

Mr. President,

I am indeed deeply honoured to address the Human Rights Council as the Chairperson of the South African Human Rights Commission, an A-status NHRI under the Paris Principles.

The Commission commends the South African government for their extensive participation in the third cycle of the UPR mechanism and notes the significant advances made since the last review process.

The Commission recognises and supports the many recommendations of this august body on the issues of:

- i) inequality, racism and xenophobia as these concerning phenomena continue to impede our social cohesion and nation-building efforts; and
- ii) the realisation of socio-economic rights, the scourge of gender-based violence, the prevalence of hate crimes, challenges facing persons with disabilities, HIV/AIDS and the need for full recognition of children's rights.

The Commission reiterates the recommendations that South Africa should ratify outstanding international human rights instruments, in particular, the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture (and establish a national preventive mechanism) and the Convention on Migrant Workers and Members of their Families. We urge the

government to expedite its efforts toward the establishment of a monitoring mechanism under the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

The recommendations recognising the role of the Commission in upholding human rights in South Africa are humbly welcomed. As an independent institution, we affirm our commitment to fighting all forms of discrimination and building an inclusive society, premised on our constitutional values and rules.

The Commission supports the UPR mechanism which provides further guidance to our young democracy as it progresses towards a society founded on non-racialism, non-sexism; democratic values and fundamental human rights.

I thank you.

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