



SOUTH AFRICAN STATEMENT

**ANNUAL HALF-DAY PANEL DISCUSSION ON THE RIGHTS
OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES**

28 SEPTEMBER 2022

(90SECS)

Mr. President,

South Africa thanks the panel for their insights on this timely topic.

It is unfortunate that 15 years since the adoption of the United Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), indigenous peoples continue to have their rights violated.

South Africa wishes to reiterate that indigenous peoples are citizens of the countries in which they live and cannot be treated as second class citizens in their own countries. This means that any social and economic recovery plans adopted should be inclusive of indigenous peoples.

To this end, issues of food security cannot be devoid from addressing the rights of indigenous peoples to their lands, territories and resources as underpinned by Article 26 of the UNDRIP.

Mr President,

During this covid-recovery period our Government has ensured a holistic and inclusive approach underpinned by the South African Bill of Rights which enshrines the rights of all our people inclusive of the indigenous communities.

All programmes are aimed at ensuring the delivery of essential services on a non-discriminatory basis to all South Africans. This includes (i) land, land reform and redistribution, (ii) public healthcare services, (iii) quality education for all, (iv) adequate housing, (v) access to clean water and sanitation and also ensuring all who live in South Africa are safe.

Despite progress, the country continues to experience very high levels of poverty, unemployment and inequality. These are compounded by the fact that the vast majority of land is still owned by less than 10 percent of

the population. Those who work the land are threatened by land tenure insecurity and land evictions. Women and persons with disabilities remain the most vulnerable.

This is why the Government has committed to working on communal land administration and tenure reform towards equal land redistribution to all South Africans in order to ensure economic growth, development and access to means of production because economic development and advancement can only come about when all have equal access to land, territories, resources and economic opportunities.

I thank you