

## **31<sup>st</sup> session of the UN Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice**

### **General Debate**

Address by Ms. Justice Yvonne Mokgoro

Chairperson of the International Independent Expert Mechanism to Advance Racial Justice and Equality in the Context of Law Enforcement

Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates,

I am honoured to speak today as the Chairperson of the new International Independent Expert Mechanism to advance racial justice and equality for Africans and people of African descent in the context of law enforcement and my two fellow Experts, Dr. Tracie Keese and Prof. Juan Mendez.

The Expert Mechanism was established in July 2021 by the United Nations Human Rights Council in resolution 47/21, which followed from the High Commissioner for Human Rights' report and Four-Point Agenda Towards Transformative Change for Racial Justice and Equality (A/HRC/47/53). Our Mechanism's three-year mandate seeks to further transformative change for racial justice and equality for Africans and people of African descent in the context of law enforcement globally, especially where relating to the legacies of colonialism and the transatlantic slave trade in enslaved Africans. We are also mandated to investigate Governments' responses to peaceful anti-racism protests and all violations of international human rights law, and to contribute to accountability and redress for victims. The Mechanism will report annually to the Human Rights Council's September session and our report will thereafter be transmitted to the General Assembly.

We recognize the importance of adopting a multi-stakeholder, consultative and inclusive approach to the implementation of our mandate. Throughout our work, we integrate gender and intersectional perspectives and give special attention to listening to and grounding our analysis, findings and recommendations in the lived experiences of Africans and people of African descent – and in particular victims and their communities.

We seek to highlight promising initiatives and make concrete recommendations through the spirit of dialogue, cooperation and consultation. Importantly, resolution 47/21 calls on our

Mechanism to coordinate our work and further strengthen our participation, engagement and cooperation with all relevant UN mechanisms, bodies and processes, including UNODC and the UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice.

We look forward to our continued exchanges as we seek to advance racial justice and equality for Africans and people of African descent in the whole world.

I thank you for your attention.