



Traditional Healers Organization

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THO REPORT ON MADIMATLE MOUNTAINS AND GATKOP CAVES

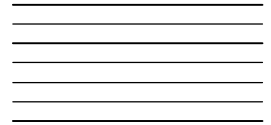
The Traditional Healers Organization ("The THO"), is a non- statutory, professional organization for Traditional Health Practitioners. It is an independent, Non-profit organization. The THO has members in the amount of over thirty nine thousand (39 000) Traditional Health Practitioners and has networks in some parts of Africa The THO are passionate about the preservation of traditional healing and customs throughout Africa The Traditional Health Practitioners are the true custodians of culture and belief. The Madimatle mountain and Gatkop caves (hereafter respectively referred to as "the mountin and caves") are considered as very important to the people of South Africa, because the mountain and caves have a vast history and significance to the community of South Africa, in addition to international communities. The mountain and caves are very unique because of the special healing power that is sourced from the mountain and caves. Visitors to the mountains and caves have witnessed miracles first hand, as many visitors to the mountains and caves were miraculously healed from terminal diseases by simply visiting the mountain and caves in order to pray for good health, guidance and strength.

Members of the community, Traditional Health Practitioners, various church groups, tourists of different traditional and religious denominations regularly visit the mountain and caves. . Approximately twenty people visit the mountain and caves weekly and approximately fifty people visit the mountain and caves over the weekend. People visit the mountain and caves from as far as from Lesotho, Swaziland Botswana, Mozambique; Zimbabwe. .The mountain and caves which are important to people for various purposes, inclusive of spiritual and healing purposes by way of example "ukuphahla", , night vigils, communicating with ancestors, praying for rain during drought, for purposes of reuniting families , seeking blessings and peace, seeking employment, improvement of marital and other relations, and lastly, for a general sense of peace and well-being

The mountain and caves also bear historical significance in that many African people died on the mountain and caves whilst fighting in the war and seeking refuge in the caves

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during the stressful civil war period known as "Mfecane," or "Defecane", dating to the period of Mzilikazi, the renegade Zulu General that ruled most of the central and south 'Transvaal' for the duration of the period 1800 - 1845.

The mountain and caves are inextricably linked, as is the case with most natural elements in a particular natural landscape with regard to African traditional religion and culture. The mountain and the caves cannot be separated in their utility, significance and relevance. When people visit the mountain and the caves, they perform special rituals prior to entering the mountain and caves. By way of example, people sacrifice a chicken, goat or any kind of animal that the ancestors may require in order to perform such a ritual.

The THO, as a custodian of culture and tradition, is of the view that the mountain and caves require the immediate protection of the law, in order to maintain the culture and heritage of African people, specifically in relation to ancestors, and for the benefit of many future generations to come. Furthermore, the THO is of the view that the mountain and caves must be declared as a national heritage site in order to enjoy the abovementioned protection. The THO only became aware of the prospecting activities on the mountain after it had already occurred and was not consulted as an interested and affected party. There is now an imminent threat of a mining right being granted to the mine in order to conduct mining activities.

The THO strongly oppose any mining activity on the mountain and caves due to the fact that in the event that mining is conducted on the mountain, the spirits will be destroyed and this equates to spiritual genocide. The THO condemn any destruction or demolition of the mountain and caves, or any activity that will disturb or prevent people from using the mountain and caves as a sacred and revered ancestral site, as people have been doing for centuries. If mining on the mountain and caves continue and access to the mountain and caves continue to be restricted, people will be prevented from exercising their religion and cultural practices in light of the fact that there is no alternative place which bears the same/similar significance of Madimatle.

To conclude, the mountain is of significant spiritual importance but is also important for environmental purposes due to the fact that there are various endangered fauna and flora on the mountain and in the caves. Some of the endangered fauna and flora have already been removed and animals have died as a result of the prospecting activities that were conducted on the mountain. If mining occurs on the mountain, these endangered species may run the risk of becoming extinct.