

**EDITORS/REPORTERS**

**11 FEBRUARY 2025**

**MEDIA STATEMENT ISSUED BY THE CRL RIGHTS COMMISSION  
FOLLOWING ITS STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION ON 04 – 06, AND A  
PLENARY SESSION ON THE 06 FEBRUARY 2025 RESPECTIVELY HELD AT  
KEMPTON PARK, GAUTENG**

The Honourable President of the Republic of South Africa, His Excellency, Cyril Ramaphosa recently appointed a new team of Commissioners effective from 02 January 2025 to lead the Commission for the period 2025 -2030. Accordingly, on 04 February 2025 this team of Commissioners was sworn in by Judge T.P. Mudau at the Gauteng Division of the Hight Court.

On the 04 – 06 February 2025 the Commissioners together with management held a strategic planning session to deliberate on various and critical issues facing the Cultural, Religious and Linguistic Communities. Thereafter, the Commissioners held a plenary session during which they resolved on a strategy that will guide the Commission’s programmes and interventions over this term (2025 -2030).

**1. Initiation**

The Commission is concerned about the deaths of initiates and for that reason, it appeals to everyone involved that we should never arrive at a point where we accept as normal the deaths of young men and women. As we know, these young people go through this practice in their quest to celebrate their culture, yet they end up dying and in the process, some among our nation accept their

deaths as just numbers and also continuing to bury some of them each season or year.

The Commission will work with key stakeholders as well as affected families to address the various issues leading to the deaths of initiates to reinforce mechanisms that will preserve the lives of our young people.

## **2. KwasizaBantu Christian Mission**

The Commission has reconsidered the report related to Kwasizabantu Christian Mission. As a result, it will facilitate an engagement with the victims of Kwasizabantu Mission as well as the Church.

## **3. Phoenix Matter**

The Commission will engage with various stakeholders on the matter of the Phoenix Massacre. This will be done in respect of those matters that relate to our mandate but will also conduct public education and advocacy programmes on the issues of culture and religion, thereby help to promote coexistence among the diverse communities.

## **4. Commercialisation of Religion**

The Commission will be working with various stakeholders in the sector to establish and approve a Peer Review Council intended to address the conduct of some religious leaders who continue to abuse their followers. This Council will not be regulating religion but will specifically look at the behaviour and conduct of some of the religious leaders.

## **5. Recycling of graves**

The Commission will engage the eThekweni Municipality on the matter related to the recycling of graves which continues to be a challenge to the religion in line with the Commission's programme of evaluating and monitoring Municipal bylaws that impact the religious and linguistic communities.

Also, through its Public Education and Advocacy programme, the Commission will be engaging the affected stakeholders and communities in those areas.

The Commission has continued to receive complaints from families who are refused access to the graves of their loved ones. In some instances, this refusal of access is despite all the necessary protocols and applications that would have been duly submitted.

**6. Ukuhlolwa/ Virginitv Testing and the Children's Act 38 of 2005**

The Commission will facilitate engagements and training programmes which can assist communities that practice ukuhlolwa/ virginitv testing so that it is done in a way that is permissible and with due consideration of the Children's Act no 38 of 2005.

**7. Promoting the equal treatment of all languages, especially the Khoi, San, SASL and other indigenous languages**

The Commission will be embarking on a programme to promote and monitor the equal treatment of all languages, particularly the Khoi, San and other indigenous languages.

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