



STATEMENT BY THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA DURING THE 3RD Third session of the Permanent Forum on People of African Descent 16-19 April 2024

ID ON Culture & Recognition

Thank you, Amb. Kimani - distinguished Moderator

Kenya welcomes this session and joins the chorus of voices in recognizing the importance of the Forum in addressing critical issues – integral to the advancement of Africans and people of African descent, the denial of which continue to stand in the way of the full realization of the right to self-determination.

Indeed, Africa is home to diverse cultures, Indigenous Peoples, Local Communities, and unique ecosystems; and has long been a repository of Traditional Knowledge and rich cultures. These resources are invaluable to our societies and continue to play a vital role in global scientific and economic advancement. They are the heritage of our people, the essence of our identity, and the cornerstone of our sustainable development. However, the historical exploitation and misappropriation of these resources have left us with a moral imperative to act.

In this regard, Kenya continues to be fully committed towards the adoption of an international legal instrument relating to intellectual property, genetic resources and traditional knowledge expected to be adopted next month.

Such an instrument will enhance the efficacy, transparency and quality of the patent system, and prevent patents from being granted erroneously for inventions that are not novel or inventive with regard to traditional knowledge and will ensure that Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities are able to assert control over their resources by calling for the respect of the principles of informed consent and benefit-sharing.

We hope that negotiations at the upcoming Diplomatic Conference are guided by a commitment to equity and fairness as we progress towards

attaining an instrument that rectifies the historical imbalances in the exploitation of our Traditional Knowledge and culture.

There is need for continued awareness raising on promoting cultural diversity and inclusivity. Kenya is committed to the call for the preservation of the cultural heritages, traditional knowledge systems and cultural lives of people of African descent.

Indeed, there is need for the amplification of marginalized voices such as that of women and young people, whose continued and deliberate exclusion and lack of recognition stem from long-standing non-representative policies rooted in colonialism, apartheid and neo-colonialism, and which have further strained the overall development of former colonized countries in the Global South and People of African Descent.

In conclusion, Kenya reiterates the importance of Recognition as a way to celebrate the cultural wealth of Africans and African descent communities in a manner that fosters the protection of their cultural heritages and their free expression; and that validates the substantial contributions of people of African descent to the global community.

I thank you.