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Street vendors of the world meet in Kigali, Rwanda, for the 7th International Congress of StreetNet

[StreetNet International](http://www.streetnet.org.za), a global alliance of street vendors and informal traders, will hold its 7th International Congress in May 2023. **This event will feature more than 150 informal economy worker leaders, activists and street vendor representatives as well as invited guests from other trade unions from four continents and over 50 countries who will gather in Kigali, Rwanda from 1st to 6th May, 2023, to discuss strategies on how to defend these workers' right to recognition, social protection and decent work, as well as relevant issues such as climate change and just transition.** It will also be an opportunity for the participants to meet for the celebrations of May 1st, International Workers' Day.

The International Congress will elect the new leadership for the next 4-year term and have the opportunity to propose, debate and adapt new policies and resolutions. The Congress is the supreme governing body of StreetNet, entrusted with leading the decision-making process.

“StreetNet International Congress is the biggest event for StreetNet family” says **Oksana Abboud**, International Coordinator, “As it is exactly the most crucial space to get together for all StreetNet members from around the globe, listen to them, collect their views and suggestions, **share experience and knowledge, analyze and criticize as well as to adopt new policies and strategies on continuous institutional growth in building collective actions towards empowerment and strengthening StreetNet at different levels**, especially to amplify the voice and influence of informal street and market vendors in their own countries and cities while advocating for their rights and all types of protection.”

“Power in solidarity”: informal traders coming together for recognition, decent work and social protection for all

For over two decades, StreetNet has built solidarity among informal economy workers of the world, uniting them in a collective voice recognised by multilateral organizations such as the International Labour Organization, a UN Agency. StreetNet has advocated for the extension to its constituency of basic labor rights. **Informal traders, as well as many other informal economy workers, in most cases do not have access to any form of social protection and are excluded from collective negotiations and social dialogue.** Although informal economy workers are essential contributors to the economy of all countries, they are often excluded and neglected.

International Council members

Lorraine Sibanda (Zimbabwe) (President), Alberto Santana (Dominican Republic) (Vice-President), Jamal Ismayilov (Azerbaijan) (Secretary), Annie Diouf (Senegal) (Treasurer), Comfort Doryen (Liberia), Jeanette Nyramasengesho (Rwanda), Gabriela Calandria (Uruguay), Maya Gurung (Nepal), Angélique Katani Kupulu (Democratic Republic of the Congo), Afiavi Anastasie Chodaton (Benin), Ken Williams Mhango (Malawi), Aaron Aiah Boima (Sierra Leone), Iryna Yaskevich (Belarus), Jose Herminio Diaz (El Salvador), Kaditou Barry (Guinea).



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“Recognition for the workers in the informal economy is critical for the growth of any country” says **Lorraine Sibanda**, president of StreetNet “This will also facilitate the access to decent work for informal economy workers, a condition that is not met in many countries. There needs to be access to social dialogue, so that workers in the informal economy are at the table of negotiations, being in the position to articulate their own issues, as well as guide the national strategies on formalization processes and the extension of social protection. **Workers in the informal economy are as legitimate as their counterparts in the formal economy**”.

The 7th Congress will set the pace and the agenda to continue the development of our global alliance in the next four years. We will continue our fight for recognition and demand for our rights.

Nothing for us without us!

Press inquiries

For more information or to schedule interviews, please contact, Margarida Teixeira, Media manager at media@streetnet.org.za

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