

PRESS RELEASE 21 NOVEMBER 1996

**GRIQWA, NAMA,
REHOBOTH BASTERS**

SIGNED TREATY – FIRST INTERNATIONAL TREATY
BETWEEN INDIGENOUS
KHOISAN FIRST NATIONS
IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

AUTHENTIC INDIGENOUS KHOESAN GROUPS REJECT JUDICIAL
COMPETENCE OF SOUTH AFRICA'S AND NAMIBIA'S CONSTITUTIONAL
STRUCTURES.
COURTS INCAPABLE OF DELIBERATING OBJECTIVELY OVER INDIGENOUS
CLAIMS
WAY NOW OPEN TO THE INTERNATIONAL COURT IN THE HAGUE

INDIGEOUS PEOPLES DO NOT EXPECT JUSTICE FROM NATION-STATE
STRUCTURES

Between

THE SOVEREIGN KHOISAN-DESCENDED

GRIQUA

FIRST NATION OF SOUTH AFRICA

AS REPRESENTED BY

*THE GRIQUA NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF
SOUTH AFRICA*

AND ITS ALLIED REPRESENTATIVE GRIQUA
ORGANISATION

THE EAST GRIQUALAND PIONEERS COUNCIL

and

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE SOVEREIGN

REHOBOTH BASTER COMMUNITY

IN NAMIBIA

and

THE CHIEF REPRESENTATIVE AND ELDERS
OF THE SOVEREIGN KHOISAN-DESCENDED

NAMA

FIRST NATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

ON CO-OPERATION AND COMMITMENT AS
DISTINCT, NON-EXTINCT, KHOISAN-DESCENDED
INDIGENOUS AND SOVEREIGN *FIRST NATION* IN
SOUTHERN AFRICA

**On Saturday 23 November 1996 at Upington in Northern Cape the GRIQUA
NAMA and REHOBOTH BASTER First Nations will sign the first ever
International Treaty aimed at securing co-operation at all levels between the various
Khoisan-decended First Nations of South Africa.**

Despite concerted efforts by these sovereign nations to regain their rightful place in the International Community, the domination and oppression by the South African and Namibian nation states governments continues and intensifies.

Traditional and elected leaders, aboriginal elders and indigenous governments will sign a pact that will commit their respective peoples to future and intensified co-operation.

Griqwa Paramount Chief A.S. Le Fleur II, Head of the Griqwa National Conference of South Africa, and Chairman Paul Pienaar of the affiliated East Griqwaland Pioneers Council, will sign an agreement with both Rehoboth Baster Kaptein J.G.A. Diergaardt and Nama Elder and representative leader Paul de Wet.

The signing ceremony will be attended by a large gathering of indigenous dignitaries and will be accompanied by Griqwa, Rehoboth Baster and Nama choirs.

PAST LEGAL CHICANERY

Sam Nujoma's Namibian Government violated international law by illegally confiscating the traditional lands of the Rehoboth Basters and Griqwa have objected vehemently to the appointment of Namibia's Chief Justice as South Africa's Chief Justice.

Chief justice Mahomed already holds a conflicting position in South Africa as Deputy President on South Africa's newly formed Constitutional Court. Judge Mahomed has been instrumental in helping to draft Namibia's constitution, which purposefully dispossesses indigenous Khoisan-groups of their ancestral lands. Adding insult to injury, the Judge himself has brought his own competency into total disrepute when upholding an appeal in Namibia's highest court that sanctions the illegal dispossessions of Rehoboth Baster lands by the Namibian state.

Chief Justice Mahomed's new position now places him in yet another position on questionable competency in all sovereign and indigenous claims put to South Africa's Constitutional Court.

Legal chicanery has been used in the past when the Cape Colony's Supreme Court's Judge Stockenström dispossessed the Griqua of their ancestral and legitimately held lands.

The Rehoboth Basters, Griqua and Nama, are left no choice but to regain, affirm and exercise their sovereign rights at the International Court at The Hague. Both the Namibian and South African nation-state governments have made it blatantly clear that they are intent on violating international law and human rights by refusing to conform to international standards in terms of recognition of indigenous peoples rights.

The Griqua and Nama First Nations are trapped within the artificial, colonially and neo-colonially-defined borders of South Africa. The continued ignoring of their sovereignty, aboriginality, historical continuity and distinctness by the present South African Government and the attempts to relegate them to mere *cultural minorities*, will never be accepted.

There is deep down concern about intellectually dishonest attempts by indigenous-insensitive ideologies and intellectuals within the ranks of Khoisan-descended peoples. Brown People and People of Colour and others (including the media) ignore totally the indigenous heritage of the Griqua, Nama and the Rehoboth Baster sovereign First Nations of Southern Africa. The questionable launching of the December 1st Movement in South Africa is a deliberate attempt at ethnocide and decoy the descendants of the Khoisan into committing national, political and cultural suicide. Local media which gave prominence recently in connection with this Movement - even before its launching next month - confirm media bias and continued downplaying of the indigenous rights movement on sovereign soil.

THE TREATY AND ITS CONTENTS

The treaty provides for co-operation and commitment between the Griqwa and Nama in South Africa and the Rehoboth Basters in Namibia as the 'distinct, non-extinct, Khoisan-descended indigenous and sovereign *First Nations* in Southern Africa.'

It further provides for these indigenous groups to seek future alliance with the other Khoisan-descended *First Nations* of Southern Africa.

The aims of the treaty have been agreed upon in terms of the universally-recognized quest by indigenous peoples and *First Nations* of the International Community as vulnerable minorities for selfdetermination, democratic empowerment, human rights, indigenous peoples' rights and in accordance with international law:

- to realize their democratic empowerment internationally;
- to resist *nation-state*, multi-national and mercantile domination and oppression;
- to obtain restitution and compensation resulting from the ravages of colonialism, ethnocide, neo-colonialism and *nation-state* and multi-corporate oppression and domination;

There is further agreement that negotiations with *nation-state* governments and international organizations shall be in their capacity as equal parties with such governments and organizations. Unless agreed, there will be no alignment to any political parties or organizations for their own ideological end.

There will be joint co-operation and participation internationally in helping the democratically disempowered indigenous nations of the world to refine the *United Nations Draft Declaration on Indigenous Peoples' Rights* and to help realize the most beneficial outcome possible in terms of shared Khoisan aspirations.