



Media release

**For Immediate Release
Tuesday, 26 January 2010**



New Southern Africa Youth Exchange Programme to be Launched

The Southern Africa Trust in collaboration with AFS Interculture South Africa will, on Thursday 4 February 2010, launch a new southern Africa cross-border youth exchange programme called ***sayXchange***. The launch will be held at The Wanderers Club, Johannesburg, starting at 18h00. It will be facilitated by the Southern Africa Trust's *change4ever* campaign ambassador and prominent media personality, Unathi.

Initially targeting young people from Mozambique and South Africa to do volunteer work in community-based non-profit organisations across the borders of the region, the first phase of the five-month exchange programme will start in July 2010 and will have a total of 20 participants (10 from each of the two participating countries). Young people between the ages of 18 and 25 years old will be eligible to apply to participate in the programme.

SayXchange will later roll out to include participation and exchanges between other southern African countries.

The programme was conceptualised following the 2008 xenophobic attacks in South Africa on people from other African countries.

"Those attacks were sad examples of a lack of knowledge, ill-informed preconceptions and a poor understanding of the different realities and social issues that affect all the countries of the southern African region," said Themba Mhlongo, Head of Programmes at the Southern Africa Trust.

"With this programme, we want to build bridges between communities across the region, boost intercultural understanding, and help develop a shared southern African regional identity," he said.

SayXchange will promote people-based regional integration and a southern African regional identity amongst young people. It will help nurture the development of leaders in southern Africa with a regional perspective by encouraging youth engagement in civic affairs across borders.

AFS Interculture is an international, volunteer-based, non-governmental, not-for-profit organization with decades of global experience, that provides intercultural learning opportunities to help people develop the knowledge, skills and understanding needed to create a more just and peaceful world.

The Southern Africa Trust is an independent non-profit agency that supports deeper and wider regional engagement to overcome poverty in southern Africa.

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All journalists are invited to attend the launch. To confirm your attendance or to get more information, please contact:

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