



**Action of the 2006-2007 American Sociological Association Council  
By Unanimous Vote of those Responding  
June 6, 2007**

Present by Vote: Rebecca G. Adams, Kathleen M. Blee, Dalton Conley, Bonnie Thornton Dill, Cynthia Fuchs Epstein, Evelyn Nakano Glenn, Arne L. Kalleberg, Michele Lamont, Ann Shola Orloff, Mary E. Pattillo, Frances Fox Piven, Mary Romero, Ruben G. Rumbaut, Gay W. Seidman, Lynn Smith-Lovin, Bruce Western, Franklin D. Wilson.

Absent from Vote: Judith D. Auerbach, Douglas McAdam

ASA Executive Officer Sally T. Hillsman provided the following background information by email.

Background

I have been asked by President Frances Fox Piven to provide you with information as background to seeking your support for ASA to take action regarding the United States Department of State's lack of action on the request of Dr. Adam Habib of the Human and Social Science Research Council of South Africa for a visa to participate in the 2007 ASA Annual Meeting.

In its program planning for the 2007 thematic session for the Annual Meeting program, the 2007 Program Committee identified the topic of "Globalization and Resistance" and asked Gay Seidman to be the organizer. Dr. Habib was one of the scholars identified to present a paper on "Speaking to Global Debates with a National Lens: South African Social Movements in Comparative Perspective." Attached to this email is the ASA's letter of invitation to Dr. Habib including the names of other participants in this session.

The American Civil Liberties Union is attempting to assist Dr. Habib obtain a US visa to come to the Annual Meeting but it seems likely that the State Department will not act on his application in a timely fashion. Dr. Habib has been to the United States frequently in the past and, indeed, has a doctorate from the City University of New York and is a highly published international scholar and black intellectual. Although he had a visa in late 2006 to enter the United States, he was refused entry at the airport.

### Proposed Action

Anticipating that the State Department is "dragging its feet" to avoid making a decision on Dr. Habib's visa in time for him to participate in the ASA Annual Meeting, the ACLU is preparing a suit to be initiated in July asking the federal court to require the State Department to act. If the State Department does act, and denies Dr. Habib entry, the ACLU will challenge that decision .

The ACLU is asking the ASA to be the plaintiff in this case. There may also be other plaintiffs since Dr. Habib is planning other engagements while in the United States in August.

Attached is the letter from the ACLU laying out more background to this situation and what being a plaintiff would entail for the Association. (Our "costs" are primarily time to work with the lawyer, not financial costs.) I have reviewed this letter with the ASA's attorney. Frances believes, and I agree, that the State Department's failure to act on a visa to admit to the United States a scholar invited to participate in the major annual gathering of academic sociologists in the United States is a violation of the scholarly principles of intellectual and academic freedom upon which our Association depends .

### Action Steps

Please respond by close of business, Thursday, June 6, 2007 with an email indicating that you are in favor of ASA becoming a plaintiff in a suit by the ACLS (YES); or that you are not in favor (NO); or that you may be in favor but want telephone conference meeting of Council before a vote (MAYBE).

If this action requires a telephone conference meeting, I will set one up for the week of June 11th.

Below please find links to Dr. Habib's website and the ACLU website on ideological exclusion.

Thank you. I look forward to hearing from you.

Adam Habib on HSRC website =

<http://www.hsrc.ac.za/Staff-1025.phtml>

ACLU website referenced by Melissa at ACLU.org/exclusion =

<http://www.aclu.org/safefree/general/21211prs20051110.html>

<p><b>Motion:</b> ASA Council approves the Association becoming a plaintiff in a suit by the ACLU should the United States Department of State fail to act in a timely manner to provide Dr. Adam Habib with a visa to enter the United States to participate as an invited speaker at the Annual Meeting of the ASA in New York City, August 11-14, 2007. Passed unanimously</p>
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