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For immediate release

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THE UNCOMFORTABLE CONVERSATION

Desecration of graves during course of development, a movement towards finding a solution

Johannesburg, Gauteng - To support SAHRA's endeavours to co-ordinate and develop a policy framework on developers pay principle for heritage conservation and sustainable development, it is proposed that a collective, participatory and consultative approach be adopted to explore various strategies for sustainable management of heritage resources whilst allowing development. SAHRA have received numerous complaints from across the country regarding graves being desecrated during course of development. These complaints are registered from rural communities, conservation bodies, interest groups and families of the deceased. The cases are mostly in settlements where mining activities are granted mining rights, on farms where forced removals prompted families to leave graves of relatives, descendants and ancestors left behind (burial grounds older than 60 years).

As a commenting and governing authority on the country's national heritage assets, SAHRA has a responsibility to facilitate this process of grievances. As a result, SAHRA will host a **ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION** set to take place on the 27th of September at the Aviator Hotel, Johannesburg, Gauteng. The event will host approximately 150 delegates and will include prominent keynote speakers.

The aim of the event is to bring all stakeholder to one platform in order to discuss this issue in a constructive and solution driven manner. Themes to be discussed are **Sacred Sites and Development and Social Benefits Through Heritage and Development**. Stakeholders and attendees include representatives from; Department Of Arts And Culture, Department Of Environmental Affairs, Department Of Minerals And Energy, Department Of Public Works, Department Of Tourism, Department Of Traditional Affairs And Cooperative Government, Local Government, State Heritage Institutions, South African Universities, Community Based Organizations And NGO's, Developers And Financial Institutions, Mines, SAPS, CRL Commission, Human Rights Commission, PHRAS, SANRAL and Social Consultants.

SAHRA is a statutory organisation established under the National Heritage Resources Act, No 25 of 1999, as the national administrative body responsible for the protection of South Africa's cultural heritage. The Act follows the principle that heritage resources should be managed by the levels of government closest to the community. These local and provincial authorities will manage heritage resources as part of their planning process.

For more information, including event updates, schedule and event location, please check out our Facebook page and website at:

www.sahra.org.za

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