



**water & sanitation**

Department:  
Water and Sanitation  
**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

### **South Africa and Cuba extend working relations in the water sector to 2023**

25 September 2017

Deputy of Minister of Water and Sanitation, Ms Pamela Tshwete, on behalf of the South African Government, has signed an agreement with Cuba's Institute of National Hydraulic Resources (INHR) to extend the RSA-Cuba Cooperation Agreement to 2023.

The signing of this agreement was concluded on the second day of the 3<sup>rd</sup> RSA-Cuba Joint Steering Committee Meeting on Friday, 22 September 2017 at Burgers Park Hotel in Pretoria.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> RSA-CUBA Joint Steering Committee Meeting was held to review and evaluate the Agreement Cooperation in the field of Water Resource Management and Water Supply agreed upon in 2013 and identify areas of improvement. During this two day meeting, the two countries also agreed to extend the contracts of the 35 Cuban engineers stationed in all nine provinces to June 2018 in order to share more knowledge with their South African counter-parts.

The agreement makes provision for the Department of Water and Sanitation and the Institute of National Hydraulic Resources to co-operate in the areas of geo-hydrology and engineering services in rural and other disadvantaged areas where such services are inadequate. The implementation of this programme has been on-going for the past eighteen months and specialists have been placed in different clusters in all nine provinces where future engineers are being mentored.

Deputy Minister Tshwete said the extension of the Cooperation Agreement between the two countries is a step in the right direction for South Africa as it will empower future engineers with much needed skills to help address the country's water challenges.

"We want to acquire as much skills as possible and Cubans are the best teachers in the field. We want to capacitate our engineers so that they can help the country address its own water challenges, particularly now that old engineers are leaving the field", she said.

In addition, she said, South Africa will forever be grateful to Cubans for their generosity in sharing their knowledge and skills in the health as well as the water sector.

INRH First Vice President, Mr Bladimir Matos Moya, said they are determined to assist South Africa improve water supplies to the next level. He said Cubans have directed South Africa to identify its specific training needs so that those can be attended to as a matter of urgency.

The Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA) also committed to speedily process requests from Cuban engineers to be recognised as professional specialists. Currently, ESCA does not recognise the Cubans' qualifications and the type of work they are doing in the country because they are not registered with them.

**ENDS**



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**Issued by the Department of Water & Sanitation**

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