



12 August 2021

### International Youth Day 2021- Press Release.

International Youth Day is celebrated annually on 12<sup>th</sup> August. The Consortium for Refugees and Migrants in South Africa (CoRMSA) joins the rest of the world in commemorating the positive contributions made by all young people across the globe as set out by the United Nations in 1999. The theme for 2021 is “**Transforming food systems: Youth Innovation for Human and Planetary Health**” which aims at highlighting that, the success of such a global effort cannot be achieved without the meaningful participation of young people.

With the above in mind, CoRMSA urges South Africans to recognise the positive contributions made by all young people including migrant youths across various sectors of our society. Presently, South Africa hosts young migrants from all nations. The majority of these migrants possess critical skills that are much needed for an innovative and developed South Africa.

In observing and celebrating this day, CoRMSA believes that we should also remember the effective sacrifices made by South African youth of 1976 in fighting against oppression and better opportunities for all such as, implementing programmes that promote the economic opportunities for all the youth, regardless of their nationalities, gender, religious affiliations or documentation status. In recognising the positive contributions made by all young people including young migrants, we should also recognise and bring to attention, the endless challenges faced by the youth of today. In light of this, CoRMSA believes that this can be done through creating awareness of the socio-economic and socio-political issues that the youth are facing in the present era. This can also be done through addressing challenges that the youth are constantly facing such as being denied access to basic needs such as healthcare especially in this Covid-19 pandemic, education, enabling documents and social inclusion, discrimination, xenophobia among others, not forgetting the high unemployment among these youths.

To affirm the theme, “**Transforming food systems: Youth Innovation for Human and Planetary**”, CoRMSA believes that young people need to be engaged, included and understood when building a world based on inclusivity, fair and sustainable development for all. CoRMSA also calls the Department of Home Affairs to address these challenges through documenting all the youths for easy access to health care services, education and social security systems. Similarly, there is need for the Department of Health to honour the health care rights of all youth as enshrined in section 27 of the Bill of Rights of the South African Constitution of 1996. In the same vein, CoRMSA calls the Department of Basic Education to honour the right of education of all the youth, regardless of documentation status, and not deprive them of their bright futures. CoRMSA extends its call to the South African government to devise intensive and effective protection mechanisms for migrant youth against xenophobia and all forms of discrimination. This will create an even more safer and conducive environment for all the youths in South Africa.

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