



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

Statement by Simataa Lennon Limbo 51st Session of the Human Rights Council on 28 September 2022. Panel Discussion on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Thank you, Mr. President

Namibia welcomes the focus of this panel discussion. For a country that relies heavily on food imports, and the environment, the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the critical need for sustainable food consumption and production. Namibia is however committed to ending hunger and all its Developmental Plans prioritise Zero Hunger to meet Goal 2 of the SDGs.

Mr President

The COVID-19 pandemic has certainly affected the livelihood of Indigenous People in Namibia and as is the case in many parts of the world, Indigenous Peoples' right to food in Namibia is intrinsically linked to access to land and water resources. Namibia therefore conducts adaptive and strategic agricultural research for value addition to indigenous plants, and members of traditional communities as seed growers for the multiplication of various foundation seeds.

As part of the Zero Hunger Strategic Review, Namibia identified that productive, cross-sector social safety nets can help small farmers cope with livelihood shocks and provide them with opportunities for long-term profitability. Namibia is currently implementing programmes aimed at ensuring access to adequate food all year round for Indigenous Peoples include strengthening market access for smallholder producers, small enterprise development, cash grants, food assistance, school feeding and the San Community and Asset Building and Creation programme.

Mr President

Namibia notes the importance of mainstreaming gender equality into national policies and programmes aimed at addressing food security, indigenous women are leaders in food production in our rural communities. Namibia is working with the UN Gender programme to promote economic empowerment of women with a focus on the indigenous San community and youth. Given the heavy reliance on subsistence farming and small-scale farming for food in Namibia, the programme has availed appropriate technology, provision of training and agricultural inputs to improve the food security conditions of rural women and youth.

Finally, Mr President, could the esteemed panellists share recommendations on concrete measures that arid countries like Namibia can implement to improve food security and build climate resilience for indigenous communities.