



## Human Rights Office

*Istituto Internazionale Maria Ausiliatrice - IIMA*

*NGO in special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations*

Geneva, 21 September 2012

**21<sup>ST</sup> SESSION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL  
ITEM 6 UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW  
SOUTH AFRICA**

Statement submitted by

**IIMA – Istituto Internazionale Maria Ausiliatrice**

and co-signed by

**International Voluntarism Organization for Women, Education, Development (VIDES International).**

(Thank you for giving us the floor).

Madame President,

IIMA and VIDES International welcomes the constructive participation of South Africa at the Universal Periodic Review. However, we remain concerned regarding persisting deficiencies in the implementation of several **economic, social and cultural rights**, among which are: the right to water and sanitation, right to food, right to adequate housing, and the right to education. In particular, **children belonging to indigenous communities** are the most affected.

Concerning **education**, while welcoming the very high rate of enrolment and retention in primary school, we express our deepest concern regarding the poor quality of basic education and drop-out rates in secondary education. Moreover, discrimination persists in the school system, with a large disparity between students.

Even though the government has prohibited **corporal punishment** at school, violence against children still occurs at home and at school. Some episodes of ill treatment against children by police officers have also been reported.

Finally, South Africa faces a considerable challenge in relation to **child mortality, maternal mortality**, as well as **HIV/AIDS rates**.

Therefore, we recommend South Africa to:

- **Ratify the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in order to improve the enforcement of these rights for all.**
- **Adopt adequate measures to combat any kind of discrimination, affecting mainly indigenous people and the poorest sections of population.**
- **Increase the secondary education completion rate.**
- **Eradicate corporal punishment in the family, school and penal institutions, and undertake education campaigns and human rights training, in order to educate parents and police forces.**
  - **Intensify the efforts to combat HIV/AIDS, especially among young people.**

Thank you.