



## South African Human Rights Commission

### **MEDIA STATEMENT: SAHRC Calls for Non-Discrimination in the Global Struggle against COVID-19**

19 April 2020

#### **ATT: Editors and Reporters**

The South African Human Rights Commission (the SAHRC or the Commission) has noted the allegations of ill-treatment of African nationals in China, including the forceful testing, quarantining and other inhuman treatment, due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

The foundational underpinnings of South Africa's constitutional democracy, being equality, dignity and freedom, apply to all people globally. The Commission is therefore deeply concerned by these allegations which, if found to be true, would be an infringement on human rights, such as human dignity, equality and other related rights, depending on what actually happened.

The Commission echoes the call by the African Union (AU) and the South African government in urging the relevant Chinese authorities to investigate these reports and take appropriate remedial measures. It also supports the call by the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) call, on the African Group of Ambassadors in Beijing to engage the Chinese authorities with a view to ensuring that Africans are not subjected to any of the alleged violations of their rights or any other ill-treatment but are treated equally, with dignity and respect, and no differently from other human beings in China.

The Commission will engage with the Network of African Human Rights Institutions (NANHRI) with the view to calling upon the Chinese authorities to intervene and stop the discriminatory

treatment of African nationals in the country. The Commission hopes that governments globally will continue to work together in the struggle against the ravages of the COVID-19 pandemic and that not just some, but all will also recognize that stigma and discrimination would do nothing to promote that global struggle.

– Ends –

**Issued by the South African Human Rights Commission**

**Gushwell Brooks – Communications Co-ordinator Tel: 082 645 8573 [gbrooks@sahrc.org.za](mailto:gbrooks@sahrc.org.za)**