



The South African Institute for  
**Advancement**

**Media release by Inyathelo – The South African Institute for Advancement**

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## **Our World, Our Responsibility: Re-Energising Civil Society**

A conference probing the impact and effectiveness of South Africa's civil society on the country's social environment will take place between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> November 2009.

Inyathelo-The South African Institute for Advancement, a well-known organisation whose core work is to build a sustainable civil society, promote social responsibility, personal philanthropy, voluntarism and self-reliance, will host the "Our World, Our Responsibility: Re-Energising Civil Society" conference at the Lagoon Beach Hotel in Milnerton, Cape Town.

"There will be workshops facilitated by highly respected professionals from all over South Africa and internationally," says Gillian Mitchell, Philanthropy Programme Manager, Inyathelo.

Potentially controversial issues will be discussed. Among them are

- Hindering or harnessing: what role should the state play in ensuring a robust civil society?
- What is the relationship between philanthropy and activism?
- If universities are public institutions, who exactly owns them? and
- What do the major foundations believe about Africa?

Hundreds of delegates from government, philanthropic organisations, business, media, education, youth and non-profit sectors, are registering to attend, hoping to not only network and gain expert assistance and knowledge through the conference's skillsXchange sessions, but to stop, think and discuss the various futures that may exist for civil societies in an ever-changing world.

"Nowadays, civil society's role is to react and respond to fundamental changes rather than to try and prevent or minimise the impact in advance. In the past, it was always ahead in predicting what the future would hold and played a leading role in devising solutions,

"Our aim is to explore how best we can regain our pro-activeness, how we can yet again play a leading role in decision-making, and how we can devise solutions to changes in economy, governance and investment patterns," says Mitchell.

Some of the speakers and facilitators include John Pampallis, advisor to the Minister of Higher Education and Training; Anna Vayanos, head of the BoE Private Clients Philanthropy Office; Khanyisa Balfour, Director of Corporate Social Investment at Engen; Kuseni Dlamini, CEO of Old Mutual South Africa; Paulos Tesfagiorgis, human rights activist and Senior Advisor for Constitution-Building Processes at the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance; Dr Iqbal Survé, social entrepreneur and Chairman of Sekunjalo Investment Holdings and Chief Executive of Sekunjalo Investments Ltd.

For more information on the conference and speakers, please go to [www.inyathelo.co.za](http://www.inyathelo.co.za) or email: [conference@inyathelo.co.za](mailto:conference@inyathelo.co.za) or contact Astrid von Kotze at Inyathelo-The South African Institute for Advancement on 021 465 6981.