

LETTER TO THE PRESIDENCY

 <p>NACOSS National Coalition for Social Services</p>	 <p>ACVV</p>	 <p>FAMSA Families South Africa 001-560-NPO</p>	 <p>JOCOD</p>
 <p>SA Federation for Mental Health</p>	 <p>Badisa</p>	 <p>PPT Project Preparation Trust of KZN</p>	 <p>Give a Child a ...it's where they belong!! family</p>
 <p>VRSTAAT-VERSORGING IN AKSIE FREE STATE CARE IN ACTION TLHOKOMELO TSHEBETSONG YA FREISTAAT</p>	 <p>COALITION SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL CHILD RIGHTS</p>	 <p>epilepsy SOUTH AFRICA</p>	 <p>CHILD WELFARE SOUTH AFRICA</p>
 <p>National Shelter Movement of South Africa</p>	 <p>1904 SAVF FOR WELFARE SERVICES</p>	 <p>SADA South African Disability Alliance</p>	 <p>POWA PEOPLE OPPOSING WOMEN ABUSE</p>
 <p>DSSA Down Syndrome South Africa</p>	 <p>Rata SOCIAL SERVICES</p>	 <p>QuadPara Association of South Africa (QASA)</p>	
 <p>SANDA South African National Deaf Association</p>	 <p>CENTRE FOR CHILD LAW</p>	 <p>support • empower • a;sa accept • include</p>	



President Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa

President of the Republic of South Africa

The Presidency

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31 August 2022

Dear President Ramaphosa

Concerns regarding the Social Sector Summit of 4 – 5 August 2022 and request to make further submissions on the Framework Declaration

We write to you as civil society organisations and networks working in a variety of ways to support the development and well-being of communities across South Africa. Collectively, we represent approximately 3 500 organisations from around the country, drawn from the following sectors: children and families; gender-based violence; older persons;

disability; substance abuse; mental health; sexual and reproductive health; and housing. (These are listed in the endorsements section of our correspondence.) The letter is prompted by our disappointment at being left out of the deliberations of the Social Sector Summit (“the Summit”) held on 4 and 5 August 2022 – a disappointment that appears to extend beyond the contributors to this letter (see <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2022-08-04-ticking-social-compact-boxes-presidential-summit-leaves-out-major-civil-society-players/>). Indeed, while many of us were invited to participate in either the 2019 provincial summits and/or the national Summit initially scheduled for March 2020 (and rescheduled due to the lockdown), almost all of us only learned about the 2022 Summit after the fact. Given that the Summit was “convened to improve the interface between the state and civil society and to address the challenges that they face”, our being overlooked not only denied us the opportunity to make our issues known, but also to contribute constructively to the resolution of these difficulties. Our letter sets out some of the concerns arising from our exclusion from the Summit’s deliberations and proposes how these can be addressed, even though the Summit has been concluded.

First, if the intention of the Summit was to improve the interface between the state and civil society then this aim ought to have been reflected by the composition of the national steering committee overseeing the Summit. According to the Framework Declaration issued at the Summit’s conclusion the committee included the Presidency; the Department of Social Development (DSD); the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME); the National Development Agency (NDA); the Department of Employment and Labour; the National Lotteries Commission (NLC); and the National Economic Development and Labour Council (NEDLAC). Five of the seven members of this national steering committee thus represented government departments, granting the state disproportionate influence in selecting civil society’s representatives.

Further, while the NLC is not part of the government, it is an organ of state and one, moreover, mired in controversy over the distribution of its funds to civil society organisations (of which we will say more later). Civil society was thus represented by one body only, the NEDLAC Community Constituency, whose representatives are somewhat opaque. (We note also the existence of a NEDLAC Community Constituency Trust but are unclear about its relationship to the NEDLAC Community Constituency.)

According to the 2010/2011 NEDLAC Annual Report (which appears to be the last report to provide this detail) the community constituency comprised Disabled People South Africa; the Financial Sector Campaign Coalition; the South African Youth Council; and the South African National Civic Organisation. However, from earlier annual reports we also note the inclusion of Women’s National Coalition at some point, while later reports show an increase in the number of individuals listed under the community constituency (without listing the structures they represent). As far as we are aware, the organisations named were appointed to the Community Constituency in 1995 when NEDLAC was established. Civil society has expanded and diversified considerably in the more than 25 years since – to the extent that the Community Constituency cannot be taken to represent the entirety of civil society in 2022.

As the narrow approach taken to who constitutes civil society delimited what was up for debate from the outset, questions are raised around the extent to which the Framework Declaration can be considered to truly represent the full range of civil society. On this basis we cannot support the call to immediately establish an Apex Alliance tasked with implementing the Framework Declaration, especially when who will be selecting representatives for this Apex Alliance is not specified. If it is left to the national steering committee then there is every likelihood that the exclusion of large portions of civil society will be institutionalised – with implications for the effectiveness of any social compact. Indeed, can a compact truly be described as ‘social’ when a number of sectors and structures are overlooked?

Second, media reports state that those present at the Summit objected to the Framework Declaration on the grounds that it did not reflect actual discussions but was framed to reflect predetermined outcomes (<https://www.news24.com/news24/southafrica/politics/we-will-not-rubberstamp-preconceived-resolutions-say-presidential-summit-delegates-20220806>). As we were not present, we cannot confirm or deny this. But we can confirm that a number of the recommendations do not address our concerns while some we simply cannot endorse.

We have already noted our reservations about the Apex Alliance. A second concern is the absence of discussion around the NLC. The Presidency will be well aware of the 2020 proclamation authorising the Special Investigating Unit (SIU) to probe alleged corruption and maladministration in the NLC, with the Special Tribunal hearing matters since at least March of this year. With the appointment of a new Board and Chair, restoring trust and credibility in the NLC ought to

have been a key feature of discussions. Instead, we note an emphasis on the creation of a single fund to which civil society moneys are expected to be channelled. This does not in any way solve the financial difficulties so many organisations encounter and is another recommendation we cannot endorse.

Given these and other concerns, we are keen to comment on and strengthen the Framework Declaration. We thus ask the Presidency to:

- 1) Confirm the legal status of the Framework Declaration document, as well as the extent to which its decisions are binding on either the state or civil society, or both;
- 2) Call for, and accept, additional submissions on the Framework Declaration since it may not be possible to call a second Summit to rectify the shortcomings of the first version.
- 3) In the event of point 2 being implemented, establish a representative and inclusive structure that includes a wide range of civil society organisations at least equivalent in number to the participating government departments. This structure's purpose will be both to adjudicate the above inputs and oversee the Framework amendments, as well as to oversee the Implementation Plan referred to in 5.3 of the draft Framework.
- 4) Make available the resolutions taken at the Summit referred to in section 5 of the Framework Declaration.
- 5) Alternatively, afford us the opportunity to make representations to the Presidency around both our various concerns with the Framework, as well as matters not dealt with by the Framework Declaration.

We look forward to your response to this letter and the opportunity to work collaboratively in building South Africa.

The networks, structures and individual organisations that have developed and supported this letter are listed below.

National and regional bodies and networks / affiliates (3 456)

Afrikaanse Christelike Vroue Vereeniging (278 affiliates)
Apostolic Faith Mission Executive Welfare Council (56 affiliates)
Child Welfare South Africa (164 affiliates)
Council for Church Social Services (1 042 affiliates)
Epilepsy South Africa (6 affiliates)
FAMSA (29 affiliates)
Free State Care in Action (83 affiliates)
Gauteng Provincial Association for People with Disabilities
Gauteng Social Services Welfare Development Forum (550 affiliates)
Imbumba Association (76 member organisations)
Khulisa Social Solutions (7 affiliates)
KwaZulu-Natal NPO Network
Midlands Social Services and Developmental Welfare Forum
National Adoption Coalition South Africa (61 affiliates)
National Association of Child Care Workers
National Coalition for Social Services (17 member organisations)
National Shelter Movement (94 affiliates)
Operation Compassion
Rata Social Services (15 affiliates)
Residentia Foundation (15 affiliates)
Salvation Army (458 affiliates)
SOS Children's Villages South Africa (9 affiliates)
South African Deaf Association (24 affiliates)
South African Disability Alliance (19 affiliates)
South African Federation of Mental Health (16 affiliates)
South African National Child Rights Coalition (126 affiliates)
South African National Council for the Blind (92 affiliates)
South African National Council on Alcohol and Drug Dependence (31 affiliates)
South African Older Persons' Forum

South African Women's Federation (153 affiliates)
Witbank Society for the Aged (4 affiliates)

Organisations (32) – a number of the organisations listed below both belong to some of the structures detailed above and wanted to be listed in their individual capacities. To prevent double-counting we have therefore only provided the total for number of organisations not already included above.

Adv Brijraj
AFM Welfare
Assitej SA
Association for the Physically Challenged (APC)
Autism SA
Awareness for Child Trafficking Africa (ACT Africa)
Bikers Against Rape
Blind SA
Callas Foundation
Catholic Women's League, Pretoria
Centre for Child Law
Childline SA, Free State
Child Protection – Martin Barnard
Children in Distress (CINDI)
Children's Memorial Institute
Children's Parliament – Mr Alessio Marcus
Community Chest Durban
Connect Network
Down Syndrome South Africa
Durban and Coastal Mental Health
Durban Child and Youth Care Centre
Equal Education Law Centre
For the Voiceless
Give a Child a Family
HI HOPES - NPO
Hillcrest AIDS Centre Trust (HACT)
Johannesburg Council for the Disabled (JOCOD)
Iris House
Issy Geshen Lamont Home
Justice Desk
Karabo Mokoena
Khensani's Collection
Khula Development Group
Kindersorg Stellenbosch
KwaZulu-Natal Deaf Association
KZN Care Association (KZNCA)
KZN Deaf Association (KZNDa)
Lawyers Against Abuse
Leliebloem House
Lifeline National
Lifeline Vaal
Mosaic
Muscular Dystrophy Foundation of South Africa
Mzamo Child Guidance Centre
Partners in Sexual Health
Pinetown Highway Child Welfare Society
Play Africa
PMB Children's Home

People Opposing Women's Abuse (POWA)
Pietermaritzburg Mental Health
Project Playground Trust
Project Preparation Trust
QuadPara Association
Quadriplegic & Paraplegic Charitable Trust SA
Rand Aid Association, Edenvale
Rays of Hope
REHAB
SaferKidsZA NPC
South African Parenting Programme Implementers Network (SAPPIN)
SANCA Pietermaritzburg
SANCA Zululand
ShonaQuip SA
South African Disability Alliance
St Martins Diocesan Home for Children
Sunshine
Teddy Bear Foundation for Abused Children
Thandanani Children's Foundation
The Association for the Aged (TAFTA)
The Child and Family Welfare Society of Pietermaritzburg
The Children's Institute
The Epic Foundation
The Marian Rose Foundation
Uviwe
Voice Movement Therapy Eastern Cape
We Care
Western Cape Foundation for Community Work
Wits Centre for Deaf Studies
World Vision
Zaida Mpofu