

**SOUTH AFRICAN STATEMENT**

**THE RIGHT TO SOCIAL SECURITY INTERSESSIONAL PANEL:**

**PROMOTING SUBSTANTIVE EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION IN THE ENJOYMENT OF THE RIGHT TO SOCIAL SECURITY**

**1 NOVEMBER 2021**

Chairperson,

My delegation thanks the panellists for their insightful presentations.

While the year 2021 marked the 20th anniversary of the DDPA, regrettably inequality and discrimination have been exacerbated by the pandemic and have reached crisis proportions around the world. This poses a growing threat to our collective future, notably for the promotion, protection, and fulfillment of all human rights.

Chairperson,

 The post-Apartheid, democratically elected government of South Africa inherited a racially divided society with over half of the black majority population defined as poor. Poverty being prevalent in rural areas, among women and children, with more than half of female-headed households being extremely poor.

These trends reflect the race-based geography of apartheid and race-based policies of the past. The new government also inherited a racially segregated welfare system that provided expansive social services and benefits to whites and a residual system for blacks.

Chairperson,

The South African Democratic Constitution recognizes a common citizenship, universal adult suffrage, and attempts to reconcile individual rights with the achievement of social and economic transformation of the society, with benefits and opportunities accruing to the most disadvantaged.

While significant gains have been made in social and political transformation in key social sectors, the past legacy of race, class, gender and spatial inequality and poverty persist and remain one of the social policy challenges. It is against this background that the contribution of social protection needs to continue to be assessed in South Africa in promoting substantive equality and non-discrimination in the enjoyment of the right to social security.

We encourage other Council members to also continue efforts to promote and strengthen substantive equality and non-discrimination – both in law and practice - in the enjoyment of the right to social security.

I thank you