

## SAMSA KEPT OUT OF IFMSA

In 1981, a few years after Natal Medical School, UCT and WITS both withdrew from the South African Medical Students Association. The primary complaint was SAMSA's refusal to come to grips with the major causes underlying ill health in South Africa. According to SAMSA, politics and health make "bizarre bedfellows." Especially noteworthy was SAMSA's reluctance to take any action concerning the behaviour of the doctors implicated by the death in detention of Steve Biko or to criticize the racist nature of their universities.

Following WITS and UCT withdrawal, the president of SAMSA preempted this organisation's expulsion from the International Federation of Medical Students Associations. This year however SAMSA (now comprising only the three Afrikaans medical schools - Stellenbosch, Bloemfontein and Pretoria) decided to reapply for membership. At the request of the Danish Medical Students, representatives of Medunsa, UCT, WITS and Natal Medical Students Councils, the WITS Black Students Committee and the NUSAS Health Directive met and drew up a memorandum. This enumerated their objection to SAMSA with specific emphasis as to why the health of the population is a direct result of the political structure of South African society. An ad-hoc national medical students committee was formed by the four medical schools concerned.

At the recent IFMSA annual general meeting, SAMSA's application for reacceptance was rejected by a "vast majority."

