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PROCEEDINGS OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES

The Council met at 14:00.

The Chairperson took the Chair and requested members to observe a moment of silence for prayers or meditation

HOUSE KEEPING RULES

(Announcements)

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Hon delegates, I would like to remind you that Rules in particular subrule 21, 22 and 23 of Rule 103 shall apply in this sitting. Hon delegates in accordance with Council to Rule 229(1) there will be no Notices of Motion or Motions without Notice.

Let me take this opportunity and welcome our President the hon Cyril Ramaphosa as well as his Council the hon Koorenhof, who is here with us today, the permanent delegates, the MECs as

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well as the special delegates who have joined in through the virtual platform, SA Local Government Association, Salga, representatives and the media personnel in the House.

Hon members, before we could proceed with questions, I just want to remind delegates that in terms of Rule 229 of the Council, the time for the President to respond to a question is five minutes and four minutes supplementary question will be allowed. The member who has asked the initial question would be the first one to ask the hon President a supplementary question. Now the time allocated for a supplementary question allocated to members is only two minutes. Accordingly, the supplementary question must originate from the initial question that has been asked by the hon member.

Having said that, I now call upon our President to respond to question number one as asked by the hon Mmoiemang. The hon President.

Mr President, you have earned so many names today.

QUESTIONS - PRESIDENT

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Question 1:

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Hon Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces, NCOP, hon members and hon delegates who are also here present and everyone else who is here, please forgive me for not wearing my usual attire, which is a tie and a proper suit, I think it is all in order to be celebrating Bafana Bafana's victory last night rather this morning. That victory was inspired by all of us. Actually, I have been telling people that we scored the goal all of us collectively. That ensured our victory. So, it is a joyous day. It is a day for celebration.

Hon members, the government has identified illegal immigration as a significant challenge in our country, which has implications for social cohesion, national security and the provision of services to our people.

On the 3rd of June 2026, Cabinet adopted a Comprehensive Approach for Migration Management in our country.

I outlined the key elements of this approach in an address to the nation on the 7th of June.

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The comprehensive approach has been endorsed also by the Presidential Co-ordinating Council, which brings together all three spheres of government and traditional leaders was quite pleased with the approach we are taking.

We have in addition held briefings with the faith-based organisations or sector, traditional leaders, organised labour, organised business just last night and other formations in society.

The first part of our response is a crackdown on violations of immigration, crackdown on labour and other laws that are violated.

Law-enforcement agencies are intensifying the identification and deportation of undocumented foreign nationals. This work will be supported by dedicated immigration courts. This we do because it is a norm because that when one visits a country must have documents that proves one's identity and also shows exactly how long one would be staying in the country.

Inspections of employers' premises are increasing, the Department of Employment and Labour is recruiting 10 000 inspectors as I announced in the state of the nation address

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and will increase penalties for employers breaching the Immigration Act.

The second part of our response is to strengthen border security.

We are directing resources to border infrastructure, technology as well as bringing in more personnel to guard our borders.

Our six busiest ports of entry will be redeveloped, and refugee reception centres will also be relocated to border posts.

The third part of our approach is strengthening the immigration system by stamping out corruption and deploying technology.

We are establishing an Intelligent Population Register with biometric data underpinned by a Digital ID and phasing out the green ID books that enable identity theft as I announced in the address to the nation.

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The Electronic Travel Authorisation system is being extended to all airports and major land ports as well.

The fourth part of our response is to close the gaps in our laws and regulations.

Cabinet approved a Revised White Paper on Citizenship, Immigration and Refugee Protection to guide a unified legal framework that should guide our work in managing migration.

The National Labour Migration Policy and the Employment Services Amendment Bill will introduce quotas for the employment of foreign nationals in particular.

Now to deal with the administrative backlog in asylum appeals, the Refugee Appeals Authority has recruited a number of advocates as additional adjudicators and continues to receive capacity support from the United Nations, UN, High Commission for Refugees to determine and finalise outstanding appeals.

The final part of our approach is to work with countries across the region as well as our continent.

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South Africa cannot address migration alone. Through SA Development Communities, SADC, the African Union and bilateral relations that we have with many countries, we will work together to tackle political instability, conflict and economic hardship that drive people to leave their homes and to come here.

We have made it clear that every person within our borders must be here lawfully.

We have also said that responsibility for enforcing our laws rests with the state, and with the state alone and that no individual may stop any person to demand documentation or proof of identity or nationality. There is no place for racism in our country, sexism, xenophobia, Afrophobia or any other form of intolerance. As government, we have put in place security and other measures to deal with any attempts to destabilise our country, whether by citizens or foreign nationals. We will not tolerate any attempts to destabilise the country by any one whether marching or otherwise.

Our security forces are ready and those who transgress the measures that we are putting in place will definitely meet the might of the law. Thank you, hon Chairperson.

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The CHIEF WHIP OF THE NCOP (Mr K M Mmoiemang): Hon Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces, greetings to yourself and also to esteemed hon members of this House, ...

Setswana:

... le baagi ba naga ya rona ka kakaretso, segolobogolo Moporesidente wa rona wa naga, Rre Ramaphosa. Tla ke leboge karabo e o re fileng yone mabapi le boeteledipele bo Moporesidente a bo bontshang mo go netefatseng gore bothata bo re nang le bone bo a rarabolwa.

English:

Particularly on the state of the nation address that you made on the 7th of June 2026, but more so to the referral to the employment of the 10 000 permanent workers as reflected in the state of the nation address, hon President.

Hon President, it will be important just to give an update on the employment of those 10 000 permanent labor inspectors more so given the fact that their responsibility is mainly to ensure that there is strict workplace laws compliance. Hon President, this is important given the fact that last week in the Northern Cape in Douglas in the Pixley ka Isaka Seme District Municipality in Siyancuma Local Municipality 20

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workers were in a makeshift boat that capsized. Out of that 20, 14 were able to swim to safety but five of them unfortunately passed on clearly illustrating the importance of compliance by the work of the labor inspectors. What is quite giving comfort, hon President, five of those that passed away are people from Malawi. To show compliance to another degree of migration laws were documented foreigners.

So, it is important just to give an update in terms of progress made in relation to those 10 000 permanent labor inspectors. Thank you, Chairperson.

Setswana:

MOPORESIDENTE WA NAGA: Ke a leboga Ntate Mmoeimang. Ke leboga potso ya gago le go batla go tlhaloganya sentle gore batho bao ke rileng ba tla thapiwa, ba ba 10 000, re setse re fitlhile kae ka go ba thapa. Re simolotse re ntse re baakanya le madi a gore ba tsene tirong ba dire tiro eno e e botlhokwa thata gore mathata a re kopaneng le ona a bofaladi re kgone go a rarabolola.

English:

We have determined that indeed we will be bringing in all those 10 000. We are doing it in phases, largely because of

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the budgetary concerns and restrictions that we have. However, we are finding pockets of finance that will enable us to bring as many as possible. We said that we will be doing so in the next three years. So, we are bringing them in phases and as they come in, they have to go through training so that they are fit and proper to be able to execute the tasks that we have given them.

It is unfortunate that a number of those documented workers are falling either on boats and drowning or passing away in a variety of ways, as South Africans we pay our condolences to their families and to the governments of their countries. We want this whole process of immigration to be handled within the parameters of our law as smoothly as possible. For they too are human and as South Africans we must handle all these matters in accordance with our human rights culture and in accordance with our values.

So, we will always seek to ensure that the safety of even those who are not documented to be here, is primary in everything that we do. Ensure that they are protected and they are safe as we process their departure. A number of them of them have opted to leave on a voluntary basis. SO therefore we are facilitating that almost 10 000 of them particularly from

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Malawi have opted to leave. Our officials are processing all that through the various reception centres in a number of our provinces. Thank you, hon Chairperson.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Hon President, I bear testimony to that. I am one of those who have been visited already. So, what you are saying is already happening. I am probably one of the few who have experienced it already.

We will now proceed to the next follow up question which is asked by the hon Badenhorst.

Mr F J BADENHORST: Hon President, I am sorry I could not afford the scarf, but I could only afford the socks. I am wearing Bafana Bafana socks, beautiful.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Beautiful.

Mr F J BADENHORST: The scarf is too expensive for me, I am sorry.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: They borrowed this, so.

[Laughter.]

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Mr F J BADENHORST: I am dropping a hint here.

Mr President, whilst concerns around illegal immigration are legitimate the Minister of Home Affairs, Dr Leon Schreiber has been implementing reforms including the digital transformation of home affairs, the strengthening of visa and asylum administration and tighter enforcement measures against illegal immigration. This represents the most credible long-term responses to the challenge of illegal immigration for decades.

Given that the government itself has repeatedly warn against vigilantism and unlawful action: What specific contingency plans have been put in place by Justice, Crime Prevention and Security Clusters to prevent violence loss of life, attacks on foreign nationals and a potential breakdown of law and order on 30 June and more specifically Mr President, who will ultimately be held accountable should government fail to prevent the bloodbath or widespread chaos? Thank you.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Hon Chairperson, it is true that the process of reforming our immigration measures is being implemented and led by Minister Schreiber, this what he is implementing has long being in the making. It started off

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in the Sixth Administration, and we are therefore grateful that the work is continuing. I should say that this is a collective work, it is not the work of one person. A number of people and officials are involved. The Director-General of the Department of Home Affairs, Mr Makhode is leading the whole administrative process. The policies and decisions having been taken by Cabinet some time ago and we are very pleased with the work that is being done. Dr Schreiber is indeed following the footsteps of what had already been set in place.

The commission process of implementing all these measures is such that we are ready to deal with whatever disruption, instability that could take place. I am a strong believer that South Africans are peaceful people they are not xenophobic, Afrophobic as well and they want peace. They just want everyday of the week to go on - on a peaceful basis without any disruption of their lives, disruption of services, and any danger to the life of anyone.

So, on the 30th as people are saying all manner of things will happen, we are taking measures to ensure that the 30th becomes a normal day where people will be able to work and go about their business. Our security forces are ready. NetJoins is firmly in charge of what could happen. So, therefore it is our

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responsibility collectively and it is all of us accountable, particularly all of us here as leaders. By the way as we sit here, we are not just bystanders, we are all leaders. We lead people who have elected us to be here so each one of us has a role to play wherever we are to ensure we call for peace, calm and where there might be people who want to destabilise the country we should speak out and we should take what ever action that is necessary on a legal basis and work with our security forces and or government officials. This is a responsibility that we all bear.

Hoving said that I am able to say that our security forces will be on the ready to prevent anyone from wanting to destabilise the country. Thank you, hon Chairperson.

Mr H J VAN DEN BERG: Hon Chairperson and hon President, legal immigrants often display a strong work ethic and greater flexibility than many South African workers. When paid the National Minimum Wage they accept far more flexible conditions and responsibilities while still earning significantly more than they could in their countries of origin. This is clear evidence that market forces are exposing a deeper structural problem in South African labour because it has become too expensive due to inflated legislation, rigid bargaining, high

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absenteeism and an entitlement culture that often accompanies it employers in sections like construction, agriculture and services are increasingly turn into foreign labour precisely because the total cost wages plus the tensions of strikes, Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration, CCMA, cases and low productivity makes many legal workers uncompetitive or local workers uncompetitive.

My question is this: What concrete solutions is government implementing to address this expensive entitlement issue specifically will you support meaningful labour market reforms such as less binding labour contracts, decentralised bargaining and adjustments to early entry level wages so that South African citizens can compete fairly? Thank you.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Hon Chairperson, I am tempted to comment on the thesis that the hon member puts forward, a thesis which is acage, so conservative and completely outdated. It does not even begin to deal with the realities of the labour market today.

If you were just to think about the employers who prefer to employ workers from other countries who are not documented and if you just peel a little bit, you will see that those workers

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are actually being exploited. They are being paid slavery wages, and they are also made to work in the most unacceptable conditions. The conditions that working people in our country would not accept. We have a responsibility as a nation and as a government to make sure that people who work in our country who produce the wealth we all want to share work in a decent place and earn decent salary.

So, those who are currently being employed by many employers our Employment and Labour Department finds that they are being paid wages well below our minimum wage as well. And they are being made to work in the most appalling working conditions.

However, having said that the labour market in our country is regulated by the laws adopted by this Parliament. The National Assembly and the NCOP. If there is ever any need of any reform it is this Parliament that should deliberate on all those matters and bring forward all those reforms. I often hear from people who speak out loudly about labour market reforms. They never specifically tell us other than the issue of collective bargaining and what the real reforms that they want to see happening.

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The trade union movement in our country is working in terms of the rights that have been enshrined in our Constitution and in the laws of our country. We should accept that. The issue of productivity is a function of how our companies, function. It should never be blamed on the workers of our country. The workers of our country have produced the wealth of this country. They work very hard and they should really be applauded and respected for continuing to power the economy of this country. If there is any weakness it is the way that our companies are structured and the way our companies are run. They are the ones that are supposed to drive productivity so that we produce more and so that we produce much more efficiently. Other countries do that.

Two days ago, I read a report of how the earnings of South Africans have come down. In fact, they said they are at a two-year low as a result of the increasing costs of living. So, it can never be said that labour in our country is expensive. What should be done is that the employment or the employers of our country should be as efficient as employers in other countries are and drive the economy of our country. We should desist from blaming workers in our country for the lack of increased productivity. We should also make sure that when we talk about labour reforms or market reforms or labour market

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reforms, we should be specific. We should not just do broad
swee, be specific. The issue of collective bargaining is
regulated by laws of our country. These are hard-won victories
that our workers have won and we should respect that. We
should work around that to see that indeed we increase
productivity. Thank you, hon Chairperson.

Afrikaans:

An HON MEMBER: Haak, Vrystaat!

Mr P NOE: Transvaal is ver. [Transvaal is far away.]

English:

Hon President, firstly, I just want to inform the President
that he should not be surprised that there is peace in the
House today because there are no red overalls.

[Laughter.]

Yesterday the hon Dlamini sent them packing to where they
belong to their funerals. There would be others who will
follow maybe next time when you come you will find others not
here. He told them where they belong. So, you will have peace
today in the House.

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Hon President, we just want to also agree with you and emphasize that the challenge that we have is not only about the porous borders and that indeed South Africans are not necessarily a xenophobic nation.

My question therefore hon President is: What are some of the inter-regional that the government has been spearheading in the African continent to ensure that immigrants do not leave their home countries to search for economic opportunities in South Africa? Thank you.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Hon Chairperson, South Africa is committed to engender the development of our continent at an economic level and at a social level and otherwise. Not only our continent but our region as well. We would like to see economic growth. To this end the continent has adopted the Africa Free Trade Area which is really going to power the growth of our continent as countries on our continent trade with each other, produce goods, increase industrialisation and manufacturing.

We believe that when that happens and it will happen a number of people will prefer to work near their homes. They will prefer to work in factories near where they live and thus

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getting them not be tempted to leave their homes and go to other countries.

Yes, South Africa is an economic oasis. The developments that we have engendered in our economy become attractive to a number of people who come from people who come from countries where there is less than adequate economic growth. We as South Africa are working with other countries in our region to foster integration and economic development. Just tonight and tomorrow we are going to be meeting a Southern African Customs Union, Saco, which is the oldest trading block in the world where we are among other things to discuss how we should increase economic development in our countries in the region. Knowing that by so doing we are working together to foster integration we will be establishing factories in the various countries in our region. We will be industrialising and as we industrialise people in the various countries will stay there and work there. This is something that we are all committed to doing and we will look at it more seriously. Tonight and tomorrow, that is precisely we will be talking about.

So, we do believe that solutions are in place and South Africa being the largest economy in our region and indeed in our continent has a responsibility to play a critical role to

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foster the economic growth of the continent as we foster our own economic growth to make sure that we all adopt policies and reform our economic policies to ensure that we all grow together. So, we want to ensure that no country is left behind so that even the people in our various countries are not left behind. They also enjoy prosperity that economic growth will yield. This is the direction in which we are going. Thank you, hon Chairperson.

Question 2:

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Thank you, hon Chairperson. The Commission of Enquiry into Criminality, Political Interference and Corruption in the Criminal Justice System, which, as you correctly say, is chaired by Justice Madlanga, is expected to submit its final report at the end of August 2026. The findings and recommendations of the commission are expected to shed light on the alleged corruption and infiltration of the SA Police Service and other organs of the state. Most importantly, we expect that the commission findings and recommendations will bolster our efforts to strengthen our law enforcement capabilities. Now, the work of the commission is already having a huge impact, an impact that is being seen by all and sundry.

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Following the submission of the commission's first interim report in December last year, the SA Police Service, working together with the National Prosecuting Authority, set up a special task team to investigate referrals arising from the commission. All this emanates from the terms of reference that I gave to the Commission of Enquiry. Those terms of reference are powering the work of the commission and enabling the Commission to look very closely at some of the misdemeanours and wrongdoings within our criminal justice system entities.

The task team that has been set up has begun its work in earnest and has already brought a number of cases to court. Matters that require disciplinary action are currently being attended to by the relevant departments. Earlier this month, the Cabinet itself adopted the National Organised Crime Combating Strategy.

As a short-term approach, the SA Police Service and the National Prosecuting Authority, supported by the State Security Agency and the SA National Defence Force, have established multidisciplinary task teams to investigate, to disrupt and to dismantle criminal syndicates. The task team is primarily focused on violent organised crime, economic and infrastructure crimes, drug trafficking, illicit mining,

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proliferation of illegal weapons and corruption-linked crimes as well. The State Security Agency, SSA, has been assigned to conduct vetting and lifestyle audits of members of the SA Police Service, especially senior managers within the Directorate of Priority Crime Investigations, the Criminal Intelligence Forensic Services and the supply chain management.

It is clear that there is criminal infiltration and corruption within law enforcement, intelligence and other organs of state. However, through the measures that we are undertaking, particularly the work of the commission, as well as working within the law and according to the due process, we are rooting out these elements and restoring the credibility as well as the integrity of our law enforcement and security apparatus.

The overwhelming majority of the men and women who serve in our law enforcement and security agencies do so with courage, with a great deal of sacrifice and some of them working under danger or dangerous conditions and through the professionalism and the integrity they are displaying. These are the men and women who work diligently and work so diligently that they are able to uncover the criminal activities of the few. These are

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the men and women that we applaud. These are the men and women who serve the Republic and its people with a great deal of commitment.

Our responsibility is to ensure that those who betray the trust that our people should have in our criminal justice system should be identified, they should be removed and they should be held accountable so that these institutions can continue to serve the people of South Africa with honour. And we need, as I said, to thank those who continue to serve diligently and with a great deal of commitment. Thank you, hon Chairperson.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr D R Ryder): Through you, Madam Chair, good afternoon, Mr President. Mr President, South Africans want three simple things from government. They want to catch criminals, they want the criminals to be convicted and they want the institutions cleaned up - the institutions that protect these individuals. The Madlanga Commission has suggested that organised criminal networks have penetrated large parts of the state itself, and you've confirmed that to us today. You've also told us that there are ongoing investigations. But I think South Africans want to see an example set. Can you tell South Africans today: Which senior

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officials have been removed and prosecuted as a result of these revelations? Or: Are we still trying to catch criminals while their accomplices remain on the state's payroll? Thank you, Mr President.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Hon Chairperson, the answer is fairly simple and straightforward. Before I appointed the Madlanga Commission, a number of South Africans were doubtful about the efficacy of appointing commissions of enquiry. They kept on referring to, for instance, previous commissions. And they were quite dismissive of the effects or the usefulness of these commissions. They kept on referring to the Zondo Commission and arguing that nothing has been done to implement the recommendations of the Zondo Commission.

I have said on a number of occasions even in these Houses of Parliament that we have been continuing to implement the recommendations from the Zondo Commission up to and including recovering monies that were stolen, up to and including reforming or passing legislation which the Zondo Commission said we should pass and up to and including getting people arrested. The investigations are ongoing. We have also enabled a number of other people to be recruited into the Police

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Service to do specialised investigations largely of an economic nature and otherwise.

Before I even get to the Madlanga Commission, we also appointed two other commissions which has really borne great results. There was a commission we appointed for the SA Revenue Service, SAR. The SA Revenue Service had been captured. We appointed a commission and it looked very, very closely at what had been done in Sars. The commission made recommendations which we implemented. It had recommended that a number of people should be removed. And we did that.

We appointed a commission for the Public Investment Corporation, PIC. It came up with recommendations which are being implemented as we move on. Now, is the Madlanga Commission. The Madlanga Commission has been, if you like, a godsend to us because a number of things that are being uncovered and that are being testified horrify a number of South Africans. Some of them were deeply hidden in the Police Service itself and in other agencies. They are being ferreted out, and they are now being revealed. At the same time we crafted terms of reference that ensure that immediate action is taken. People are being arrested, people are being prosecuted, people are being put in jail and people are also

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being disciplined in the places where they work. A wholesome process of reforming the Police Service is now underway. When the final report comes out, we will all be in a much better position of what has happened, what needs to happen and how we should reform an important institution like the Police going forward.

I want to say it largely because South Africans always want transparency. And we made it all transparent. We are working at all this together and we will make sure that every aspect of our Police Service is properly looked into and reformed. Where action is warranted, we will take action as we are taking action. All that is being done without favour, without prejudice and without siding with anyone. We are doing it as objectively as possible in terms of the laws of our country. So much as it is difficult to give praise where good work is being done but this time around there needs to be a shout out. I'm glad to see that you yourselves are applauding. Thank you very much.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Before I proceed to the next follow-up question, I would like to acknowledge the presence of Leah Knott, who is the Member of Parliament, MP, in the National Assembly, as well as Danica Wilking. We also have the

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former player of Moroka Swallows as well as Mamelodi Sundowns, Cllr Pringle and his son Ross Pringle. Can we please give them a round of applause. If they may stand up so that they are acknowledged by the House. May I request that you stand up so that you are acknowledged. Thank you very much.

Ms S L SITHOLE: Thank you very much, Chairperson. Hon President...

Xitsonga:

...i nhlikani.

English:

I want to use this opportunity to say that the continued impasse and squabbling between the members of the SA Police Service and the National Prosecuting Authority's, NPA's, Investigating Directorate Against Corruption are a very serious cause for concern and a potential security threat that must be dealt with decisively and immediately. My question is: What actionable steps are you taking to ensure synergy within the security cluster to ensure decisive action against senior officials in the security cluster who continues to undermine public trust in the cluster as well as against those implicated in shielding syndicates, destroying intelligent

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data and manipulating evidence to aid criminals? What specific timelines have been set to conclude the monetary integrity test, lifestyle audit and vetting of the SA Police Service, SAPS, management team? Thank you very much.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Thank you, hon Chairperson. As an ardent Moroka Swallows fan, I would also like to give applause to the Moroka Swallows. I know that whenever I say I'm a Moroka Swallows fan I'm laughed at because they say it is almost non-existent. But I will die a Moroka Swallows fan.

Hon Chairperson, a number of steps are being taken to stem the instability within our security forces and particular amongst the key officials and a number of processes underway to ensure that all key officials in our security agencies work in a co-operative manner and they put aside what could be seen as vengeance against each other and focus on the task at hand. The task at hand is to fight criminality. The task at hand is to root-out corruption and to ensure that the criminal justice system and entities in our country regain the trust of our people rather than to be going at each other. Of course, we do want to root-out those who are involved in criminal activities. This is what we are indeed pursuing.

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The process of, say, lifestyle audits is being processed by, as I said, the SSA. We have determined that all senior officials in our security entities should go through Lifestyle audits. That is a rigorous process that is currently underway. Whilst I would like to give clear timelines, vetting processes and lifestyle audits do tend to take time. But they are being done. As they get concluded, those that are found to be involved in various nefarious activities will be dealt with. That is the assurance that we would like to give. Thank you, hon, Chairperson.

Mr B J FARMER: Thank you, hon Chairperson. Good day, hon President. Maybe Bafana-Bafana cannot help but do well because they have a very good Minister. Hon President, whistleblowers and officers who refuse to participate in syndicates become targets for their own corrupt colleagues, facing intimidation, victimisation or even assassination attempts. What is available to those honest ones who are also husbands, wives, mothers and fathers? Thank you.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Thank you, hon Chairperson. Yes, I'd like you to remember, hon member that I am the one who sent the Bafana-Bafana team off to play for the country. Of course, as I said, I will definitely be at the final when

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they play to win the cup to bring it back. That is what I can say. Some people say I'm delusional, but It's good to dream, and it's good to hope that our boys will do well and they'll do our country proud.

The issue of whistleblowers is a daunting one. Whistleblowers are those South Africans who are brave, who are honest, who are able to reveal the wrong things that are being done even by their colleagues. We should really applaud them and thank them for revealing the wrong things or the criminal things that are being done. But we should also go just beyond applauding them. We should protect them. We should come up with various measures which we are working on to protect them, to ensure that they do not risk their lives as they do so. Those measures are in place, and they range from ensuring that they are safe, that their families are also safe and protected. We will continue to do precisely that. We also say and call on South Africans who see wrongdoing to come forward and know that the state will stand with them as we investigate acts of wrongdoing that may be happening in a variety of places in the state institutions. Thank you, hon Chairperson.

Mr N H PIENAAR: Thank you, Chairperson.

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Afrikaans:

Goeiemiddag, agb President.

Die PRESIDENT VAN DIE REPUBLIEK: Goeiemiddag.

English:

Mr N H PIENAAR: Mr President, speaking of criminals, five senior ANC members have been named in the Madlanga Commission. One of them is your secretary-general, Fikile Mbalula. Why has the ANC not expelled them? And when can we expect them to be arrested? Thank you, Chair.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Hon Pienaar, the follow-up questions that you are making to the President here have no bearing to the initial question that has been asked. However, I would afford the hon President an opportunity, if he is willing, to respond to your question. Even if he doesn't respond to it. Hon President, you are more than welcome to do that. Hon Pienaar, the President listened to you when you were making your point therefore afford him an opportunity.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Thank you, hon Chairperson.

What I can say is that we should allow the Madlanga Commission to continue doing its work. That is quite something that

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should be prominent in our minds. Where there is evidence of wrongdoing, the task force or the task teams that we have established are empowered to take action. They are taking action as the Madlanga Commission continues with its work. Thank you, hon Chairperson.

Question 3:

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Hon Chairperson, the National Illicit Economy Disruption Programme that we announced in the state of the nation address is operational as a co-ordinated, multiagency enforcement operation.

The programme does not function as a stand-alone or a new structure, but consolidates and intensifies existing enforcement mechanisms that we have established.

Some of these interventions are being implemented by the SA Revenue Service, Sars, through the existing Sars Compliance Programme and Sars' Illicit Economy Strategy.

The SAPS National Counterfeit, Contraband and Illicit Goods Unit and its provincial counterparts also conduct enforcement operations, resulting in the seizure of counterfeit and illicit goods, and arrests and prosecutions.

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The Department of Trade, Industry and Competition, DTIC, also contributes to this work through testing services and the enforcement of the compulsory certification of goods. The department is working on enabling track and trace legislation to proactively deter illicit trade in key products.

The current approach is focused on those economic sectors that are under imminent threat and pressures from organised crime and illicit trade, including tobacco, alcohol, fuel and counterfeit goods.

However, they are not only limited to these. They are much broader. One day when I visited Sars, I was shown a whole collection of goods ranging from lipstick to medicines to all manner of other goods that were counterfeit and which were peddled in our markets. So, it's not only alcohol and tobacco. These people who are involved in illicit trade are able to copy anything that has an economic value.

Intelligence-driven operations are aimed at counterfeit clothing, footwear, apparel, cosmetics as I was saying, cell phone accessories and related goods. At times, when you look at some of these cell phones and apparel, you would even think

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that they are the original items that you buy from the original producers.

The SA Police Service, Sars, the provincial liquor authorities and the Department of Agriculture conduct joint compliance and seizure operations targeting illicit and noncompliant liquor.

Operations are also undertaken against illicit and counterfeit cigarette ... resulting in criminal cases and the recovery of excise by Sars.

The distribution of illicit trading in fuel is led by Sars, the Department of Mineral and Petroleum Resources and the Border Management Authority, BMA. The SA Police Service itself provides operational and tactical support to these operations.

The National Illicit Economy Disruption Programme builds on existing interdepartmental co-operation. Examples of such co-operation include the illicit financial flows multiagency task team, the organised crime and corruption task team and the multistakeholder working group on illicit trade.

All of these activities currently underway form part of the National Illicit Economy Disruption Programme, so that

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government can be in a position to proceed in a co-ordinated and comprehensive manner to deal with all acts that are part of illicit trading. Thank you, hon Chairperson.

Mr M G MODISE: Chairperson, firstly, I must probably take this opportunity to wish the Director-General of the Gauteng government, Mr Edward Mosuwe, a happy birthday.

Tshivenda:

Ndi masiari, Vho Phuresidennde.

MUPHURESIDENNDE WA AFURIKA TSHIPEMBE: Ndi masiari a vhudi.

English:

Mr M G MODISE: President, thank you so much for the response. It's quite substantial if you take into consideration the question itself.

I just want to check, President ... You know, yesterday when the referee blew his final whistle, I thought about you, and I was like, President ... [Inaudible.]

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President, earlier this year, the former commissioner of Sars indicated that in the past 15 to 20 years the illicit economy has grown so much more than the formal economy of the country.

Now, I want to check whether there is a specific department or office that is responsible for co-ordinating the activities that deal with the illicit economy.

Secondly, how does this then help in resolving the historical bottlenecks when you take into consideration Operation Ukubusa?

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Hon Chairperson, yes, it was at 3:00 am this morning when Bafana Bafana played and a number of people in our country, including myself, deprived ourselves of sleep to see Bafana Bafana marching to victory and to give them the support, albeit from far away. I think they could feel our support, the enormous spirit and support of many South Africans who were awake at that time.

Even at that time, I spoke to a number of people, not so much to check whether they were awake, but just to exchange messages with them and to say, do you see how they are playing? They played extremely well. I'm not saying this to be

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a football commentator, which I am not, but they played extremely well.

The work that we are doing to deal with illicit trade is actually integrated. It's co-ordinated through this programme that I spoke about, the National Illicit Economy Disruption Programme.

It is a programme in which Sars plays a key role, in which the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition also plays a key role ... the BMA that is really at the front face in dealing with people coming with all illicit goods and counterfeit goods. The SAPS is also on hand to deal with all of this. The Department of Agriculture is also involved, working together with all other departments.

This has helped us to break down the silos that have often prevailed in government, where various departments tend to work alone. Through this programme, we've enabled them to work together and to co-operate at a very high level in order to ensure that the illicit trading of goods ... of counterfeit goods, is actually curbed.

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Illicit trading, as you correctly said, has been growing in leaps and bounds, not only in our country but globally. There are gangs and people who are committed to counterfeiting goods, who sell goods that are not made by the original manufacturers, and they deceive people. They hawk these goods, not only cigarettes, and as I said even harmful substances that get sold. They are, sort of presented as very good and helpful products, yet they are actually substandard in many, many ways.

So, a combination of all these entities working together is able to bring about checks and balances, and ensure that real identification of various loopholes is actually found and arrested.

So, I do believe that through this structure we are really succeeding in dealing with the illicit economy. Of course, those people who get involved in the illicit economy are clever. They keep changing their rules, their processes and their ways of doing business, but we are on their tracks, and we will lessen and reduce illicit trade in our country. Thank you, hon Chairperson.

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Ms H S BOSHOFF: Mr President, you have repeatedly spoken about building an ethical and capable state. Do you accept that public confidence in the fight against the illicit economy is weakened when South Africans perceive that accountability is often demanded of others, but seldom demonstrated at the highest levels of government? Thank you, Chair.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Of course, we demand accountability all around, and we often say that we want all of us in South Africa to be accountable ... to be people who work on the basis of integrity. This we have said, particularly in building a capable state, a state which has integrity and a state which will serve the people of South Africa with due respect to our Constitution and the values that we as South Africans have espoused. This is the position that we always put out there. Thank you, hon Chairperson.

Ms K R MOLOKOMME: Chairperson ...

Sepedi:

... e re ke tšee sebaka se ke dumediše Mopresidente wa rena
...

English:

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... Bafana Bafana that they won. President, I'm like others who managed to wake up and watch the soccer, but when I heard that we had done well, I was the first one to immediately out of my bed to celebrate.

Mr President, thank you for the in-depth reply and ... acknowledge the interagency collaboration to enforce compliance.

My question is on the other aspect of these illicit activities that are taking place, President. Are there illicit financial flows? Has the government made any assessment on the implementation and impact of government policies, and also the enforcement measures and international co-operation initiatives to combat the outflow of billions of rand through tax evasion and other corrupt activities? Thank you very much, Chair.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Yes, hon Chairperson, we do have agencies in government whose task and work is to monitor the flow of illicit money, and they are quite active.

The Financial Intelligence Centre, FIC, for instance is able to track transactions that are suspicious, and they are able

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to raise the alarm so that various other agencies or entities in government are able to follow through and ensure that action is taken.

As you correctly say, illicit trading ... illicit economy is always accompanied by illicit money flows. So, the agencies that we have are able to look at that very closely and see exactly some of those trades that are taking place. And, because our economy is so big, they are able to be on their toes and look at various transactions that they believe are suspicious. So, that is done on a regular basis. Thank you, hon Chairperson.

Mr J H P BRITZ: Mr President, trade in illicit products like cigarettes and liquor became embedded during the COVID-19 lockdown period, and it is still thriving today. You can still buy illicit cigarettes openly at the spaza shop on the corner. It is costing the economy billions in lost legitimate revenue.

Now, you have answered a number of questions, but what evidence exists that this programme you announced is indeed disrupting syndicates rather than simply increasing the cost of doing business for criminals ... simultaneously, chasing away thousands of affected legal job opportunities and

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legitimate companies like British American Tobacco. Thank you, Mr President.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Hon Chairperson, the current commissioner of Sars, as well as the previous one, have highlighted the concerns that we should all have about illicitly traded products. When it comes to those two items that you have highlighted, there are special operations that are being pursued or worked on to identify those who are involved in those illicit trading networks.

So, that is a process that is currently underway and I am satisfied that with the hawkish eye that Sars has on illicit trading, we are going to continue seeing a lot of progress and success.

Yes, you are right. This illicit trading, particularly in alcohol and cigarettes, perhaps reached its height during the period of COVID when a ban or restrictions had been imposed to preserve the health of our people. A number of people found gaps to get involved in those illicitly traded products.

However, we have identified that there are these networks, and they are being pursued and action is being taken. Of course,

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Sars does not always precisely announce what actions they are taking. They work in a very special way and so does the BMA, but they are continuing to take action. Thank you, hon Chairperson.

Question 4:

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: We are now moving to Question 4. I don't see hon Makesini in the House. Can I establish whether hon Makesini has joined in through the virtual platform? Oh, she's not even on the virtual platform.

Mr President, in terms of Rule 228(6), if the question stands in the name of the member who's not present in the House, that question laps or the President may elect to respond to the question or table a response. Hon President, the choice is yours.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Hon Chairperson, I think in my case, it would be respectful and proper to answer the question when the member is present in the House, either physically or online. I think that is the respect that I would like to give to the hon members of this House. So, you will excuse me, therefore, for doing that.

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The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Thank you, hon President. You may proceed.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: I said that you will excuse me because I will not be able to answer.

Mr F J BADENHORST: ... listen for meaning most of the time.
[Laughter.]

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Thank you very much, hon President. We are now proceeding to Question 5. I misread you, I must say, on the previous one ... [Laughter.].

Okay, the next question is from hon Van den Berg, which talks about South Africa's alignment with certain states. Over to you, hon President.

Question 5:

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Hon Chairperson, South Africa's foreign policy is guided by our Constitution, which commits the Republic to the promotion of human rights, peace, multilateralism and a rules-based international order. In this context, South Africa engages with a wide range of countries

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across the globe based on sovereign equality, mutual respect and non-interference in the internal affairs of other states.

I have often said that we do not see ourselves as a country having enemies. We are a country that seeks to be at peace with all other countries and have good relations with all. We maintain diplomatic relations with countries across different regions and political systems in pursuit of our national interests and our commitment to constructive global engagement. This approach is consistent with South Africa's longstanding policy of non-alignment and strategic autonomy.

Engagement with countries such as the United States, Iran, the Russian Federation, the People's Republic of China and various other countries take place within this framework. This engagement takes place through bilateral relations that we have with many countries across the world and multilateral platforms, which we are a part of, with a view to advancing dialogue, co-operation and peaceful resolution of disputes.

The Minister of International Relations and Co-operation acts in accordance with the policy positions of our government and within the mandate provided by the President and our Cabinet. South Africa remains committed to its policy of non-alignment.

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This does not imply neutrality or disengagement, but rather an independent foreign policy that seeks to promote dialogue, co-operation and peaceful resolution of global challenges.

Government will continue to engage all international partners in a balanced and principled manner, consistent with the national interests and constitutional values. South Africa values its longstanding bilateral relationship with the United States and continues to engage constructively with the United States on areas of mutual interest. In areas where we disagree or we do agree, we continue to engage because non-engagement does not serve any of us any good.

Efforts to strengthen and normalise relations include ongoing diplomatic engagements, dialogue through bilateral mechanisms, and co-operation in areas such as trade, investment, health, education, security and the promotion of people-to-people contact. Government remains committed to addressing matters of concern through respectful engagement and dialogue, with a view to maintaining a constructive and mutually beneficial partnership with the United States while preserving South Africa's independent foreign policy stance. I thank you.

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Mr H J VAN DEN BERG: Mr President, if non-alignment is genuine, why then host military drills with these mentioned countries while relations with the United States deteriorate, as we have seen with lost funding recently? What specific distancing steps and timeline can South Africans then expect?

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Hon Chairperson, hon Van den Berg, you may want to know that in implementing our international relations policy, when it comes to things like military exercises or naval exercises, from time to time, we do have military or naval exercises with a number of countries including the United States, a number of so-called Western countries and countries that are in the East - India, China and many others.

Military exercises like those are so useful in enabling us to have insight not only into the capability, but in new technologies that various countries have. We share not only experiences, but we share experiences when it comes to manner of either warfare, manner of ensuring that we keep the peace on an international basis and in the end, we see nothing wrong in engaging in military exercises with the United States, China and other countries. As our former president, the

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founding president said, it should never be that one's enemy should be depicted as an enemy of all.

We don't operate on that basis, because we often find that even those that you may regard as your enemies, in the end, we often find that we must deal with them. Therefore, to avoid being hypocritical, we are able to maintain relations across a number of areas of the world. In doing so, we keep our own sovereignty and integrity, because those two must never be sacrificed. Those two must never be compromised.

We have never, in dealing with a variety of nations, sold out our soul as a nation, or our integrity or sovereignty. Even in dealing with them, we always ensure that they know what our stance is, that we are a self-respecting country, a country that is proud of our history and the values that we stand for. We are able to deal with them on the basis of respect and on the basis that they, too, will respect our standing and our sovereignty. That is how we deal with other countries.

We are not shy to state our position, and our position is often well-known. In many ways, we are respected around the world for the position that we hold. A good example to give you is, during the Ukraine-Russia war, as it has been going

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on, we have become one of the very few countries that is able to talk to both sides, whereas others only prefer to talk to one. Those who don't want to talk to others often come to us and say, could you please pass on this and that message to the other side. So, in that conflict, we are one of those very few countries that has been able to do a number of things to give assistance to the resolution of the conflict.

We don't stand on rooftops or shout and scream about the role we play. Both sides respect us for the role we play. Even as they engage with each other on a variety of platforms, we often find that they call us, they send messages to us and tell us that this is where we are going and this is what we are doing. This demonstrates the respect that they have for us for the stance that we always take and the role that we play. We play a positive role in the world with regard to the resolution of disputes. We are not shy; we're not shy at all to vocalise that. Those who have problems don't know the impact that South Africa has on the global stage. We play a positive role. Thank you, hon Chairperson.

Ms T I LEGWASE: Good day hon Chairperson and hon President. Hon Chairperson, it is clear and worrisome that there are members of this Parliament who do not understand South

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Africa's foreign policy of non-alignment. But this is a topic for another day.

Mr President, kindly give us the progress that South Africa is making in using economic diplomacy to protect South African industries without abandoning its non-aligned position, particularly on critical domestic sectors like steel, where we have witnessed unilateral trade disputes and tariff policies imposed by countries such as the United States and the European Union. How does South Africa ensure its non-alignment position is interpreted as strategic importance rather than bias? Thank you very much, Mr President.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Hon Chairperson, we are able to exercise our economic diplomacy which is grounded on our broad international policy position. As I was saying earlier, it is a policy position that is based on our non-alignment, which enables us to deal with a variety of players in the world. Many have come to accept that the non-aligned position that we have opted for stands us in good stead, because we are not tied to any block in the world. We are tied to multilateralism, which we respect deeply.

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We play a role in various multilateral organisations on a voluntary basis. We are not compelled to be in the United Nations, UN, which is the family of all nations, I must say. We are not compelled to be in the Commonwealth, Brics or in the non-aligned movement. It is by choice and it is through exercising our own policy position. Armed with that, we're then able to exercise it through economic diplomacy. Where there are disputes of an economic nature, for instance, armed with our non-aligned policy, we're able to engage with all countries without saying, we will not talk to this one or we will not talk to that one.

It enables us to engage with all to advance the interests of South Africa, and we should understand that the real foundation of our international policy is to advance the interests of South Africa. To do so, we will engage on a basis of sovereignty and respect for others, and with a variety of countries. For example, when it comes to trade negotiations where others may want to impose tariffs, we engage with them, we go to various forums, be it on a bilateral or multilateral basis, and we engage with them with a view to finding solutions. They may have acted on a unilateral basis or on the basis of regional blocks that they may want to advance.

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We are quite robust and active when it comes to economic diplomacy, more so now in the wake of the tariffs that were imposed on many countries around the world by the United States. We have decided to turbocharge our economic diplomacy and reach out to many countries around the world with a view to establishing sustainable and dependable trade relations with them, where we know that we can relate with them on the basis of respect and trust. This is the basis on which we exercise our economic diplomacy and deal with issues such as steel, critical minerals and many others. We are well armed with the principles and values that underpin our general international policy. Thank you, hon Chairperson.

Ms J M ADRIAANSE: Hon Chairperson, hon President, our international standing should open trade options and not close them. True non-alignment means being guided by principles, not friendships.

If South Africa is genuinely non-aligned, as alluded to and confirmed just now, why does government appear reluctant to criticise authoritarian states with the same vigour that applies elsewhere? What message does that send about our commitment to human rights, democracy and the rule of law?

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The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Let me thank you, because you are reiterating precisely the principles on which our foreign policy is based: respect for human rights, democracy and the values that are so strongly enshrined in our Constitution.

Now, in executing our foreign policy, we ensure that human rights and principles of democracy become our guiding light. In exercising our foreign policy, we are able to utilise a number of policy instruments. Some would want us to engage vigorously on a bilateral basis with a number of countries. and some would want us to stand on tabletops and use megaphones to shout out our policies, etc. Some would want us just to be completely quiet. We are able to utilise a variety of instruments. Where our policies are at variance with various partners in the world, we are able to vocalise precisely where we stand. We often say that this is where we stand as a country.

We seek not to interfere in the policies of other countries but to state our own position. There will be occasions where, for instance, certain parties or entities in the world just remind us of the past that we have had, or where we believe that policies such as apartheid are being perpetrated. We will not be quiet. We will speak out because the majority of South

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Africans lived through the horror of policies of that nature. Having felt the stone in the shoe, we will speak out. There are other moments where, yes, there will be certain policies that could be at variance with ours, however, we will articulate our position very clearly and directly.

We, therefore, are able to utilise a variety of instruments, levers and measures to execute our policy. We have found that it is quite successful. Of course, there are others in our country who would want us to stand on table tops and just shout out at everyone, and in doing so, not even begin to achieve the purpose of getting to resolve the disputes that are given rise to by whatever is happening elsewhere in the world. Therefore, we choose our moments. We choose the various processes that are underway to engage and all the time, seek to have disputes resolved and settled in a variety of ways. This is the way that we have adopted to exercise our foreign policy. Thank you, hon Chairperson.

Mr P A PHALA: Good afternoon once again, Chairperson and President. We are indeed pleased and over the moon about the success of our national football club. I would really appreciate your leadership in this regard.

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Hon President, thank you for adequately responding to the distortions about our beloved country's foreign policy and objectives. I want to emphasise, President, they are distortions because our policies are very clear, as you have indicated.

Hon President, I want to speak about the Brics group, a very important interstate body comprising economies of developing nations, the body which possesses a superior economic scale and demographic weight currently. Hon President, my question is, how has South Africa's membership of Brics assisted in efforts to influence reforms of international, political and economic institutions? That's my question, hon President. Thank you very much.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Thank you, hon Phala. Before the President responds, I'm sure, President, you will note the timing there. It's haywire; the server is down. Please don't mind the timer. We will indicate when your time has lapsed. You may proceed, hon President.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Hon Chairperson, the hon member refers to our participation in Brics. We are a proud member, as South Africa, of the Brics formation, which has grown by

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leaps and bounds, and now represents up to 48-50% of the world population of the global gross domestic product, GDP, of about 43% and a nominal GDP of about 30%.

Now, it has enormous reserves. For example, when it comes to reserves such as oil, it's almost 50% of oil reserves or assets of liquid petroleum that reside in Brics countries, as well as gas, etc. For us as a country, the benefits that we derive from Brics are quite enormous. We never want to compare one global formation to another, but Brics stands out as an outlier, which has brought together a number of countries that want to co-operate, trade with one another and in proving that, they have established the New Development Bank, which is helping to fund infrastructure projects, particularly, in various countries.

When BRICS countries get together, they discuss all manners of things. One of the recent areas of discussion was about, for example, just having common payment systems, global payment systems; a matter that has been thoroughly discussed by all those countries. Payment systems are so important for countries that trade with each other. So, as that whole idea matures, going beyond just the formation of the investment body or the New Development Bank, we'll find that it becomes

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more and more effective, and enables those countries to trade with each other on a seamless basis.

There are a number of other areas in which Brics comes up with policies and, of course, without interfering in the policies of each country. This is where, for instance, we utilise Brics as a melting point of enabling countries to express their views on a number of issues and still be able to retain their own sovereignty. So, Brics has been a great benefit to us as South Africa, and that is why we're so proud to be associated with a number of countries that are members of Brics.

In many, many ways, being a country with a very small economy, being a member of Brics lifts us up and gives us benefits that we would otherwise not have. Brics has been of great benefit to us as a rather smaller economy than the gigantic economies such as China, Brazil, India and a number of others. We participate with all those countries on the basis of equality, respect and knowing the value that we each add. The value that we add is so respected, even as Brics summits are also held in our country. They value the positive contribution that South Africa makes in the Brics family. Thank you very much.

Question 6:

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The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Hon Chairperson, the Presidential Nodal Points Programme, incorporating the Urban Renewal Programme and the Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Programme, predates this administration. While the specific institutional arrangements that are associated with these programmes have changed over time, the underlying objective of directing co-ordinated government interventions across areas that are characterised by poverty, unemployment and underdevelopment remains a feature of our government's policy. These objectives have subsequently been reflected in programmes such as the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme, approved by the Cabinet in the year 2009, and more recently through the Integrated Rural Development Sector Strategy of 2023.

Now, these objectives have now been taken up through the District Development Model, DDM, specifically the work to address development challenges through an integrated approach to policy, planning and execution. Therefore, the DDM, as we call it, was introduced in 2019, to fix the co-ordination challenges that have long undermined service delivery. The DDM is meant to overcome the problem of government spheres and departments that have tended to operate in silos, which has led to a lack of coherence in planning and implementation,

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resulting in poor service delivery and low levels of investment in social infrastructure.

Now, this DDM focusses all spheres of government on the municipal, district and metropolitan spaces as the key sites of joint planning, budgeting and implementation, working together with business and labour. This is the real good aspect of the DDM because it seeks to engender co-operation and collaboration between government, labour, civil society, as well as business and ordinary citizens in each district or metro and develop a single long-term plan that all three spheres of government align resources behind, working together with a number of key role players in the area. This is meant to accelerate delivery of water, sanitation, electricity and roads.

What had been service delivery challenges can be turned into development opportunities through localised procurement and job creation that promotes and supports local businesses. The key objective of the District Development Model is to co-ordinate a government-wide response to poverty, unemployment and inequality. In fact, it should be seen as a stakeholder-wide response because it does not only limit itself to what government should do. It brings government closer to citizens

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but also enables businesses to also be part of this process, labour to be part of this, and community-based organisations by strengthening the co-ordination role and capacities at the district and metro level. This improves responsiveness and accountability.

The DDM process expedites delivery by breaking the silos down and assigning plans and budgets and converting service delivery blockages into local and employment opportunities in our districts. We have seen this working out so well, albeit in its nascent stages in eThekweni, which is one of our big metros, which is a district in the end, where we have seen business, unions, local government, provincial government and national government, and community-based organisations working together.

We have seen how, for instance, the City of Durban has been transformed, and the local areas that make up the metro are now also beginning to benefit from all that. We still have a long way to go. However, we have embarked on a process that will turn eThekweni into the true jewel, for instance, of tourism in our country once again, and ensure that service delivery becomes a process that benefits all. Thank you, hon Chairperson.

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Mr T M KAUNDA: Chairperson, through you, thank you, Your Excellency, for your comprehensive response. Let me also take this opportunity to wish you well in your evening meeting to reposition Africa to take its rightful position in the global economy. We wish you everything of the best.

Hon President, looking at how this targeted approach, which was implemented through the Presidential Nodal Points, has impacted positively, especially in the areas like uMsinga, KwaZulu-Natal, which is a poverty-stricken area, KwaMaphumulo, Inanda, Ntuzuma and KwaMashu. If you look at the evaluation of how this has impacted, there are positive indicators that if this can be taken forward, it will also continue to make and add more value in turning the tide around.

Therefore, my follow-up question is, is the President considering reviving such an intervention, which is a very targeted intervention, to turn around the fortunes of these communities, especially if you look at the areas like Inanda is leading with conduct crimes in the Republic of South Africa? Therefore, it still requires as much as there were interventions, but we still need more interventions in this regard. Is the President considering reviving such a noble programme? Thank you very much, hon Chairperson.

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The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Hon Chairperson, the answer is yes, we do need. As we proceed with the implementation of a District Development Model, which really calls for us to focus on specific areas in our country and develop one plan, one budgeting framework, as well as doing it under the rubric of one government, a government that is layered as national government, provincial government and local government, and embark on projects that will be of benefit to our people. Yes, begin to deal with even areas such as criminality, which, as you correctly say, is so rife in some areas in KwaZulu-Natal, and not only in KwaZulu-Natal, but in several places around the country. Yes, that is our intention.

For instance, just yesterday, we were talking about the Eastern Seaboard which will be a cross-border type of project, which will incorporate the southern KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape, and a number of districts that will be focused on with a high level of interventions, catalytic projects for infrastructure, bringing in investors from a number of places. Now, this will be one of those projects that will be, in my view, quite exciting, because it brings together traditional leaders, brings together local governments across the border of two provinces, and brings together the private sector, and brings together local government, as well as provincial and

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national government, in an area of our country which has been quite neglected, which has some of the poorest regions in our country.

As we execute the various projects, the District Development Model will be at the core of it, and we'll be able to embark on those types of projects that will lift the lives of our people, just as hon Kaunda was saying, with areas that he alluded to, uMsinga and a few others. That is the intention, as we embark on implementing the District Development Model. Thank you, hon Chairperson.

Afrikaans:

Mnr N H PIENAAR: Dankie, Voorsitter. [Thank you, Chairperson.]

English:

Mr President, let's hope I can get an answer out of you this time. Mr President, the ANC Ministers and speechwriters have been peddling the DDM model ambitiously, for the last few years. Why do you keep pushing for centralised control, even though the SA Communist Party has abandoned you? Thank you, Chairperson.

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The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: I don't know who's been writing those follow-up questions for you, hon Pienaar. You're so obsessed about the ANC today. Hon President, you may not respond to the question, because there's no relevance to the initial question that's been posed before you.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Thank you, hon Chairperson. Of course, I will follow your guide in this regard. However, all I would want to say is, hon Pienaar, in Xhosa, we would say ...

IsiXhosa:

... unochuku.

Setswana:

Ka Setswana re a re o rata ditshela. O a seba. O tlisa ditshela tsa kwa ntle o di tlisa mo. [Setshego.]

Tshivenda:

U funa zwitshela.

English:

Hon Chairperson, all I would say is, if one did a thorough study of the District Development Model, which I invite hon

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Pienaar to look at, it's one of the most decentralised models, because what it seeks to do is to devolve the process of planning to that district level. I've come to really believe that development takes place not in a sort of silo or a singular manner. It should take place at the district level. I've seen how it works, for instance, in education. I've seen how it works, and I'll cite this example again in eThekweni, where at the district level we are able to devolve discussions, various processes of implementation to that level, and give powers to that level. Where we say you have the ability, the power to implement your plan, and you craft your budget, and you ensure that various processes, which should be owned by yourselves at that local level without, for instance, national or province breathing down on you and where you need support and assistance, you can then tap onto that at the provincial and national level.

That is how the District Development Model works. It empowers our local government at the district level. It gives enough capability at that level. Even the skills that we seek to execute are skills that are to be found at that level. We bring them in and they work together. Through that, we break down silos. Now, if you want to say that breaking down silos is to centralise, it is to bring about efficiency and

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effectiveness and get those who used to work in a fragmented manner to work together to make things happen. Therefore, that is how magic happens.

If you looked at how Bafana Bafana won last night, they won because they were so well-integrated. I'm not a football commentator. Their game was so well-integrated. They acted, yes, as individual players, but acting together and for one goal. Of course, they scored one goal, which was the winning goal. That is what District Development Model is also all about. I think they studied it. They perfected it last night. Thank you very much.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): Hon Chairperson, through you to hon President, I'd like to take this opportunity in your presence to commend the SA Police Service in KwaZulu-Natal, led by the Acting Provincial Commissioner, Major-General Gopaul, for finally arresting the fourth suspect of a gang who brutally murdered seven members of the Moonsamy family in KwaDukuza. I remember, hon President, that at that time, you had a very sympathetic response to that brutal crime. Therefore, I pray that those criminals will face the full might of the law. Thank you for your support on that issue, hon President.

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Now, coming to my question, one of the critical interventions in the District Development Model is the development of one plan, which are critical for strengthening three spheres, planning, co-ordination and interventions to address issues of poverty, unemployment and inequality. My question, hon President, is, what support systems has government put in place to ensure the completion of one plan across all districts and metros to accelerate the implementation of the Medium-Term Development Plan priorities to drive development in these areas, including the accelerated development of rural areas? Thank you, hon Chairperson.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Thank you very much, hon Chairperson, and thank you to the Deputy Chairperson for those kind words. The whole process of getting our districts through the DDM model process is a work in progress. We see that even now as our municipalities and our districts are developing their own budgets, and in several areas, that is beginning to take effect. In some areas, the District Development Model is being implemented. People are crying out for the implementation of this model because they have seen how it works elsewhere.

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I spoke about, for instance, the Eastern Seaboard in our country, which is in the south and east part of the country. That is where the District Development Model across borders of our provinces will be seen to be in full effect. The involvement of national and two provinces will be seen playing out to a point where, yes, as they embark on catalytic major projects, those will be part of the plans that will be developed in the metros that make up the Eastern Seaboard. We have seen how impactful it is in a metro like eThekweni, I repeat once again, because that is the one metro that is the poster metro of the effectiveness of the District Development Model.

Therefore, it is going to continue spreading, particularly when the need for a single plan is seen by all and sundry, particularly now as the plans are being crafted and budgets are being adopted. It is work in progress, and I see it gaining traction. There was one province that had its doubt about the District Development Model, and those doubts have now dissipated, and the embrace of the DDM is now the order of the day, and I would say, yes, throughout the country.

Therefore, we will begin to see real action as we see the efficacy of the District Development Model spreading. Thank you, hon Chairperson.

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Adv Inkosi M NONKONYANA: Chairperson, through you to Mr President, thank you very much for your comprehensive response. It is pleasing to hear that the ANC-led government continues to push back the frontiers of poverty, inequality and unemployment as the identification of nodal points is designed to provide all the people living in those poverty-stricken areas with needed government intervention to address inequality bequeathed by oppressive colonial and apartheid regimes and to deliver a better life to all.

Arising from the responses to the question posed by Comrade Kaunda, what are the new structural reforms beyond planning interventions are being implemented to build productive, sustainable economies within the designated nodes to ensure that local entrepreneurs are able to drive down local unemployment and are linked with rural development as envisaged in the DDM model piloted in the O R Tambo Region within the Eastern Cape province of legends? Take this, Comrade President, as a true pass from an ANC midfielder for you to score as we inspired Bafana Bafana to make us all proud at the International Federation of Association Football, Fifa, World Cup this morning. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Hon Chairperson, thank you to Inkosi yethu [Our King] for that question. Maybe let me take a minute to expand a little on how we will see the District Development Model being truly implemented, particularly through the Eastern Seaboard development. The Eastern Seaboard really incorporates iconic areas such as Coffee Bay, Port St Johns, Lusikisiki, Bizana, Kokstad, Port Shepstone, as well as Scottburgh in KwaZulu-Natal. Now that is, if you call it a precinct, that will be part of this Eastern Seaboard. It is quite an ambitious project which is underway.

That corridor on its own, that precinct, has a few important benefits, I would call them, with regard, for instance, to sectors that will contribute to the growth. Those areas that I've counted are some of the poorest areas in our country, as you called O R Tambo and the other districts in KwaZulu-Natal. They're very, very poor. We've focused on those areas, and it is very ambitious. It incorporates, for instance, tourism. Now, the tourism part will be the jewel of South Africa. It has beaches, cliffs, indigenous forests, marine resources, cultural tourism, adventure tourism and heritage attractions.

It also has agriculture, and the ocean economy, and renewable energy, and the linkage of important roadways. You will be

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aware that we are building two mega bridges, Msikaba and Mtentu Bridges, that will be the linkages and the pathways that will add a great deal of benefits to those areas, Coffee Bay and all of them, Lusikisiki, Bizana, Scottburgh, and so forth.

Now, all that will lead to a great deal of development. This is how the District Development Model then fits in, because it will bring each of the municipalities, and it will bring in national governments, provincial governments, and we were just talking about it even yesterday. Catalytic projects that will be considered in that area is the development of, say, Port St Johns, which is a jewel in our country, which has long been neglected, and we will raise Port St Johns as a key area, just like we have another important port area which has a wonderful hotel in southern KwaZulu-Natal.

All that has enormous economic potential, and it will attract a lot of billions of rands. Already the private sector, having seen this jewel of an area in our country, and the plan that not only us as government have, but also a number of private sector players have, they see it as a strategic area, and I have said that, you know, calling it the Eastern Seaboard is actually quite a nice, sexy name, and just as sexy as

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Waterfront was. Waterfront has attracted a lot of investments, and I see Eastern Seaboard, with all its natural beauty, also being able to do that.

What will that lead to? It will lead to a lot of employment. It will lead to a lot of development, and already plans are underway for housing development, which will span all those areas, thousands of houses, but the fact that we've embarked on a catalytic project such as those bridges, and that will link not only our communities, but also be pathways for economic development, and also lift the Wild Coast in KwaZulu-Natal to a number, to a higher level. That will be a great boon, and this will be happening as part of the District Development Model, which will enhance integrated infrastructure, spatial planning, and become an investment attraction. It's very ambitious, and I think it is doable, because we have a natural resource that we will be able to get all these developments to surround. Thank you, hon Chairperson. Thank you very much.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Thank you very much, President. We've come to the end of the question, you may take your seat. Hon President, we would like to take this opportunity ... [Interjections.] ... hon Badenhorst, order! We would like to

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take this opportunity, hon President, to thank you for leading from the front in ensuring that government is responsive to the needs and the challenges of the people of South Africa. Therefore, this to us is indicative of you respecting the doctrine of separation of power by always availing yourself to account to Parliament and to the people of South Africa at large.

Therefore, for that, we would like to thank you so much for respecting this august House and to thank the director-general, DG, and the entire component of your administration, including your Ministers as well. We've not had anything untoward in terms of them having to come to respond and be accountable to this House. Therefore, for that, we thank you. Hon delegates, we have come to the end of the sitting today. The sitting stand adjourned until further notice.

The Council adjourned at 16:18.