



Launch of Cape Town Chapter Swaziland Democracy Campaign

PRESS STATEMENT

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In the wake of the worsening crisis in Swaziland, civil society organizations from the Western Cape officially launched the Cape Town chapter of the Swaziland Democracy Campaign. The Swaziland Democracy Campaign is a coalition united around the demand for democracy, peace, and security in Swaziland. The chapter was officially launched on 9 July in Salt River and the meeting was attended by 31 people representing various organisations including PASSOP, COSATU, COSATU Young Workers Forum, SACTWU, SACCAWU, DENOSA, BHASO, CECAngola, Workers World Media Productions as well as members from the local DRC, Angolan, and Ugandan communities.

Those in attendance addressed the influence that the South African Government has, based on Swaziland's reliance on South Africa for aid and trade. Moreover, the Swaziland state income is dependent upon the revenue received from the South African government through its share of the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) funds. Approximately half of its annual R11billion budget is dependent on the SACU. This affords our government tremendous power and influence for pushing for a democratic dispensation in Swaziland in accordance with the wishes and aspirations of the Swazi people. Recently we've also learnt of the approaches to the South African government by the Swazi king for a loan of over R1billion. We call on the South African government to refuse this loan and to stop SACU payments to the government of Swaziland and push the king and his regime to step down and enable a process towards a democratic Swaziland.

The SDC of Cape Town plans to meet regularly to ensure effective communication and strategizing. In addition, the representatives expressed priority in strengthening the capacity of the SDC, which is imperative in steering union and political leadership to bring about better conditions in Swaziland. It was agreed that the Cape Town Chapter will be hosting a protest outside parliament, the details of which will be discussed at our next meeting.

The next meeting will be held on 13 August at 9h30 at Community House in Salt River. The political economy of Swaziland will be highlighted and discussed in the upcoming meeting. The media is invited to be part of this educational session.

For comments, please contact the SDC Western Cape representatives: Martin Jansen 0828702025; Mike Louw 082 339 5443/ 021 448 0045/6/7; Braam Hanekom 0843191764.

