



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
7 December 2024

English only

Commission on the Status of Women

Sixty-ninth session

10–21 March 2025

Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled “Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century”

Statement submitted by Maalkop Trading and Projects, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.



Statement

Protecting and Copyrighting Our Grandmothers Indigenous Knowledge

Our grandmothers here in South Africa are storytellers. Every night while sitting by the fire they tell their grandchildren African Folktales. Those folktales educate the grandchildren about our culture, mannerisms and values. The men of the family by that time will be at work, the women would be busy with the cooking or doing household chores. The grandmother would take that opportunity to inform and entertain the children while sitting by the fire. The unfortunate part is that those stories are subjected to being taken by big corporations who will produce books or films with those stories as their content. Those stories are passed down from generation to generation. The takeover has already begun with multinational broadcasters acquiring African folktales.

Our grandmothers are also beer brewers. They brew traditional sorghum beer. It is the role of the women to brew, not the men. In craft beer we talk about germination, filtration and brewing with indigenous ingredients. Those are the methods that our grandmothers use to brew traditional beer.

According to “Tasting Beer “ 2nd Edition Book By Randy Mosher, Page 9 Around 22,000 BCE, as the last ice age ended and changing climates made the part of the Middle East now known as Kurdistan more habitable. As people settled the area, they made use of wild-harvested plants, including grasses, as a good source of nutrition and more. Chemical evidence from a place called Gobekli Tepe indicates that people may have been brewing beer from wild grasses as early as 15,000 BCE.

Our grandmothers and great grandmothers have been brewing beer. They are not documented by history. The question is who came up or who inspired beer brewing. Even if we will never be credited. We need to acknowledge that African women are beer brewers and storytellers. As the baguette made it into the United Nation heritage as a French Bread. Traditional Sorghum Beer should be considered.
