

HUMAN RIGHTS FOR ALL

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) was adopted by the United Nations Organisation (UNO) in 1948. It is the basis for human rights protection and promotion around the world.

In the same year that the UDHR was accepted at the UNO, the National Party came to power in South Africa. They put into practice a racist policy called 'apartheid' under which black South Africans were denied basic human rights. The system of apartheid clearly did not meet the standards set by the UDHR. For example, the basic human right of a person to participate in the government of his or her country was denied to the majority of South Africans before 1994. The apartheid government did not sign the UDHR and apartheid was later declared a Crime against Humanity by the UNO.

In 1990, Nelson Mandela was released from prison after serving almost 30 years. On May 10 1994, Nelson Mandela became South Africa's first black President after our country's first democratic election. After the 1994 democratic election in South Africa a new non-racial constitution was drawn up. It includes a Bill of Rights and is based on the UDHR.

'We, the people of South Africa, recognise the injustices of the

past; honour those who suffered for justice and freedom in our land; respect those who have worked to build and develop our country; and believe that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, united in our diversity'

Coat of Arms

A new National Coat of Arms was adopted. The motto is: !ke e: / xarra //ke, written in the Khoisan language of the /Xam people, literally meaning: diverse people unite. It calls for the nation to unite in a common sense of belonging and national pride – Unity in Diversity.



National Anthem

South Africa adopted a new National Anthem in the spirit of reconciliation – a combination of Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika and Die Stem.

Flag

The new national flag of the Republic of South Africa was first used on 27 April 1994. The national flag of the Republic of South Africa was adopted on Freedom Day, 27 April 1994, and first flown 10 May 1994 – the day Nelson Mandela was inaugurated as president.

National sports teams

South Africa was boycotted from participating in international sport during the apartheid years. South African teams now play sport against people from all over the world. South Africa will be the host nation for the 2010 FIFA World Cup. It will be the first time the tournament is held in Africa.

International organisations

During the apartheid period South Africa was excluded from international bodies. Since 1994 South Africa has been welcomed into the international community, and belongs to SADC, the African Union, the Commonwealth and the United Nations Organisation.

Voting in South Africa

The Electoral Commission (IEC) manages local, provincial and national elections. Elections in South Africa take place every five years. You must be registered in order to vote.

What is required to register and vote?

To vote, you have to be 18 years or

older, but that does not mean you cannot participate earlier. As soon as you turn 16, you can register to vote. To be eligible to register, you must:

- Be a South African citizen
- Be 16 years or older (but you will only vote when you are 18 years or older)
- Be in possession of a green bar-coded identity document (or Temporary Identity Certificate)
- Provide a physical address where you are ordinarily resident

Where can you register?

Voter registration takes place at all Local Municipal Electoral offices in all provinces from Monday to Friday during office hours. Voting stations in the country are open over one weekend in the lead-up to the elections. At those voting stations you can:

- Register to vote if you are 16 years or older
- Re-register if you have changed your address
- Check whether your name is on the voters' roll of the voting district where you live

SMS your ID number to 32810 or visit the IEC website (www.elections.org.za) to check whether you are registered to vote. For more information call 0800 11 8000 toll-free, or the IEC National Office on (012) 428 5700



SOUTH AFRICA