BUFFALO CITY DECLARATION
SOUTH AFRICAN EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE
FROM 27 TO 30 MARCH 2012

We the undersigned;

Acknowledging that Early Childhood Development (ECD) services are an investment in the overall well-being of children and intrinsically related to the promotion of child rights, poverty eradication, sustainable human resource development, basic education and health for all as enshrined in the South African Constitution;

Noting the crucial role of parents/ caregivers to the well-being of a child;

Recognising the first 1000 days of a child's life as critical to its holistic development;

Noting the lack of access to ECD services for most children including children with special needs, the urban bias in ECD provisioning and the inequitable distribution of services impeding the fulfilment of children's rights as enshrined in the Constitution and International Conventions;

Affirming the role of civil society in the provision of quality ECD services by government;

Recognising the need to improve qualifications of and conditions of service for ECD practitioners;

Acknowledging the need for the development of an ECD Curriculum for children between the ages of birth to four years;

Taking cognisance that ECD services are not adequately resourced;

WE COMMIT OURSELVES TO AN ACCELERATED ACTION TO ENSURE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THIS CONFERENCE, FOCUSING ON:

1. A comprehensive review and harmonisation of policy and legislation within the ECD sector moving towards universal access.

2. A multi-sectoral, integrated, coordinated approach to ensure the effective provisioning of ECD services by Government, non- governmental organisations, civil society and business.

3. Strengthening the role of parents/ caregivers, families and communities in the provisioning of ECD services.

4. The inclusion of children with special needs and deliberately extending ECD services to children in rural areas.

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5. Adequate resourcing of ECD services, including infrastructure provisioning;

6. Working towards professionalization, accreditation, improving training and promoting the Basic Conditions of Employment Act in the ECD services sector.

7. Streamlining of registration processes and the standardisation of ECD services to improve the quality thereof.

8. The development of a Programme of Action, in collaboration with civil society partners, with clear targets and outcomes for each of the identified focus areas by 30 June 2012.

MINISTERS AND DEPUTY MINISTERS:

Name and Surname	Portfolio	Date:

MEMBERS OF EXECUTIVE COUNCILS

Name and Surname	Portfolio	Date:

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CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS

Name and Surname	Portfolio	Date:

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