



National Albinism Society



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Oral statement

Item 3: Inter-active Dialogues with the Independent Expert on the enjoyment of human rights by persons with albinism- visit to South Africa

Madam President,

Amnesty International, the National Albinism Society, Albinism Society in South Africa and Albinism Advocacy for Access* welcome the findings of the Independent Expert on the enjoyment of human rights by persons with albinism and the Government of South Africa's facilitation of her visit in 2019.

7 years after the adoption of the Ekurhuleni Declaration of 2013, more concrete actions need to be taken to give full effect to the human rights of persons with albinism in South Africa, including, but not limited to security, education and health.

In South Africa, the safety of persons with albinism remains a concern given the cross-border nature of attacks. In 2018, a 13-year-old girl with albinism, was kidnapped from her home for ritual purposes and later found dead with body parts missing. The 13-year-old's nephew, mistaken to have albinism was also kidnapped at the same time and later found dead. Whilst progress has been made in prosecution of the case, concerns remain over the failure to prosecute one of the suspects who remains in Eswatini.

A profiling project, done by the National Albinism Society in 2017 for the Department of Social Development, found that an average of 80% of learners with albinism drop out of school before exhausting compulsory education level. This was considered to be due to lack of assistive devices, lack of proper support materials such as text books, negative attitudes towards learners with albinism, and a lack of understanding of albinism and learner needs by both parents and teachers.

Lastly, persons with albinism in South Africa lack the necessary access to specialised mental healthcare from trained professionals given the humiliation and discrimination many face.

We urge the Government of South Africa to develop a National Action Plan through genuine consultation with representatives of persons with albinism and to take prompt and concrete steps to implement the Ekurhuleni Declaration and the recommendations of the Independent Expert.

Thank you.

*National Albinism Society, Albinism Society in South Africa, Albinism Advocacy for Access are representing the Task force team established on the occasion of the visit by the UN Independent Expert on the enjoyment of rights by persons with albinism visit to South Africa, with a view to ensure unity and representation of Albinism organizations across the entire country.