

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### SAAPhDs STATEMENT ON HERITAGE DAY

24 September 2024

As proud citizens of South Africa, it is a great honour that we can celebrate and acknowledge our diverse cultures and traditions during the month of September. The 24<sup>th</sup> of September is a day that is set aside for South Africans to proudly celebrate their unique, and diverse cultures that are grounded on their strong beliefs and traditions. This day 'Usuku Lwamagugu, Usuku lokugubha amasiko nezithetheth' is one of the days that reminds the majority of us of exactly who we are as citizens of this beautiful country, South Africa.

All these different cultures are what make up South African population and historical richness. This day is quite significant as it also contribute positively in ensuring understanding and conducive relationships amongst the many different cultures. Furthermore, this day can enhance healing and visible reconciliation amongst the different races in South Africa due to the painful past events that happened in our country. These events led to toxic divisions and lack of unity amongst us as the citizens of South Africa. Even though South Africa has displayed a certain amount of healing progress, this day can also remind many of us of the great work that has been made thus far, post-Apartheid era. On this day, many South Africans will be braaing as usual and enjoying this hard-earned historical day. However, it is of utmost importance that we focus on the cultural heritage of South Africa and its effect to our country at large without forgetting those strong heroines and heroes who risked their lives so that we can enjoy this freedom. Today is also a reminder to all of us that, the freedom that we are enjoying as the citizens of this beautiful country of ours, South Africa, did not come easy. A lot has been done and many hard sacrifices were made to get us to where we are today.

Thank you to those brave freedom fighters who were forced to leave South Africa and their families to seek refuge (exiled) in faraway countries so that this freedom is achieved and enjoyed by all. Some of them never made it back to their homeland, South Africa. They died in foreign countries. That on its own is big enough to make us enjoy this day fully without regrets because it has been earned in a very hard way. As South Africans, we must never forget those heroes and heroines of our struggle. Therefore, let us go out and showcase our different cultures and diversity through our unique, beautiful and bright traditional regalia (attires). We are a bright Rainbow Nation after all. Let us embrace each other's cultures today and be proud of our unique differences in our traditions and rituals.

The South African Association of PhDs (SAAPhDs) would like to wish all the South African citizens a beautiful, peaceful and memorable Heritage Day.

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