



SOUTH AFRICAN STATEMENT

INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE WITH THE SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

28 SEPTEMBER 2022

(90SECS)

Mr. President

My delegation wishes to thank the special rapporteur for this report. Quite often the role of women, particularly indigenous women is overlooked.

Mr President

South Africa has recorded some progress in the following areas:

Indigenous languages:

South Africa supports the International Decade of Indigenous Languages which commenced this year. To this end, the Government has taken practical and positive measures to to elevate the status and advance the use of these languages, through the revitalisation, resuscitation and preservation of indigenous languages. This has happened through the development of the Khoekhoegwab Dictionary Glossarium as well as the MOU by the Pan South African Language Board and the Department of Arts and Culture.

Indigenous Knowledge Systems:

The Government of South Africa developed a policy on Indigenous Knowledge Systems to recognise and affirm, develop and promote indigenous knowledge systems.

In this regard, the Government has worked to ensure that intellectual property of indigenous peoples is accredited to the rightful owners for their benefit.

Recently South Africa's rooibos tea industry has paid money to indigenous communities as part of an benefit-sharing agreement to recognise the role of indigenous peoples as cultivators of the rooibos plant.

Land:

The issue of land remains contentious in South Africa for indigenous communities especially in relation to the extractive industries. Our courts

have recognised that Free Prior and Informed Consent should be sought before land is used for business purposes.

Mr President,

Strides are being made and the role of women remains critical. As per the tenets of our Constitution, the rights of indigenous peoples must be promoted, protected and fulfilled in a non-discriminatory way.

Thank you