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MEDIA STATEMENT BY THE SOUTH AFRICAN LAW REFORM COMMISSION: EXTENSION OF CLOSING DATE FOR COMMENT ON DISCUSSION PAPER 153: INVESTIGATION INTO MATERNITY AND PARENTAL BENEFITS FOR SELF-EMPLOYED WORKERS IN THE INFORMAL ECONOMY (PROJECT 143) UNTIL 03 DECEMBER 2021

On 20 July 2021, the South African Law Reform Commission (SALRC) published for general information and comment, Discussion Paper 153 on the investigation into maternity and parental benefits for self-employed workers in the informal economy (Project 143). Respondents were requested to submit comments to the SALRC by 29 October 2021.

Discussion Paper 153 is available on the Internet at the following site:
<http://www.justice.gov.za/salrc/dpapers.htm>

The purpose of this SALRC investigation is to examine shortcomings in the current maternity and parental protection mechanisms, how this gap should be addressed, and by whom, in order to give effect to South Africa's obligations in terms of the Constitution, and applicable regional and international gender equality conventions. The discussion paper aims to determine two principal questions in relation to maternity and parental benefits for self-employed workers in the informal economy, namely:

- (a) Who should be included in the definition of "self-employed worker" (target group) in the informal sector of the economy? and
- (b) What is the nature and extent of the benefit, that is, state maternity and parental benefits that could be offered to self-employed workers in the informal sector of the economy?

Responses to the discussion paper will be collated and evaluated to prepare a final report setting out the SALRC's final recommendations. The SALRC will submit the report (with draft legislation) to the Minister of Justice and Correctional Services for his consideration and referral to the Ministers of Employment and Labour and Social Development respectively.

During September 2021, the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development's Information Technology systems were interrupted due to a security breach. This interruption affected the receipt of written submissions to the SALRC. To ensure wide spread awareness of the discussion paper, the Advisory Committee for Project 143 has taken a decision to host a national webinar in order to consult widely with all the stakeholders. The national webinar will be held on 10 November 2021. The Commission for Gender Equality and the Solidarity Centre have indicated that they will not be able to make written submissions to the SALRC by 29 October 2021. These stakeholders have requested for an extension of the closing date for submission of comments to the SALRC.

In response to these requests, the SALRC has decided to extend the closing date for submission of comments until Friday 03 December 2021. Respondents are therefore requested to submit written comments, representations or submissions to the SALRC on Discussion Paper 153, by not later than **3 December 2021**, for the attention of Mr Linda Mngoma to the following address:

The Secretary
South African Law Reform Commission
Private Bag X668
Pretoria
0001
E-mail: lmngoma@justice.gov.za
Tel: (012) 622 6349

A hard copy of the discussion paper is also obtainable free of charge from the SALRC upon request (the contact person is Mr Jacob Kabini at (012) 622 6349).

ISSUED BY THE SECRETARY: SA LAW REFORM COMMISSION, CENTURION
DATE: 27 OCTOBER 2021