racial democratic society in South Africa and Namibia stand to gain by becoming part of it. We accordingly call upon participants and participating organisations to undertake follow-up action in cooperation with AALAE at the following levels:

- Networking and exchange within South Africa and Namibia,
- Networking and exchange with the Frontline States;
- Networking and exchange with the rest of independent Africa;
- Participating in AALAE activities,
- Networking with the Regional Adult Education Movements in Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean, North America and Europe,
- Participating in ICAE activities.

3 **Acts of Solidarity**

3.1 *"Disclosure of Foreign Funding Bill" in South Africa*

We reject the "Disclosure of Foreign Funding Bill" that is to be tabled in racist South Africa which aims, among other things, to cut off foreign assistance to organisations within the mass democratic movements. The passage of this Bill will mean that adult education work within the progressive movement which is heavily dependent on private funding will be severely affected.

3.2 In order to pressurise the racist South Africa government not to implement that Bill, the Conference recommends:

- 3.2.1 that the content of the Bill be brought to the attention of all nations through the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), United Nations (UN) and other relevant bodies, in order that the Bill is condemned in the strongest possible terms.
- 3.2.2 that *Donor Agencies* currently supporting adult education work in South Africa and Namibia be called upon to oppose attempts by the racist South African government to block the flow of external funding for this work. We urge that if the new "Disclosure of Foreign Funding Bill" becomes law Donor Agencies devise mechanisms to ensure the continued flow of funds and that these Agencies be encouraged to honour their commitment to adult education.

4, **The Conference further resolves**

- 4.1 that donor agencies be encouraged to support the Liberation Movements and their allies working inside South Africa and Namibia.
- 4.2 that AALAE and ICAE establish exchange programmes within Africa for representatives of adult education in the Liberation Movements and their allies inside South Africa and Namibia.
- 4.3 that AALAE and ICAE encourage and facilitate the exchange of information and materials between South African and Namibian adult education organisations including the Liberation Movements and similar organisations in other African Countries.
- 4.4 that AALAE and ICAE encourage and facilitate the participation of South African and Namibian adult educators, including the Liberation Movements, in their international events.
- 4.5 that the International Task Force on Literacy be requested to give world-wide exposure to conditions in South Africa and Namibia which hamper the promotion of literacy work.
- 4.6 that AALAE and ICAE be requested to prepare and widely disseminate a report on the situation of adult education in South Africa and Namibia.
- 4.7 that networks be established between NGOs inside South Africa and Namibia, including the Liberation Movements and other countries.
- 4.8 that support be given for the establishment of institutions within South Africa and Namibia for training and resource development in adult education.

- 4.9 that sister organisations in Africa and around the world organize training courses and exchange programmes for NGOs, trainers and community workers from within South Africa and Namibia, including the Liberation Movements.
- 4.10 that because of the important role that women play in the struggle for independence in South Africa and Namibia, and since a large number of them have very limited access to education, AALAE and the ICAE initiate adult education programmes which give special attention to women.
- 4.11 that links be encouraged between NGOs in South Africa and Namibia and the Liberation Movements.

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