

# Cogta continues to engage Khoisan Council

The Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (Cogta) has committed to continue to engage the National Khoisan Council (NKC) as part of the implementation of the South African Human Rights Commission Report on the promotion of rights of the Khoi and San people.



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This follows the SAHRC releasing the National Hearings Relating to the Human Rights Situation of the Khoi-San in South Africa report in August.

On 17 November 2018, the Department of Traditional Affairs (DTA) held a meeting with the NKC in Bloemfontein.

“The NKC and the DTA will continue to work together to ensure that key issues regarding the recognition of the Khoi and San communities receive attention. Such recognition includes legislative measures such as the Traditional and Khoi-San Leadership Bill which is currently before Parliament, and the implementation of programmes that promote the languages, culture and heritage of the Khoi and San,” Cogta said in a statement.

The DTA will also coordinate with other relevant sector departments whose mandates include issues relating to the Khoi and San communities.

“These issues include those raised in the report of the South African Human Rights Commission, such as access to basic services as well as the protection and promotion of cultural and indigenous knowledge systems,” the department said.

Once the Traditional and Khoi-San Leadership Bill is passed in to law, the government will be ready to give full effect to the implementation of the provisions of the law, in particular the establishment of a Commission on Khoi-San matters.

The Commission, is expected, amongst other things to investigate the applications that would have been lodged and make recommendations to the Minister on the recognition of Khoi-San communities and leadership.

“Following the first democratic elections in 1994, and as part of a comprehensive strategy to implement the new South African Constitution, particular attention was paid to the issue of the recognition of the Khoi and San.

“In May 1999, government supported the establishment of a national non-statutory body that became known as the National Khoi-San Council (NKC). This body was established to facilitate the discussions between government and the Khoi-San communities and to facilitate consultation on key issues relating to the Khoi and San,” the department said.

South Africa adopted the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP) in 2016.

The Declaration imposes a number of obligations on member states. It also prohibits discrimination against indigenous peoples and promotes their full and effective participation in all matters that concern them. These pronouncements are also fully in line with the country’s Constitution.

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