



AI Index: AFR 53/6595/2023

24 March 2023

ORAL STATEMENT

Item 6:

Consideration of UPR reports: South Africa

UN Human Rights Council

52nd session

27 February 2023 to 4 April 2023

Mr. President,

We welcome South Africa's support for 44 recommendations to address GBVF and urge their swift implementation, noting the importance of providing adequate financial resources to deliver outcomes of the National Strategic Plan on GBVF.¹

We welcome South Africa's support for all four recommendations relating to sexual and reproductive health and rights. In 2017, only 7% of the country's health facilities were providing abortion services, and the unregulated refusal by health care professionals to provide the services are major barriers to access.² Meaningful steps to implement the recommendation to ensure women have access to these health services, including abortion are urgently needed.³

Mr President,

We welcome South Africa's support for all 19 recommendations made in relation to the right to access quality basic education. Public schools are beset by decaying and dangerous infrastructure. Almost 3,000 schools use illegal plain pit toilets, which violate the rights to dignity, sanitation, privacy, and in some cases life. The recommendations to improve and invest in school infrastructure are key to ensuring progress on these rights.⁴

¹ Human Rights Council, *Report of the Working Group on the Periodic Universal Review - South Africa*, A/HRC/52/17, recommendation 143.186 (Chile), 143.203 (Italy), 143.206 - 143.209 (Estonia, Finland, Gambia, Ghana), 143.211 - 143.214 (Ireland, Israel, Lesotho, Montenegro), 143.216 - 143.249 (Mozambique, Namibia, Netherlands, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Philippines, South Sudan, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Uganda, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uzbekistan, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Zambia, Argentina, Belarus, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, New Zealand, Germany).

² Amnesty International, 2017, *Barriers to safe and legal abortion in South Africa*, AFR 53/5423/2017, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr53/5423/2017/en/>

³ Human Rights Council, *Report of the Working Group on the Periodic Universal Review - South Africa*, A/HRC/52/17, recommendations 143.143 (Finland), 143.145 (Luxembourg), 143.147 (Panama), 143.150 (Uruguay)

⁴ Human Rights Council, *Report of the Working Group on the Periodic Universal Review - South Africa*, A/HRC/52/17, 6 January 2023, recommendations 143.8 (France), 143.125 (Bahamas), 143.159 (Germany), 143.160 (Estonia), 143.161 (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela), 143.163 (Uzbekistan), 143.164 (Ecuador), 143.165 (Ecuador), 143.166 (Democratic People's Republic of Korea), 143.168 (Burundi), 143.169 (Bulgaria), 143.170 (Botswana), 143.171 (Benin), 143.172 (Benin), 143.173 (Barbados), 143.174 (Azerbaijan), 143.175 (Sri Lanka), 143.178 (Indonesia), 143.179 (Mauritius).

We welcome South Africa's support for all three recommendations made in relation to business and human rights, including in the extractive sector. Government continues to fail to adequately monitor mining companies' implementation of their Social and Labour Plans, exacerbating the negative impacts on human rights like access to water. Implementing the recommendation for the government to work towards protecting the rights of local communities and involve them in their decision-making is important in this regard.⁵

We encourage the government to implement supported recommendations as soon as possible and urge it to submit a mid-term report on progress towards implementation of these recommendations and use an Item 6 General Debate to bring it to the attention of this Council.

Thank you.

Words: 325

⁵ Human Rights Council, *Report of the Working Group on the Periodic Universal Review - South Africa*, A/HRC/52/17, 6 January 2023, recommendations 143.183 (Morocco), 143.184 (Japan), 143.278 (Tunisia).