



# ArchivesSpace

a community served by †Lyrasis

## Committee for Health in Southern Africa records6605663

---

This finding aid was produced using ArchivesSpace on January 13, 2025.

Description is written in: English.

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

### Rare Book and Manuscript Library

Butler Library, 6th Floor  
Columbia University, Mail Code 1127  
535 W. 114th St.  
New York, NY 10027  
Business Number: (212) 854-5153  
Fax Number: (212) 854-1365  
[rbml@libraries.cul.columbia.edu](mailto:rbml@libraries.cul.columbia.edu)  
URL: <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/lweb/indiv/rbml/index.html>

---

## Table of Contents

---

Summary Information .....	3
Biographical / Historical .....	3
Summary .....	5
Arrangement .....	6
Administrative Information .....	6
Controlled Access Headings .....	7
Collection Inventory .....	8
Series I: Correspondence .....	8
Subseries I.1: Alphabetical .....	8
Subseries I.2: Chronological .....	10
Series II: Administrative Files .....	10
Series III: Conferences and Workshops .....	12
Series IV: Activities .....	13
Subseries IV.1: NAMDA .....	13
Subseries IV.2: Projects .....	14

---

## Summary Information

---

<b>Repository:</b>	Rare Book and Manuscript Library
<b>Creator:</b>	Committee for Health in Southern Africa
<b>Title:</b>	Committee for Health in Southern Africa records
<b>ID:</b>	6605663
<b>ID:</b>	HR#0006
<b>Date [inclusive]:</b>	1981-1998
<b>Date [bulk]:</b>	1985-1991
<b>Physical Description:</b>	7.56 linear feet 18 manuscript boxes
<b>Language of the Material:</b>	English , Afrikaans .
<b>Abstract:</b>	This collection documents the efforts of the Committee for Health in Southern Africa, a human rights organization once based in New York State, in its attempts improve the health of the people of Southern Africa through research, education, training, and consultation.

### Preferred Citation

Identification of specific item; Date (if known); Committee on Health in Southern Africa; Box and Folder; Center for Human Rights Documentation and Research, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University Library.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

---

## Biographical / Historical

---

The Committee for Health in Southern Africa (CHISA) was a not-for-profit North American human rights organization consisting of volunteers--most of them health professionals--who recognized the urgent need for better health care, education, facilities, and medical training in the nations of Southern Africa. Founded in 1984 as South Africa approached a state of emergency, the group was especially concerned about the disparity between medical care for white and black patients in that country, and about the direct effects of apartheid on health and mental health. CHISA served as the U.S. liaison with the National Medical and Dental

Association (NAMDA), an anti-apartheid professional group in South Africa, and worked closely with a number of other organizations, most of which merged to become the South African Health and Social Service Organization (SAHSSO) in 1992.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

---

## Biographical / Historical

---

CHISA met its goal of improving health care for all people in Southern Africa by conducting research, educating and assisting health care workers, and raising awareness among the international medical community. Much of the group's initial work centered on resisting apartheid, and members presented the results of apartheid health studies at conferences and in medical journals such as "Lancet" and "American Journal of Public Health". Beginning in 1987, CHISA gave programs on health in Southern Africa at the annual meetings of the American Public Health Association, drawing large audiences and increasing public awareness of issues such as the HIV/AIDS epidemic. In 1989, CHISA organized a delegation on health and human rights which visited South Africa to study health issues, and published its findings in a monograph. CHISA members also acted as technical and professional consultants, lending expertise to many projects, including the creation of a School of Public Health at the University of the Western Cape.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

---

## Biographical / Historical

---

Among CHISA's most significant achievements was a series of four International Workshops on Health in Southern Africa, held in late 1980s and early 1990s. The first three focused on the themes of Health Activism and Primary Health Care, the Health of Workers, and Women Under Apartheid. The fourth workshop, entitled New Models of Health Sciences Education and Health Care Delivery: Strategies for Change in a Time of Transition, Conflict, and Epidemic and generally known as the Maputo Workshop, was a groundbreaking event that had a major impact on South Africa's health systems. Organized and funded by CHISA with the help of many other organizations, the conference was held in Maputo in April, 1990 at the invitation of the Minister of Health in Mozambique. For the first time, representatives from all of South Africa's major health organizations met with the African National Congress Executive Committee and Health Department, government health officials from other African states, and professionals from the U.S. and Europe. For seven days, the nearly 200 delegates discussed the current state of health care in South Africa, examined the nature of and possible solutions for the HIV/AIDS epidemic, and created new goals for the transitional period. The conference represented a shift in focus from resisting and documenting apartheid to planning new policies, primary health care systems, financing, and health education for a post-apartheid state. It

resulted in the Declaration on Health in Southern Africa and the Statement on HIV and AIDS in South Africa, which formally recognized the epidemic and outlined a plan for change.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

---

## Biographical / Historical

---

In 1992, CHISA took on the Human Resources Data Bank project, a database which listed North American professionals from many areas of expertise who were willing to work or volunteer in South Africa. The project aimed to create "an efficient pathway for the thousands of requests--and offers--that now move in each direction."

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

---

## Biographical / Historical

---

After free elections were held in South Africa in 1994, members of CHISA considered disbanding the group, as many of its original goals had met with success. Instead, CHISA remained for several more years with a new mission to assist in the rebuilding of South Africa.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

---

## Summary

---

The collection is made up primarily of correspondence, which is found throughout the files, as well as a fair amount of conference and project information. Much of the material concerns the work of CHISA's president Mervyn Susser, a South African doctor and professor of epidemiology at Columbia University, and it is likely that the files originated in his office. The collection also contains meeting minutes, newsletters and mailings, financial reports, grant proposals, and a small number of cassette tapes, video tapes, and booklets on hygiene and general health care intended for the South African public.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

---

## Arrangement

---

This collection is arranged in four series.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

---

## Administrative Information

---

### Publication Statement

Rare Book and Manuscript Library

Butler Library, 6th Floor  
Columbia University, Mail Code 1127  
535 W. 114th St.

New York, NY 10027

Business Number: (212) 854-5153

Fax Number: (212) 854-1365

[rbml@libraries.cul.columbia.edu](mailto:rbml@libraries.cul.columbia.edu)

URL: <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/lweb/indiv/rbml/index.html>

### Revision Description

PDF replaced with full finding aid, YH June 2020

### Restrictions on Access

This collection has no restrictions.

### Restrictions on Access

This collection is located off-site. You will need to request this material at least three business days in advance to use the collection in the Rare Book and Manuscript Library reading room.

### Terms Governing Use and Reproduction

Reproductions may be made for research purposes. Permission to publish material from the collection must be requested from the Manuscript Curator, Rare Book and Manuscript Library (RBML). The RBML approves permission to publish that which it physically owns; the responsibility to secure copyright permission rests with the patron.

### **Immediate Source of Acquisition**

Source of acquisition--Mervyn Susser. Method of acquisition--Donated by; Date of acquisition--2000.

### **Processing Information**

This collection was processed by Carolyn Smith.

### **Processing Information**

Finding aid written by Carolyn Smith in March 2008.

### **Accrual**

No accruals are expected

### **Accruals**

Materials may have been added to the collection since this finding aid was prepared. Contact [rbml@columbia.edu](mailto:rbml@columbia.edu) for more information.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

---

## **Controlled Access Headings**

---

- AIDS (Disease)
- Anti-apartheid movements
- Apartheid
- Discrimination in medical care
- HIV infections
- HIV/AIDS awareness
- Human rights
- Medical care
- Post-apartheid era
- Right to health
- Mozambique
- Namibia
- South Africa
- Public health
- Correspondence
- minutes (administrative records)
- Bylaws (administrative records)

- Financial records
- Membership lists
- Notes (documents)
- Conference proceedings
- Press releases
- Audiocassettes
- VHS
- Proposals
- Programs (documents)
- Slides (photographs)
- Photographs
- Newsletters
- Printed Ephemera
- Committee for Health in Southern Africa
- NAMDA (Association : South Africa)

---

## Collection Inventory

---

### Series I: Correspondence, 1981-1995

#### Scope and Contents

This series has been divided into two subseries: alphabetical correspondence, filed either by individual correspondent name or by organization title, and chronological correspondence. There is considerable overlap and all files contain a similar mix of letters and memos between CHISA members, other human rights organizations, and medical professionals. Many discussions relate to event planning or fundraising, although others are more in-depth conversations on health issues. CHISA's president Mervyn Susser is well represented, and these files may have come from his office. There is also some material on the Maputo Workshop, but correspondence files relating specifically to this event can be found in Series III.

#### Subseries I.1: Alphabetical, 1984-1995

Title/Description	Instances	
Individual Correspondents		
Bassett, M.T., 1989	box 1	folder 1
Benatar, S.R., 1990-1994	box 1	folder 2
Broomberg, Jonathan, 1992	box 1	folder 3
Brutus, Dennis, 1985-1987	box 1	folder 4
Cherry, Violet, 1984-1991	box 1	folder 5
Coodvadia, H.M., 1989-1990	box 1	folder 6
Crane, Charles, 1995	box 1	folder 7
De Sweemer, Cecile, 1985	box 1	folder 8



Committee for Health in Southern Africa records6605663

Dommissie, John, 1979-1990 <u>Physical Description:</u> 2 folders	box 1	folder 9-10
Geiger, H. Jack, 1994	box 1	folder 11
Henderson, Martha, 1989	box 1	folder 12
Kistnasamy, Barry, 1990-1991 <u>Physical Description:</u> 2 folders	box 1	folder 13-14
Lackey, Miles M., 1990	box 2	folder 1
Mandela, Nelson, 1993	box 2	folder 2
McBeth, William, 1992	box 2	folder 3
Mennin, Stewart and Arthur Kaufman, 1989-1990	box 2	folder 4
Mji, Diliza, 1987-1988	box 2	folder 5
Orr, Wendy, 1988	box 2	folder 6
Reddy, Jairam, 1991	box 2	folder 7
Rice, Michael and Ruth Fisher, 1989	box 2	folder 8
Ritterman, Jeffrey, 1988	box 2	folder 9
Sachs, Jonny, 1988	box 2	folder 10
Salim Abdul Karim, 1988-1990	box 2	folder 11
Simonsen, Richard, 1988	box 2	folder 12
Sinclair, Michael, 1987-1989	box 2	folder 13
Sisulu, Walter and Albertina, 1989-1990	box 2	folder 14
Susser, Mervyn, 1991	box 2	folder 15
Tambo, Oliver, 1990	box 2	folder 16
Tobias, Phillip, 1985	box 2	folder 17
Yach, Derek, 1990-1993	box 2	folder 18
<b>Organizations</b>		
Africa Fund, 1981-1987	box 3	folder 1
Concerned Nurses of South Africa, 1992	box 3	folder 2
Global Exchange, 1990	box 3	folder 3
International Council of Nurses, 1993	box 3	folder 4
Kellogg Foundation, 1993	box 3	folder 5
Lawyer's Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, 1986-1989	box 3	folder 6
MASA, 1989	box 3	folder 7

New York Academy of Sciences, 1986	box 3	folder 8
Operation Hunger, 1988	box 3	folder 9
Physicians for Human Rights, 1987-1989 <u>Physical Description</u> : 2 folders	box 3	folder 10-11
University of the Western Cape, 1991	box 3	folder 12
U.S. Aid, Pretoria, 1990	box 3	folder 13
U.S. Information Agency, 1995	box 3	folder 14

### Subseries I.2: Chronological, 1985-1994

Title/Description	Instances	
General, 1985-1986	box 3	folder 15
General, 1986-1992 <u>Physical Description</u> : 2 folders	box 4	folder 1-2
General, 1987-1988 <u>Physical Description</u> : 5 folders	box 4	folder 3-7
General, 1988-1990 <u>Physical Description</u> : 6 folders	box 5	folder 1-6
General, 1990-1993 <u>Physical Description</u> : 6 folders	box 6	folder 1-6
Letters of Support, 1994	box 6	folder 7
President's Correspondence--Faxes Sent, 1989-1990	box 6	folder 8
President's Correspondence--Faxes Received, 1989-1990	box 6	folder 9
President's Correspondence, 1986-1991 <u>Physical Description</u> : 5 folders	box 7	folder 1-5

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

### Series II: Administrative Files, 1984-1998

#### Scope and Contents

Documents in this series relate to the operation and promotion of CHISA as a non-profit organization. Minutes and notes for national, board, and other meetings provide an overview of CHISA activities and goals. Meeting materials are filed chronologically but not by type; a folder may contain information about several meetings from a particular year. CHISA's national meetings were often held at the annual meeting of the American Public Health Association (APHA).

Title/Description	Instances	
Articles about CHISA, 1985-1990	box 8	folder 1

## Committee for Health in Southern Africa records6605663

By-Laws, 1987-1991	box 8	folder 2
Bibliography, circa 1990	box 8	folder 3
Chapter Files		
Atlanta	box 8	folder 4
Baltimore, 1986	box 8	folder 5
Boston, 1989-1993	box 8	folder 6
East Bay, 1988-1989	box 8	folder 7
Los Angeles, 1989-1991	box 8	folder 8
Seattle, 1988	box 8	folder 9
Toronto, 1988	box 8	folder 10
Financial		
Audit Report, 1989	box 8	folder 11
Financial Statements, 1992-1993	box 8	folder 12
General, 1987-1991	box 8	folder 13
Human Rights Internet Survey, 1996	box 8	folder 14
Information Packet	box 8	folder 15
Mailings		
General, 1985-1989	box 8	folder 16
Occasional Letters #1-8, 1984-1987	box 8	folder 17
Occasional Letters #9-13, 1988-1989	box 9	folder 1
Newsletter Attachments, 1988	box 9	folder 2
Solicitation Letters, 1990	box 9	folder 3
Membership Lists, 1986-1992	box 9	folder 4
Meetings		
CHISA-PPHC Joint Meeting, 1987	box 9	folder 5
Minutes and Notes, 1984-1991 <u>Physical Description</u> : 7 folders	box 9	folder 6-12
Minutes and Notes, 1992-1994 <u>Physical Description</u> : 8 folders	box 10	folder 1-8
Minutes and Notes, 1994-1998	box 11	folder 1-6

Physical Description: 6 folders

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

### Series III: Conferences and Workshops, 1985-1992

#### Arrangement

Files are arranged alphabetically by event title.

#### Scope and Contents

Most of the documents in this series relate to the highly successful Fourth International Workshop on Health in South Africa, also known as the Maputo Workshop. Although many organizations were involved, CHISA was the primary coordinator, responsible for drafting the program, inviting speakers, and raising funds. It took two years and considerable effort to plan, in part because participating organizations were scattered across fifteen countries and faced political and technical problems that made communication impossible for months at a time. Letters between CHISA members and other organizations discuss overall goals, potential workshop sessions, speakers, and logistics. Members were particularly concerned about funding, but CHISA was able to raise enough to pay for travel and accommodation for many African delegates. In addition to correspondence, the Maputo files contain workshop outlines, conference programs, follow-ups and reports on the conference's impact, and a copy of the proceedings. This series also contains smaller amounts of information on other conferences CHISA participated in, including the Symposium on Poverty and Change in Southern Africa and the National Conference in Support of the ANC.

Title/Description	Instances	
American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) South African Delegation, 1990	box 11	folder 7
African National Congress, 1987	box 11	folder 8
Beyond Apartheid Health, 1992	box 11	folder 9
Beyond Medical Care in the South African Transition, 1990	box 11	folder 10
Fourth International Conference on Health in South Africa (Maputo Conference), 1989-1990		
Planning Notes, 1988-1989	box 11	folder 11
Planning Notes, 1989 <u>Physical Description</u> : 2 folders	box 12	folder 1-2
Correspondence, 1989-1990 <u>Physical Description</u> : 4 folders	box 12	folder 3-6
Agendas, 1990 <u>Physical Description</u> : 2 folders	box 12	folder 7-8
"Action on AIDS in Southern Africa"--Proceedings, 1990	box 13	folder 1
"Proceedings of Maputo Conference on Health in Transition In Southern Africa", 1990 April 9-16	box 13	folder 2

"Declaration on Health in Southern Africa", 1990	box 13	folder 3
Roster of Speakers, 1990	box 13	folder 4
Press Release, 1990	box 13	folder 5
Human Rights Delegation, 1985	box 13	folder 6
National Conference in Support of the ANC, 1992	box 13	folder 7
South African Health Workers Congress, 1989-1991	box 13	folder 8
Symposium on Children in Detention, 1987	box 13	folder 9
Symposium on Poverty and Change in South Africa, 1989	box 13	folder 10
Third Workshop on Poverty, 1989	box 13	folder 11
Workshop Programs, 1987	box 13	folder 12
Working Group Notes	box 13	folder 13
University of the Witwatersrand	box 13	folder 14
Audiocassettes		
Special Section: Action on Apartheid, 1987 October 18-22 <u>Physical Description</u> : 1 audiocassettes	box 18	
Women, Children and Health in South Africa, 1987 October 18-22 <u>Physical Description</u> : 2 audiocassettes	box 18	

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

## Series IV: Activities, 1984-1995

### Scope and Contents

This series contains material related to projects and causes CHISA organized or participated in.

### Subseries IV.1: NAMDA, 1984-1993

#### Scope and Contents

The first subseries documents CHISA's role as the U.S. liaison for the National Medical and Dental Association (NAMDA), an anti-apartheid professional group that aimed for an equal opportunity health care system in South Africa. CHISA worked closely with NAMDA to protest the detention of health workers, plan workshops and raise funds. This subseries holds general information about NAMDA in the form of newsletters and reports, as well as correspondence between CHISA and NAMDA members, minutes and notes from joint meetings, papers on violations and health problems, and other documents that show how the two organizations worked together.

Title/Description	Instances	
General, 1984-1992	box 14	folder 1-7

Physical Description: 7 folders

Denouncement of Torture Cases, 1985	box 15	folder 1
Progressive Primary Health Care Committee, 1985-1988	box 15	folder 2-3
<u>Physical Description</u> : 2 folders		
Slide Presentations, 1987-1988	box 15	folder 4
<u>Physical Description</u> : 56 slides		
Human Rights Fellowship, 1990	box 15	folder 5

## Subseries IV.2: Projects, 1981-1995

### Arrangement

Files are arranged chronologically.

### Scope and Contents

The second subseries holds information on a variety of other projects such as Priorities for Prevention, a proposal outlined by a CHISA task force to combat the HIV/AIDS epidemic by studying high-risk groups, training health workers, and educating the migrant worker community. CHISA often acted as a consultant, advising anti-apartheid nursing organizations and assisting in the formation of a School of Public Health at the University of the Western Cape. This work is documented mainly through proposal drafts, notes, and correspondence. There are also several folders of educational brochures, printed in English and Afrikaans that represent attempts to educate the public about health problems.

Title/Description	Instances	
Medical Education for South African Blacks, 1985-1990	box 15	folder 6
Alexandria Township Report by Tim Wilson--Transcript, 1986	box 15	folder 7
Alexandria Clinic--Correspondence, 1986-1987	box 15	folder 8
Medical Aid Project, 1987	box 15	folder 9
Protest of Child Detention, 1989	box 15	folder 10
CHISA Center in South Africa--Proposal, 1987	box 15	folder 11
Reebok Award--Ceremony Packet, 1988	box 15	folder 12
Health-Pac Update: Health in Southern Africa, by Mervyn Susser--Report, 1988	box 15	folder 13
Baragwanath Hospital Crisis, 1988	box 15	folder 14
A Proposal for Increasing Columbia's Participation in the Education and Training of Black South Africans and Namibians" by Gail Gerheart--Draft, 1988	box 15	folder 15
Educational Health Booklets by Department of Health and Welfare (South Africa), 1981-1988	box 16	folder 1-3
<u>Physical Description</u> : 3 folders		
Academic Boycott of South Africa, 1989	box 16	folder 3-4

Physical Description: 2 folders

Health Assessments in Mozambique, 1989	box 16	folder 5
Hunger Strike by South African Prisoners, 1989	box 16	folder 6
"AIDS Prevention in Southern Africa"--Proposal, 1990	box 16	folder 7-8
<u>Physical Description</u> : 2 folders		
Mervyn Susser Visit to South Africa (includes photographs), 1990	box 16	folder 9
Treatment of Black Nurses, 1991	box 17	folder 1-2
<u>Physical Description</u> : 2 folders		
"HIV/AIDS in Southern Africa: Priorities in Prevention"--Proposal, 1991	box 17	folder 3
Medunsa Installation Address by E.T. Mokgokong, 1992	box 17	folder 4
University of the Western Cape School of Public Health--Proposal, 1991-1992	box 17	folder 5
CHISA Office Proposal, 1992	box 17	folder 6-7
<u>Physical Description</u> : 2 folders		
Fogarty Grant Application for Training Program, 1992	box 17	folder 8
"A National Health Plan for South Africa"--Draft, 1994	box 17	folder 9
Nkosazana Zuma's Visit to the U.S., 1994	box 18	folder 1
Multicountry Projects, 1995	box 18	folder 2
Solly Rotmanae Visit, 1995	box 18	folder 3
"Proposal for the Establishment of a Regional Weekly Newspaper in Durban", 1995	box 18	folder 4
Hiabisa Trust, undated	box 18	
<u>Physical Description</u> : 1 videocassettes (VHS)		

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)