



## **SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL STATEMENT**

### **UN FORUM ON MINORITY ISSUES**

**29-30 NOVEMBER 2018**

***Check against delivery***

Chair,

The delegation of South Africa wishes to make use of its right to reply.

The history of our country is characterised by the oppression of the majority of our people by the minority, and their struggle for

liberation. At the heart of the system of *apartheid* was the dispossession of the majority of our people of their land. If this issue is not addressed in accordance with the Constitution, the stability of our democracy is in jeopardy.

An audit by our Department of Rural Development and Land Reform indicates that 72% of farms and agricultural holdings are owned by white citizens, and 4% by the African majority. Accelerated land reform is therefore a moral, historical and constitutional imperative. The World Bank recently noted that it is essential to address the chronic inequality and social fragility that arise from historical land ownership patterns in South Africa.

In this light, our government is implementing an accelerated land reform process that seeks to redress the injustices of the past, increase agricultural output, promote economic growth and protect food security. Redressing these historical injustices will permit us to enhance social cohesion and build a better life for all.

Chair,

The Constitution of our Republic requires that past wrongs must be righted for the wounds of our past to heal. In line with the International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, our Constitution provides for special measures to advance certain groups who were previously disadvantaged. The White minority continues to enjoy vast privileges not enjoyed by minorities in other countries. The affirmative action legislation that we have adopted has yet to fully achieve its intended aim, with

African and coloured South Africans firmly at the centre of the process of redress.

Chair,

It is important that this Forum is not abused to advance racism and xenophobia at a time when white nationalism and racial intolerance are increasing across the world. In this year of the centenary of Nelson Mandela, the South African Government will continue to engage with all of our communities to ensure their place in, and meaningful contribution to our national project.

I thank you.

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