



National Heritage Council
S O U T H A F R I C A

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National Conference on African Cultural Practices and Human Rights
17th – 18th July 2008

Conference Theme:

Cultural Practices, Democracy and Human Rights – South Africa: A Cross Cultural Comparison

Background:

Since the advent of democracy in 1994 and the subsequent inscription of new laws enshrined in our constitution, there seem to be a great emphasis on inclusiveness and equitable diversity in the fair representation of cultural practices, specifically traditional African practices and human rights. An integral part of African heritage occurs through cultural practices involving the enactment of tradition and customs, and the transmission of these from one generation to the next to ensure perpetuity and persistence of cultural heritage. While other cultural practices enhance or improve the quality of life of people, however others are perceived to infringe basic human rights under the current laws.

In this instance the constitution is not specific and explicit in prescribing measures for mediation and mitigation of the potential dangers in the contestations, conflicts and tensions between traditional African practices and human rights. It is in this context, the National conference on African Cultural Practices and Human Rights, will serve as a dialogue to interrogate the prevalent

misunderstanding, contradictions and tensions between African Cultural Practices and Human Rights. This will include zooming into the deficiency in policy and legislative framework, and the values/principals that underpin both African Cultural Practices and Human Rights.

Objectives

- Identification and deepening of our understanding on the contradiction, conflict and tension between African Cultural Practices and Human Rights;
- Gather public opinion and views on the challenges and opportunities associated with the link between African Cultural Practices and Human Rights;
- Review existing policies that impact on African Cultural Practices and Human Rights;
- Prescribe new policy proposals and recommendations towards the harmonization and mitigation of the tension/s between African Cultural Practices and Human Rights.

Questions to be Explored

- What are the sources or issues of conflict and tension between African Cultural Practices and Human Rights?
- What are the existing public perceptions on the association between African Cultural Practices and Human Rights?
- What could be best approach/es to mediate the prevalent tension between African Cultural Practices and Human Rights?
- What are the policy interventions required?
- How does the constitution accommodate both African Cultural Practices and Human Rights?
- What bearing do African Cultural Practices and Human Rights have on each other.

Some Key Participants and Stakeholders

1. Human Rights Commission
2. Gender Commission
3. CRL Commission
4. Youth Commission
5. Moral Regeneration Movement
6. SPCA
7. National House of Traditional Leaders
8. Traditional healers Association
9. National KhioSan Representative Council
10. UN Chair for Human Rights (UNHRC)
11. Department of Foreign Affairs
12. Department of Arts and Culture (including Prov. Departments)
13. Portfolio Committee on Arts and Culture
14. Department of Welfare and Social Development
15. Department of Science and Technology (IKS Unit)
16. Department of Home Affairs
17. Department of Land Affairs
18. Department of Justice
19. Department of Correctional Services
20. Department of Safety and security
21. Department of Health
22. South African National Defence Force
23. President's Office
24. Khumbula
25. CSV
26. Khulumani
27. Universities
28. Pan African Parliament
29. Municipalities

Times and Venue :

Dates: 17th – 18th July 2008

Time: 08h30 – 16h30 1st Day (17th July 2008)

09h00 – 13h00 2nd Day (18th July 2008)

Venue: Diep in die Berg (Pretoria East)

Draft
PROGRAMME

Day1: 17 July 2008

8:30 –9:00 Registrations

9:00 – 10:45 Chairperson: Prof Muxe Nkondo

Welcome and Opening:
Adv Sonwabile Mancotywa

Key Note: Dr Z Pallo Jordan

Overarching Themes and Speakers:

9:30 – 10:00 **Gender Relations and Human Rights in the African Context** Dr Nomboniso Gasas

10:00 – 10:30 **Gender Relations and Human Rights in the African Context** Prof Thandabantu Nhlapo

Vote of Thanks: Mr Maqubela – Chairperson of NHC

10:30 – 11:00 **Tea Break**

Sub-themes and Speakers

11:00- 13:00 Chairperson: Dr Pearl Mpilo Sithole

Rituals and Law : Constructing Cultural and Political Identities

Ms Grace Masuku

Rituals and Law : Constructing Cultural and Political Identities

Dr Guma

A Legal Perspective: African Cultural Practices and Human Rights

Mr Ndamane

Chairperson: Prof Teffo

- 11:40 – 12:00 **Cultural Practices and Governance: Negotiating
Modernity**
Dr Pearl Sithole
12:00 – 12:20
- 12:20 – 12:40 **Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Knowledge
Economy**
Prof Yonah Seleti
- 12:40 – 13:00 **Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Knowledge
Economy**
Ms Priscilla de Wet
- 13:00 – 14:00 **Lunch Time**
- 14:00 – 15:30 **Chairperson: Prof Yonah Seleti**
- 14:00 -14:30 **Cultural Practices and Governance: Negotiating
Modernity**
Ms Thembeke Ngcebetsha
- 14:30 – 15:00 **Gender Relations and Human Rights in the African
Context**
Prof Nomfundo Luswazi
- 15:00- 15:30 **Ubuntu as Public Policy in South Africa: Conceptual and
Strategic Considerations**
Prof Teffo
- 15:30 – 16:00 **Tea Break**
- 16:00 – 17:00
Discussions and Deliberations
- Announcements

Gala Dinner: Evening of 17 July 2008

18:00 – 21:00

MC

Ms. Florence Masebe

18:00 – 18:15

Welcome

Adv. Sonwabile Mancotywa

18:15 – 18:30	Music by Paseka and group
18:30 – 18:40	Poem Cultural Practices V/S Human Rights
18:40 – 18:50	Introduction of guest speaker
18:50 – 19:20	Keynote: Ms Angie Motshega
19:20 – 20:00	Music by Paseka and buffet opens
20:00 – 20:05	Vote of Thanks: Mr Maqubela – Chairperson NHC
20:05 – 20:30	Music continues /Networking
20:30 - 21:00	More music and Closure

Day 2: 18 July 2008

08:30 – 10:00	Chairperson: Prof Luswazi
8:30 – 9:15	Property Ownership: From Traditional Conceptions to Human Rights Prof Lungisile Ntsebeza
9:15 – 10:00	Neo- Liberalism in South Africa Prof Brutus
10:00 – 10:30	Tea Break
10:30 – 13:00	
10:30 – 11:30	4 Breakaway Sessions and Commissions:
	1. Ubuntu as Public Policy Chaired by Prof Teffo
	2. Indigenous Skills and Techniques as Knowledge Chaired by Prof Seleti
	3. Tradition and the Negotiation of Modernity Chaired by Dr Pearl Sithole

