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NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

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PROCEEDINGS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

The House met at Nieuwemeester Dome at 14:00.

The Speaker took the Chair and requested members to observe a moment of silence for prayer or meditation.

HOUSEKEEPING MATTERS

(Announcements)

The SPEAKER: Order, hon members. Order can hon members settle down and also our guests in the gallery.

Hon members, on behalf of the presiding officers, I wish to extend our apology for the late start owing to the scanner outside which was not working and hon members had to wait on a long queue.

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Me and the hon Deputy Minister Mathale, had to intervene to ensure that we assist members to come in. We hope you accept our apology.

Secondly, I just want to indicate our concern on what happened in the House yesterday. I think there are ways in which we can manage our House better so that we are able to ensure that the business of the day is not compromised. We would look on how we continuously better improve on the functionality of our House but also on the adherence to our rules.

Hon members I just want to again indicate that we have written to the Deputy President expressing the concern of members about the quality of answers that are received on questions. I must say that some members have improved but there are still some difficulties with others and hopefully the Deputy President will continue to work with us to ensure that on both questions from members that is our part as well as on the part of the executive that we do ensure that this area of accountability is done without compromise.

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In consultation with the Whips owing to the absent of some of the members in respect of the ethics report that was going to be tabled we agreed that we will postpone that to another date.

So, today the first item on the Order Paper is questions addressed to our Deputy President. Parties have been given enough time to ask their questions but also have indicated which questions their members wish to pose as supplementary question. Adequate notice was given to parties for this purpose. The members who will pose the supplementary questions will be recognised by the presiding officer. In allocating opportunities for supplementary questions, the principle of fairness among others has been applied. When all supplementary questions have been answered by the Deputy President we will proceed to the next question on the Order Paper.

The first question has been asked by the hon M Dlelanga. The question is: Following his oversight visit as the Chair of the Water Task Team to Johannesburg Water facilities and the briefing on the current status of water supply systems in Gauteng: What specific short to long-term interventions have been implemented to ensure uninterrupted and equitable water supply to affected communities?

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The hon Deputy President.

[Applause.]

Order! Order, hon members!

Hon Deputy President, before you can answer, I just want to indicate that when we were coming through somebody mistakenly took the cell phone of the hon Ndhlela as well as his permit. So, if an hon member took that by mistake, please give them back to the hon Ndhlela.

Order! Order!

However, I have made sure that the hon Reddy you will appear on the TV so that you are calmer. What is the issue?

Mr V G REDDY: Hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The cell phone has been found.

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Mr V G REDDY: Hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER. Yes.

Mr V G REDDY: Hon Speaker, as we entered here today one of the scanners is not working. Somebody, ... [Inaudible.] ... that scanner also, please, get them to work because it causes a huge bottleneck as we entered. It is wrong. Please. Thank you, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Order!

I think when the Chief Whip of the MKP is here I will write a note to her to make sure that the hon Reddy sits in front because he did not hear my apology at the start of this session because it related exactly to the scanner issue. So, next time the hon Reddy I will negotiate for you to sit in the front row of your party.

Hon Deputy President, you can now answer.

QUESTIONS FOR ORAL REPLY

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Question 1:

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon Speaker, I appreciate hon Dlelanga's question, which is especially relevant as we are currently observing the National Water Month. From 1 to 31 March, we are called to promote water conservation, highlight infrastructure development, and mobilise all South Africans to protect and preserve our country's limited water resources.

Immediate relief is being secured through the commission in Johannesburg, of Brixton Reservoir and insourcing of water tankers, while long-term stability will come from the 20 million litres Carlswald Reservoir and expanded Rand Water capacity. These interventions, alongside leak repairs, strict water use enforcement, ensure that every household has access to reliable, dignified water supply.

Hon Speaker, in my capacity as the chairperson of the Water Task Team, I undertook an oversight visit at the Carlswald Reservoir construction site and the Grand Central Water Tower in Midrand on 20 February this. During these visits, we have encouraged the municipality, including other municipalities, to ensure they access the new performance-based Metropolitan Trading Services Grant from National Treasury.

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In this regard, metropolitan municipalities are now developing water and sanitation turn-around strategies as part of the reform of Metro Trading Services Program, which will be implemented by National Treasury. One of the key reforms of this programme is to develop water and sanitation turn-around strategies, focusing on ring fencing revenue from the sale of water, specifically for the water function. The implementation of these reforms seeks to stabilise and strengthen delivery of core basic services in the metropolitan municipalities and set foundations for increased investment and economic growth in South Africa's eight largest cities.

The Department of Water and Sanitation is rolling out bulk supply schemes and large-scale projects while exploring new solutions such as groundwater, desalination, freshwater spring protection and wastewater reuse. In tandem with this, we are conducting oversight visits across affected provinces to directly assess progress on the construction and maintenance of key water infrastructure, ensuring that communities receive water that is sufficient, reliable and sustainable.

Specifically, we wanted to assist the Gauteng municipalities when we visited there, in turning around water supply

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interruptions and the department has confirmed now an increase of 200-megalitres in the water use licence allocated to rainwater. [Applause.] This expansion enables rainwater to extract and treat additional volumes - a measure that will support the stabilisation of municipal water supply systems and strengthen delivery to households and businesses alike.

As government, we reaffirm that access to sufficient, safe and reliable water is a fundamental human right. It is a cornerstone of advancing dignity, of securing social justice and of ensuring that every household, every community and every city can thrive. I thank you, hon Speaker. [Applause.]

Mr M DLELANGA: Hon Deputy President, we appreciate your positive response on the inroads that you have made on trying to address the problems in Gauteng. We also want to be clear that we are happy on the work of the Grand Central Water Tower and the Carlswald Reservoir. In particular, the additions of 200 million megalitres of water from the Vaal River system. As the ANC, this is the year of decisive intervention and what you are reporting to us is a decisive intervention that you want on addressing water challenges in Gauteng. Therefore, I want to check from you on appreciating this work that you've done that what measurable

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milestone and the clear timelines have been established to ensure that these long-term interventions are translated into sustainable and uninterrupted water supply, particularly in communities that continue to experience recurring outages.

Thank you so much, Deputy President.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon member, the Minister of Water and Sanitation held a Water Indaba last year where we came up with a number of resolutions that will assist provinces and municipalities and all water authorities to be able to manage our water supplies. We found that often the challenges of water are created where infrastructure is not maintained. So that's one of the important issues that we have raised that it is important that water authorities should maintain infrastructure, invest more in water infrastructure and also attend to problem of leaks. We lose a lot of clean water through leaks that we see all over the country. So that's what we have emphasised to all these water authorities that are there in all provinces to ensure that the bulk supply of water should be reliable. In fact, as we speak now, that is something that we are succeeding on.

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Our challenge now remains reticulation, particularly in municipalities. So that's where we're going to focus to ensure that municipalities - once water reaches the reservoirs in municipalities - the water must then reach households and businesses. It's one thing to have bulk water supplies to municipalities and you have reservoirs full, but if that water doesn't reach households, there's no water coming out of their taps, then we would not have resolved the problem.

So we are monitoring the implementation of all those resolutions through the Water Task Team that the President has appointed me to lead last year. We meet with all municipalities and all water authorities throughout the county to ensure that we have reliable water supply to all our communities. I thank you, hon Speaker.

Mr S J MOORE: Mr Deputy President, Saturday is Human Rights Day, yet as I speak to you, the right to water is being violated. The same worst-affected communities in Johannesburg, such as Melville and Lenasia, are once again without water. Melville has now gone 11 days in a row without water because of the long-failing Hursthill Reservoir. Now the project, meant to fix them, is under threat because contractors have not been paid for two

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months. You mentioned Brixton. We saw the same in Brixton, where non-payment delayed the tower and reservoir project for months. You have chaired the Water Task Team during this crisis, yet Johannesburg water still stands with hundreds of millions of rand in overdue creditors, while project after project is delayed. Why should residents believe that your intervention is making any difference at all? Thank you. [Applause.]

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon member, those are some of the issues we are attending to. In fact, yesterday we had the inaugural meeting of the Water Intervention Committee that is chaired by the President. We call it Watercom. And the idea there is that national governments should have the powers to intervene directly where we have challenges, such as those that you are alluding to in municipalities. Not that we will take away the functions of municipalities, but we're going to make sure that we don't just leave everything to them and say, you sort it out.

Through this committee, we are bringing a group of experts. We're bringing the provinces themselves. The President will convene the PCC, which is the Presidential Co-ordinating Council, where we are going to sit with all the premiers to be able to discuss how we intervene on this issue of water because

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it is a crisis. As you correctly say, even as we go throughout the country, we still find out that in some areas issues have not been resolved. So this committee met yesterday, chaired by the President. We're meeting again next week once we finalize our terms of reference. And we will be sending teams out to all provinces, particularly where there are these challenges. We will go to all more than 100 municipalities where there are challenges. We will, of course, prioritize those that there are more pronounced problems like Gauteng, as was mentioned, Giyani, and some in the Free State, KwaZulu-Natal, and so on. But we will reach out to everybody to resolve those problems. Thank you, hon Speaker.

Setswana:

Rre D D Van ROOYEN: Madume, Motlatsamoporesidente. Re a amogela jaaka mokgatlo wa MK gore dimasepala di nale baikarabelo a go berekana le bothata bo ba metsi, ...

English:

... but we also want to emphasize to you that the national oversight responsibility ultimately rests with the Minister responsible under the National Water Act and the Water Services Act. Now, given the well documented failures in Johannesburg,

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including aging infrastructure, governance breakdowns within Johannesburg Water, and allegations of corruption linked to outsourced tanker contracts and sabotage of water infrastructure, are there any specific instructions, as the Deputy President, that we have issued to the Minister of Water and Sanitation to end the reliance on outsourced tanker system and investigate corruption and stabilize water supply? I don't think this thing want further commission. [Time expired.]

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon member, yes, indeed. You would recall that during the state of the nation address, the President sent the Minister of Water and the Deputy and the Minister of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs to Gauteng to intervene. So they were not at the state of the nation address. They had to go there, and they met with the premier and the Executive Mayor of the City of Johannesburg and their officials to deal with this problem of water.

So the instruction to the Minister of Water and Sanitation to intervene has already been issued by the President to be able to do so. I then went to Johannesburg myself to follow up on the implementation to make sure that things are fixed. Also, there are plans to ensure future reliable supplies. For example, in

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Johannesburg, when I was at Carlswald, they are already building a 20 million megalitres water reservoir, which once completed next year, it will have the capacity to give reliable water in that area for another 20 years.

In addition, the private sector in the same area is building a 10 million one, which will add this to 30 million. So those initiatives are already rolling out. As I said earlier, Rand Water is also increasing the capacity. So we have asked the Minister of Water and Sanitation to be on the ground, not only in Johannesburg, as they did, but we're also going to go to Limpopo because we've been told that there's a problem in Giyani. I was there before. A lot of water in the dams but not reaching the people. S we're going to get there as well.

Yes, indeed, the Giyani problem has been there for some time, and that's why we need to go back because the issue of dams was long resolved. It is a question of reticulation, as I said, because in the rural areas, people are far apart in the topographic. So there is a big challenge. We've then said to Minister of Water and Sanitation also introduce the issue of groundwater so people can be able to drill, or municipalities can drill and get water for people. S

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Secondly, as you say, we have said to the municipalities that we want to empower them to deal with the water mafia tankers. So what government is going to do is to buy the trucks - the insourcing that you're talking about. So we will insource and make sure that it is the government that have the capacity to supply. So that's what we're going to do. Thank you, hon Speaker.

Ms M P KOBE: Deputy President, during the Covid-19 pandemic, R500 billion of relief funds were unashamedly looted by brazen political actors who sought to profit from the crisis while thousands of our people died. Today, similarly, we have billions that have been dedicated towards this water crisis under what hon Dlelanga said is your decisive leadership.

Now, Deputy President, what accountability mechanism will you use to ensure that the funds that are dedicated towards resolving the water crisis - that's used to pay contractors and fund infrastructure projects - is not looted by bad faith actors? Thank you.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Yes, hon member, it is a challenge. The decision we have taken is that municipalities should ring-fence

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water revenue. Now you probably would have noticed that in some municipalities, and let's make an example, Johannesburg water would bring in about maybe R60 billion or more of revenue and then it becomes a good revenue base for the city to do other things and we are not saying they must take all that revenue to water because obviously they need to perform other functions, but a sizable amount of revenue that is derived from water should go to fix water infrastructure and support maintenance of water infrastructure.

So if a municipality can bring about R20 billion from water, surely, they should be able to allocate close to R5 billion directly to water rather than allocate R1 billion out of the R20 billion. I am making an example like that but in principle we are now going to ensure that we ring-fence revenue that comes from water to prioritize dealing with water infrastructure and maintenance. That's the decision we've taken. Thank you very much, hon Speaker.

Mr M DLELANGA: Hon Deputy President, given the undeniable success of the ... [Inaudible.] ... approach in the energy crisis, which has been load shedding being a thing of the past in our country, how is the establishment of the National Water

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Crisis Committee as pronounced by the President during the state of the nation address intended to be complementary with the Water Task Team in isolating solutions to the country's water crisis?

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Indeed, as I indicated earlier hon member, that the President has established this national water crisis similar to the national energy crisis that was established when we had load shedding. But of course, as I said earlier, the committee met for the first time yesterday to finalize its terms of reference and also the action plan and we've agreed with the President that we will meet again next Tuesday to finalize our action plan.

Now, the challenge with this crisis committee as opposed to the one that was dealing with electricity is that with electricity, in the main, you are dealing with one entity, Eskom. There and there you have municipalities that generate, but in the main, more than 90% of electricity in this country comes from one entity. When it comes to water, you have a plethora of water authorities throughout the country. The responsibility for water is with municipalities. Therefore, the task is going to be much bigger than the other crisis committee.

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We are now preparing. We want to accelerate infrastructure development, ensure that we address challenges in municipalities and also ensure consistent investment in the infrastructure for water, because if you look at the challenges at other municipalities, you can see that for a number of years there was no investment in water infrastructure, its decaying, therefore leads to leaks and loss of a lot of water. What they call non-revenue water. Basically, non-revenue water is water lost to the ground. Revenue that is gone. Close to 40% of municipalities lose their revenue that they're supposed to get from water.

With this committee, our idea is that in addition to ourselves as political leaders, we will be accompanied by a number of specialists, engineers and so on, that we're going to deploy down there to municipalities to fix the problem. I thank you, hon Speaker. [Applause.]

Question 2:

IsiZulu:

USEKELA MONGAMELI: Ngiyabonga Somlomo, ngizophendula ngesiNgisi.

USOMLOMO: Kulungile.

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USEKELA MONGAMELI: Ngingasuka ngibhayize uma ngingathi ngilanda ngesiZulu.

English:

Hon Speaker, let me firstly thank hon Nodada for raising this critical question about government's commitment of the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment, BBEE, review. Hon Nodada, indeed, during the second *Frank Talk Dialogue Show* in Durban, I highlighted that government is embarking on a two-phase review of the BBEEEE framework led by Minister Parks Tau and the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition. The review will occur in two phases. Firstly, it will be a short-term one and secondly, a long review.

The short-term review aims to refine and assess subordinate laws, including regulations, codes good conduct, guidelines, practice notes which are under the Minister's legislative authority. The long-term review is the prerogative of Parliament, which will involve the review of the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act for substantive amendments. This process will also be supported by the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Commission and other oversight bodies to ensure credibility and enforcement.

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The review will focus on strengthening Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment by shifting from compliance to measurable outcomes. The review, further, aims to strengthen the execution of section 9(2) of the South African Constitution, focusing on reimagining economic transformation and accelerating the participation of Black South Africans in the economy. Among other critical intervention, the review includes the following: Improve the effectiveness of Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment implementation. Strengthen implementation gaps and compliance. Setting timelines for achievement of milestones. Lastly but not least, provide for a strong linkage between Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment and growth paths and industrial policy.

In conclusion, hon Speaker, let me reiterate this point, without any fear of contradiction, that abandoning Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment is not an option. Abandoning Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment would in truth be abandoning transformation. [Applause.] So Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment is a necessary tool for transformation, essential for achieving economic equality and we are going to proceed to implement it. I thank you, hon Speaker.

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Mr M BAGRAIM: Deputy President, leading the Government Business, whether the review of Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment will be alongside alternatives like the DA's Economic Inclusion for All Bill and the policy that creates most jobs and narrows inequality will be implemented?

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: I was struggling to hear the hon member. If he may repeat?

The SPEAKER: Okay, I will ask him to repeat. Hon member, may you please repeat your question?

Mr M BAGRAIM: Thank you. Deputy President, leading the Government Business, whether the review of Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment will be alongside alternatives like the DA's Economic Inclusion for All Bill and the policy that creates most jobs and narrows inequality will be implemented? Thank you.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: I have heard the hon member now. Hon member, all the time when we review policies or legislations, we do have public hearings that take place and that is to enable all South Africans who are interested to bring forth their suggestions for comments. So, if the DA has some clever ideas,

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you are allowed to bring them forward. We will look into them. If we think they do not make sense, we will throw them away but we will give you a chance to bring them because I think it is only fair that we should hear how you think you are going to help us. If they are good, I can assure you we will incorporate them as we do the review. Thank you very much, hon Speaker.

Ms M C DIKGALE: Deputy President, in light of the response provided regarding the phase review of the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment framework, what measures will government put in place to ensure that the review not only evaluates the existing empowerment indicators and scorecard elements but also addresses the practical challenges faced by the black-owned businesses and emerging entrepreneurs in the assessing markets, finance and procurement opportunities.

Furthermore, Deputy President, will the review consider strengthening monitoring and enforcement mechanism to ensure that the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment compliance leads to tangible economic participation and ownership rather than purely administrative compliance?

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The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon Dikgale, you are correct, often in the past, focus was what I would call administrative. We focused on compliance, we did scorecard sheets and all of that, which is okay. But we have taken a decision that we need to shift to a more empowerment approach where we look at the implementation of programmes that really empower black businesses. So, that is what we will look at to ensure that we look at some of the issues coming from the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Commission. To be able to emphasise that, let us expand the measures that we are putting in place but not end up focusing too much only on compliance but also on implementation and getting businesses to work to ensure that they have real projects, real businesses that are running. We should not end up only with compliance, as you say it is administrative.

Yes, it helps us to see what is happening, where the challenges are but we definitely need to expand and do much more to ensure that Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment is really implemented in a real way. It must not be just a paper thing. We need to go out there and see that these people are involved in the real businesses. Those businesses must also be visible. That will give us a sense of the progress we are making but thank you

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very much for raising this matter sharply. Thank you, hon
Speaker.

Mr N L S KWANKWA: Deputy President, let us clarify that the
discussion is not about whether we need Broad-Based Black
Economic Empowerment or not. We do. The discussion is about
whether we need it in its current form which is what we are
seeking to address.

IsiXhosa:

Ingxaki, Sekela Mongameli, kukuba sisoloko silila emingcwabeni
engeyiyo le ekufanele ukuba silila kuyo. Sinomkhwa ombi wokufuna
abantu bafumane iqhekezana le10 ekhulwini kumashishini abelungu
endaweni ...

English:

... market concentration by making sure that our people are
funded. In addition to this review ...

IsiXhosa:

... bekungafanelekanga ukuba kujongwa ukuxhaswa ngemali ...

English:

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... the Development finance institutions, DFIs, that help in the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment programmes so that our people can begin to control and own the means of production?

IsiXhosa:

Abantu bayeke ukuya kulila emingcwabeni engeyiyo. Enkosi.

English:

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon Speaker, I agree with you that we need to fund these agencies and departments that empower the previously disadvantaged communities, particularly black people. But it is also important for us to be able to have reliable ways of ensuring that indeed those resources will go to these emerging businesses, that is, the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment companies.

One of the challenges we must deal with very sharply is a question fronting. When people, as you say, say you can get 10% here or 30% in that company but sometimes that is not real empowerment. You know some of the companies will do it for compliance. So, if you go to their books, you will say that they have somebody, maybe with an African name, who got 30% there? But in reality, that is where it ends. It is just a name.

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Sometimes the person does not even know. If they know, they think maybe they will get something. That is not empowerment.

Empowerment must mean real involvement in business. Black people in this country must build enterprises and not be happy that they have 10% of Van de Merwe business. We want to see black people building factories, building businesses and not be happy with some 10% here and 20% there which in most cases, is not even there. It is just ...

Xitsonga:

... ko va ntsena leswaku va hoxe vito ra wena kambe wena a wu yena n'wabindzu. A wu kumi nchumu.

English:

Let us see entrepreneurs. That is why one of the things we are doing is to train young people to become entrepreneurs.

[Applause.] They are not going to queue for the 10% of Van der Wardt business and all that. No, they will start their businesses. We will make sure, as government, that the resources that are with our DFIs, our departments and agencies give these enterprises support to be able to run real business. I thank you, hon Speaker.

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Mr V ZUNGULA: Hon Speaker, given how the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment was intended to transform the economy, especially in light that over 90% of the country's economy is in white oligopolies. However, what you say is different from what is being practiced. Industrial Development Corporation of South Africa is currently exposed by Fezile Dlamini in that it funds white companies instead of black entrepreneurs. If you go to the Public Investment Corporation, PIC, it manages over R3,7 trillion in assets which are coming from black workers' pensions. However, less than R200 billion of that is invested in majority black-owned companies. In the government spending budget of R2,7 trillion, over 80% of that goes to big white companies and black small, medium and micro-sized enterprises, SMMEs only get less than 20%. So, how do you reconcile what you say in speech versus what is practically happening because white companies are the biggest beneficiaries of the economy? Thank you.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon member, your observation is correct. Many of the funding institutions tend to fund listed companies and we all know that in the Johannesburg Stock Exchange, most of those companies are white-owned businesses. We have looked into this matter and we are going to tighten the rules, particularly

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where we have control. With the DFIs, you have mentioned some of them we will suggest that they fund unlisted businesses as well. I know sometimes the argument would be we want to grow the cake for the members of this pension fund and this investment. But we must fund unlisted businesses, most of them emerging and most of them involved in infrastructure.

If South Africa wants to drive growth through infrastructure, then resources must go also to companies that are not listed on the stock exchange. That is a very important observation that these resources are not finding their way and we need to tighten the regulations of these institutions. We have noticed that ourselves and we will interfere to make sure that resources must support growth. Growth is even driven by unlisted companies that are involved in infrastructure development, most of them or some of them owned by the previously disadvantaged in our country. Thank you, hon Speaker.

Mr M BAGRAIM: Mr Deputy President, in your remarks of the dialogue on Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment, you also mentioned that the review is aimed at reducing corruption. How is this not your admission of Broad-Based Black Economic

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Empowerment benefiting a select few? The evidence confirms of a trillion rand circulating around 100 connected hands. Thank you.

IsiZulu:

USEKELA MONGAMELI: Mangibonge Somlomo.

English:

Hon Bagraim, the review of the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment, amongst others, is to ensure that we broaden participation. Of course, also deal with corrupt practices. But ultimately, the goal is to expand. South Africans have been very concerned with the fact that the empowerment that we talk about is benefiting a limited number of people. It is a big concern. We need to ensure that we expand. So, when we come with initiatives, including the Transformation Fund that Minister Tau launched, we are targeting to reach many people in our country, particularly young entrepreneurs, women, people with disabilities, etcetera, so that we move away from this reality that has been observed that not many South Africans are benefiting from empowerment. That is why you need to move away from this approach of equity to more supporting real businesses that are involved in projects because by doing so you will then reach out to many other people.

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as I conclude, I will tell you that, one of the challenges the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment or let us say even before, when it was just Black Economic Empowerment, the approach has been, you go and buy shares in a company that is already operating. You do not get it for free. So, in most cases, who will buy? Those who have money? They will go and buy that 10% or the 20%. Government must create platforms for emerging businesses, ensure that that they have access to funding, particularly from our DFIs and the money must go into real businesses and not to buy shares or a stake in someone's business that is already dying and waste your money. We must give them money to start businesses and run real businesses. So, I agree but we need to make sure that we tighten up when we do this review so that we also deal with corrupt practices. Let us expand resources to people who want to run real businesses, create jobs in this country and empower our young people. Thank you very much, hon Speaker. [Applause.]

Question 3:

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon Speaker, hon Mokoena-Zondi is raising a very important matter which concerns all of us regarding the persistent levels of crime in the country, but also persistent

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dysfunction in co-ordination between those departments or agencies that are supposed to lead us in tackling this.

Hon Speaker, violent crime remains a grave concern for all South Africans. The JCPS continues to monitor the implementation of targets that have been set. Current statistics show that there is visible progress in some areas.

Conviction rates for sexual offences now exceed 77%. Joint operations like Operation Shanela 2 and Operation Prosper, targeting illegal mining and gangsterism, have resulted in arrests and prosecution. We are strengthening intelligence-led policing and modernising the justice system to restore safety and trust.

In this regard, the JCPS Cabinet Committee will continue to co-ordinate several strategies that are aligned to the Medium-Term Development Plan 2024-29, which prioritises strengthening the criminal justice system, improving co-ordination to ensure effectiveness in policing and reducing violent crime. The recent crime statistics released by SAPS indicate that while some improvements have been recorded in certain categories of crime, overall levels of crime remain a serious concern, requiring

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sustainable and co-ordinated action across government.

Government has decided to recruit an additional 20 000 new police officers.

President Cyril Ramaphosa has announced the deployment of members of the South African National Defence Force for service and co-operation with the South African Police. This deployment serves to prevent and combat crime and support and preserve law and order under Operation Prosper, which is targeting, as I said, illegal mining and gangsterism. The JCPS Cabinet Committee is focused on improving inter-departmental co-ordination, which, of course, you have identified as one of the big challenges.

We are enhancing intelligence-led policing and modernising the criminal justice system. We will, hon Speaker, continue to implement targeted measures to reduce violent crime and enhance community safety and security. I thank you, hon Speaker.

The CHIEF WHIP OF THE MKP: Hon Deputy President, the July 2021 unrest and looting laid bare the critical failures in intelligence co-ordination and the apparent inability of the National Security Council to convene at a moment of national

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crisis. Can you outline how the JCPS cluster, which is under your leadership, has remedied these deficiencies?

IsiZulu:

Okunye esifuna ukukwazi ukuthi ...

English:

... what indicators, if any, of improved intelligence integration, and early warning capabilities and inter-agency co-ordination have you or can you present to assure this House that the state is now institutionally equipped to prevent such failures from ever occurring again? Thank you.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon Speaker, hon Zuma, as I said earlier, we ... [Laughter.]

The SPEAKER: Zondi, apologies.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon Zondi ...

IsiZulu:

... uyabona ngiyakunyusa ngikuyisa phezulu.

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English:

Mr S NOMVALO: You just like the old man.

The SPEAKER: Order! Order! We do not ask for the point of order.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: We have noticed, ... or let me start from where you started, that with the July unrest. I think that the lack of intelligence-led policing was clear that it was not there. So, in the JCPS, we do have the police, we have the army, SANDF, Correctional Services, and all other agencies. So, the security cluster has the intelligence apparatus there.

So, when we plan, we plan on the basis of intelligence and as I emphasised in my answer earlier, it is that we have now decided that our policing must be intelligence-driven, to ensure that we are successful in combating crime. I don't have indicators now that show the success of this, but when we do our review, next time we will be able to see the success story of this approach. But it is a correct approach. Otherwise, you're shooting in the dark.

So, policing must be intelligence-driven, and it is now the approach that we are using. Not only the South African Police,

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but the entire JCPS cluster has prioritised this matter. Every time when we meet, we get reports on what's happening in the country, proper reports, so that when we deploy, we know that we're deploying at the right place, with the right levels of intervention, so that you don't send two police officers when you should be sending ten. That's the approach we are taking. Or you send ten when you should be sending two. So, we welcome your emphasis on this matter of intelligence-driven policing. That's what we are doing now. Thank you, hon Speaker. [Applause.]

Xitsonga:

Tat M S CHABANE: Ndza khensa Xipikara na Xandla xa Puresidente.

English:

Deputy President, thank you very much for a comprehensive report. South Africans have noted that recent crime statistics released by the South African Police Service has recorded a marginal decline in most of the crime indicators. Amongst the crime indicators, as you've indicated, is a successful breakthrough by the SIU in relation to fraudulent documents issued by Home Affairs, including work permits and work visas.

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These indicators make sure that part of the ANC's priorities is to fight against crime and corruption. Deputy President, how will the government build on this gain through implementation of the National Organised Crime Strategy in a more co-ordinated and integrated manner across law enforcement agencies and intelligence agencies to ensure sustainable movement? Thank you, hon member.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, hon Speaker.

Xitsonga:

Ha khensa, muchaviseki Chabane. Hi swi endlisa xisweswo. Mhaka ya tirhelo ro kongomisa eka vunhlori [intelligence-driven] yi ta hi pfuna swinene eka ku hlula ku lwisana ni vugevenga.

English:

When you look at border management control, you look at what we're doing in those areas or ports of entry and so on. We are now emphasising this approach, that we must be intelligence-driven. You know that, for instance, we are strengthening our work in Home Affairs on how we deal with issues of documentation and so on. So, there's a lot of work that is happening, and what is really required is integration.

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For us to be successful, the justice system must be integrated, because otherwise we're going to have a challenge where police are successful, but when people get to courts to be prosecuted, and then they are let out easily back into the streets. So, we are strengthening that. But lastly, something that we often take for granted is community participation.

You know, in the past, I'm sure many of you sitting here were involved in street committees and so on. The role of communities in fighting crime is very critical. But if you look at our CPFs these days, they have not been given priority. Many of us don't think they are important. But the communities must always be the eyes and ears of the police on the ground.

There's no best intelligence you can get than the one you get from the community. They know them, they know where they stay, and let's strengthen that as well, working with our communities. Thank you very much, hon Speaker.

Mr S N SWART: Hon Speaker and Deputy President, you referred to targets and to crime statistics. However, a very alarming fact, as reported by Rape Crisis Cape Town Trust and other NGOs, is the significant under-reporting of sexual offenses and rape in

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particular, with only an estimated 7% of cases being reported, leaving almost 93% of cases unreported. This the ACDP finds concerning. Do you not agree, hon Deputy President, that this under-reporting significantly skews crime statistics and that far more needs to be done to encourage rape victims to report those crimes and then to protect them from secondary victimisation? Otherwise, those predators will escape justice and commit those crimes again. It doesn't help to have 77% conviction rate when only 7,7% of sexual offenses are reported. Thank you, Speaker.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon Speaker, and hon Swart, yes, it's important that we avoid under-reporting. I was looking at the statistics myself when I was looking at this question. But it was difficult to say whether it's underreporting. So, we're going to check it because we do need to get accurate information to be able to respond adequately. This is a matter we'll discuss once we have evidence that in some categories of crimes there is underreporting. It shouldn't be.

The police may not have all the information they need.

Obviously, with intelligence-driven, we'll begin to get more.

But there will be an effort to ensure that we're as accurate as

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possible to be able to come up with plans that will ensure that we respond adequately.

Therefore, I take your concern seriously if you think that it's underreporting. We're going to look at it so that we're able to make sure that what we project to the communities, what we tell South Africans, is what it is and therefore, design intervention that brings them on board to work with us on addressing that reality. And it's important. But I have not noticed that completely, that they are underreporting. But I'll check it because they shouldn't underreport. So, I will engage with them through the JCPS Plus. Thank you, hon Speaker.

Dr M A MAIMANE: Speaker, and Deputy President, I'm glad you're talking about underreporting. Let me give you just one number. Of the 21 million cases that were reported last year - opened cases - that were opened, only 61% of them were solved and 13,2 million cases were closed without resolution.

So, our problem isn't just under-reporting. It's the fact that the police don't have capacity. The fact is this. When I come into this Parliament, there are 200 police officers here, VIP protectors. There are more police here than in any other police

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station in the country. The police themselves will tell you that they are running short of over 2 300 detectives nationwide.

But we protect the politicians and ignore the people. So, my question to you, Deputy President, is whether or not, don't you think the R4 billion spent on VIP protection would be better spent giving capacity to the police? Let's help the people rather than the politicians. So, Mr President, you are running for President. Are you willing to direct the resources to the people rather than to the politicians? Thank you.

The SPEAKER: Your time is up. Hon member. Order, hon Maimane! Hon Maimane, the Deputy President heard you, and maybe I can see you are trying to make a new application to go back to somewhere where you can express your voice on the other matters that you have just said, but we are not there yet.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon Speaker ...

Setswana:

... mogaetsho, dumela. Ga o a ka wa re dumedisa, gompieno.

English:

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Hon Speaker, there are areas in the country that are designated as key points areas, and therefore they need to remain guarded.

I mean, I can look into your issue of whether members of Parliament think that we guard you too much, but Parliament is a very important institution. There was fire the other time in the old Parliament and many people were saying, where were the police? So, we can't make that mistake. You see, when we are here in this precinct, and the President of the Republic is also here, you cannot have the police.

Members of Parliament are here. You can't get out here and get mugged outside of Parliament. This is a very important institution, but if you say to me, there's a shortage of police where we are fighting crime, and all of them are sitting here. We'll look at it, but normally when the Commissioners of police are deployed, they take into account the events, the institutions that have been guarded, etc.

So, it's important that those institutions should have adequate police. I did say, hon Maimane, that we are now employing more. We have not reached the numbers that we need. The President has

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announced, you recall, previously 10 000, now 20 000. We still need more. So, I agree with you.

We need more police officers to be recruited and trained. Of course, we need to then deploy them into crime-fighting areas as much as we can. They need to be out there to fight crime and work with communities. Thank you, hon Speaker.

The CHIEF WHIP OF THE MKP: Deputy President, we, as uMkhonto weSizwe, will find it quite deeply concerning that even after five years since the July 2021 unrest, you still have a response to say improvements need to be made. Does this mean that the Government of National Unity is finally saying to its people, you have failed the country, you have failed to act with urgency required to secure our country? And if a similar threat occurred tomorrow, are you confident that the current system would respond differently, and if they fail, who accepts responsibility between yourself and the President? Thank you.
[Applause.]

IsiZulu:

USEKELA MONGAMELI: Mangibonge Zondi, ngikubize kahle manje.

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English:

Maybe let me use this phrase. It might help me and you.

Improvements are being made, not they are going to be made. So, as I speak to you, we are busy. You are quite right to say if it happens again and you still say improvements are going to be made, we may find wanting. But I can assure you we are better prepared now. We are better prepared. Those improvements are rolling out. We are equipping. Intelligence is coming in. We will not be caught wanting or caught by surprise. So, we have learnt our lessons and our security forces are more than ready to tackle any incident that may come up. But you know South Africa is a big country.

So, I go back to the issue of whether you do need more police officers to deploy as much as we can. But hon Zondi, I can assure you that we are better prepared now to deal with the challenges. Thank you, hon Speaker. [Applause.]

Question 4:

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you, hon Speaker. The question raised by the hon Gigaba is very important as it helps us to highlight the need for the review of broad-based black economic empowerment, BBBEE policy. We spoke about this earlier on in the

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first question. Hon Speaker, BBBEE has opened doors for many who were previously disadvantaged. Since 2021 to date, R94 billion has been invested in black-owned enterprises, with R72 billion in skills development and over R600 billion in shared transactions. But, of course, compliance remains a challenge. So, I don't want us to gloat on these figures because we need to make sure that those resources reach as many people as possible.

We are now strengthening regulations and stricter rules to ensure business compliance. However, we must now move, as I said earlier, from compliance to delivery, aligning BBBEE with District Development Model, but also localisation, industrialisation, and empowerment that reach both urban and rural communities. These achievements indicate that empowerment is more than an abstract policy. It has been experienced through business growth, community upliftment, and national opportunity expansion, especially for young people in sectors like mining and finance.

Despite this progress, the journey towards BBBEE continues with a goal of enhancing its impact to permeate all societal levels. Hence, government is embarking on a two-phase review, as we said earlier, of the BBBEE framework that I spoke to when answering

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the hon Nodada. At the initiation of BBEE Act in 2003 and following its amendment in 2013, which established a framework for measuring the policy's implementation, the compliance rate was very robust at the time. However, recent monitoring by the BBEE Commission indicates a significant decline in compliance momentum.

The peak number of compliance reports submitted by the commission in 2019 were 5 818, and this figure has now drastically fallen below 1 500 reports in the current period. Therefore, the focus must shift from mere compliance to effective delivery, ensuring that rhetoric translates into measurable impact, so that we don't just measure the numbers, but we look at the impact of what empowerment is doing.

There is a need to align BBEE with broader industrial, fiscal and competition policies, transform it from isolated efforts into a catalyst for inclusive growth. Furthermore, we must strengthen enforcement against practices like fronting. It is critical to combat this because it's economic sabotage.

Empowerment efforts must be concrete, reflected in job creation, establishment of enterprises, opening of markets and the

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significant involvement of women, youth and people with disabilities.

Government is accelerating the integration of BBBEE into the District Development Model. By incorporating empowerment into One District, One Plan, funding black-owned enterprises and emphasising localisation of small and medium enterprises, SMEs, this alignment ensures that transformation occurs both in urban and rural areas through funding instruments and integrated in planning frameworks aimed at industrialisation and service delivery.

Lastly, through integration and collaboration, government, in partnership with the private sector, has introduced a Transformation Fund Initiative. This initiative aims to unlock capital as part of a support package designed to grow black-owned enterprises and accelerate inclusive growth because we know that often those who were previously disadvantaged - black people - when they start applying for funding to be able to start enterprises, many of those doors are closed. So, we will use the transformation fund as a mechanism to assist in this regard. Thank you very much, hon Speaker. [Applause.]

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The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, Deputy President. I have been informed that the hon Seate will take the question.

Ms M O SEATE: Thank you, Deputy President. Thank you, Speaker.

My question will then be: How is government intending to introduce measurable indicators and timeframes to strengthen monitoring of the impetus to transformative capacity of the BBBEE in changing the economic landscape and key economic sectors through comprehensive master plans and direct catalytic investments targeting municipalities in distress, especially in rural areas and provinces.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, hon Seate, for the follow-up. Indeed, government is not merely intending to strengthen the transformative capacity of BBBEE; we are already actively working to enhance its effectiveness. We are strengthening the indicators, particularly the measurable indicators are being strengthened already. As you asked, how will this review assist? We will recalibrate scoreboards to ensure that we emphasise, as I said earlier, actual real ownership. When we say we are empowering, we must see people involved in businesses, not just looking at scoreboards.

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We must be able to see the impact - entrepreneurs who have been funded and empowered, running businesses, producing goods or services, employing people, and delivering concrete results in terms of empowerment. So, we are not intending to do it; we are already doing it. We are making sure that we are strengthening and will continue to give regular reports to this House to ensure that even the previous policies that were enacted previously - the Procurement Policy Framework Act and others, are being looked at currently to make sure that we strengthen all of them.

Dr M J BURKE: Thank you, Madam Speaker. It seems as if where there is smoke, there is a questionable fire detection and suppression contract. Regarding BBEE, does the R49 million Gauteng hospital contract awarded to your children not further proof that BBEE stands for "Biassed Elite Empowerment"?

[Applause.]

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: I am not sure what he is talking about. [Interjections.] I hear him referring to a contract awarded to my children, but I am not aware of which contract he is referring to. But let me say that what we are doing as government is to ensure that when we empower people, we do it

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properly - no corruption and no favouritism. If there are children of the Deputy President somewhere who have been favoured by some government department, I will oppose it myself. I will oppose it myself if I find that there is such a thing. At the moment, there is no illegal, irregular contract which was ever allocated to my children that I know of. If you do have information, you can come and give it to me. Thank you, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, Deputy President. The next supplementary question will be asked by the hon M V Daniels.

Mr M V DANIELS: Good afternoon and thank you, Speaker. To the hon Deputy President, the question that I have on behalf of the PA is not for political grandstanding but in the interest of South Africa. Hon Deputy President, to what extent do we accept that elite capture fronting and compliance driven deal-making have weakened the transformative impact of BBBEE? What concrete steps are being taken to redirect BBBEE benefits towards productive broad-based participation rather than a narrow group of beneficiaries, for we do know and understand how true it is - the uncomfortable truth that fronting is real. Thank you, Deputy President.

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The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, hon Speaker. Yes, hon member, it is true that fronting is real and that is why we are dealing with it. As we do this review, this is one of the problems. I said earlier that I liken it to economic sabotage because if people are fronting, it means they are not really in the economy. They are not doing the work. They are not building any businesses. They are sitting somewhere but their names are used. In effect, it must be a crime that should be treated seriously. As we review this as Parliament, let's tighten up these pieces of legislation to ensure that the penalties are so stringent that no one is attracted to get involved in fronting. We want people to run real businesses and ensure that we can measure that they run businesses, not do a desktop analysis and say that there are so many blacks who are involved in this and they own these businesses, but we don't see it. We need to see those businesses. We are going to have the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition and other government departments must go out and ensure that they do have officers who go out to these businesses and see if indeed they are run by black people as they say. I agree with you that we must eliminate fronting.

Thank you very much, hon Speaker.

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Mr I ISMAIL-MOOSA: Thank you, hon Speaker. Blessings to this hon House and blessings to the hon Deputy President. Hon Deputy President, what measurable outcomes and accountability frameworks are currently in place to assess whether BBEE initiatives within the District Development Model are effectively translating into tangible local industrial growth, job creation, and equitable participation of historically disadvantaged communities across both urban and rural districts? I thank you.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you, hon Speaker and thank you, hon member. I said earlier that we are currently integrating BBEE into our development model, particularly the "One Plan". The good thing about that is that these plans are already being implemented, and you will begin to see tangible results that these entrepreneurs and these businesses are involved in implementing these plans, and you are able to measure that concretely. We will continue to do scorecards and look at compliance, but the best measurable instrument for me is where people are involved in real businesses. Even if government has to deploy officials - whether from the Labour department or the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition, to conduct on-site inspections of businesses, ensuring that what is reported

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reflects what is actually taking place - that will help us a lot. Through the DDM, we are out there as a whole-of-government approach, it's even much better. Whenever I go out on the work of the DDM, I meet with premiers, MECs, mayors, and members of the mayoral committee, MMCs, and city managers, directors-general - the whole of government.

It should be easy to measure progress in that regard. We have given this company a contract to construct the road, and they claim that they are a BBBEE company - but where is it? When we go on site, we must be able to see it. And where is the road? We cannot remain in the head office, relying on reports that say the road has been built when, in reality, it does not exist-or that it was constructed by a black economic empowerment company when, in fact, it was not. The DDM is going to help us because we are on the ground - we can see, we can meet people, we can question, and we'll make sure that our measures are real, in real time, and we will talk about what we see. Thank you very much, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, Deputy President. Hon M O Seate? Oh, sorry, hon Mkhaliphi? Deputy President, you can take a seat. There is a point of order.

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Ms H O MKHALIPHI: But Madam Speaker, there is no DDM. There is nothing. This thing was introduced in 2019 and seven years later, there is no DDM.

The SPEAKER: Hon M O MkhaliPhi, could you please ask that question formally? Do not just ask it when you are not on the speaker's list. I note it, but again, let's just respect the Rules. Deputy President? Sorry, hon Seate?

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: I ignore the hon M O MkhaliPhi today. Yes, hon Seate.

Ms M O SEATE: Deputy President, Matjhabeng Local Municipality is another classical case of National Treasury and Department of Water and Sanitation's interventions to strengthen capacity and resources. Four hundred and forty-four billion rand was disbursed through Regional Bulk Infrastructure, RBI, grants, with Vaal Central being the implementing agency, and also monitoring and assessing themselves and their progress.

Deputy President, clearly here, localisation, industrialisation and inclusive economic growth is unlikely to be actualised on infrastructure just based on water, something as basic as that.

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Would you have any different model of accountability of monitoring and just a tracing model of how you return the investment in all this infrastructure development on all the master plans? Thank you.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you, hon Speaker. Thank you, hon Seate. Did you say Matjhabeng? Matjhabeng is in the Free State. Okay. One of the things that we are doing now as national government is to prioritise intervention in municipalities. We use the phrase and fix local government, because we have realised that there are a lot of challenges in municipalities. Some receive grants but spend them on purposes other than those intended, and sometimes they do not spend the funds at all. By the end of the financial year, the money must be returned to Treasury, and delivery fails to take place.

So, Matjhabeng will probably be one of the municipalities that will be put on our radar screen as we intervene in local government, allowing us to closely examine how they are allocating and spending their resources and so on. I acknowledge your concern that, based on your understanding, the municipality may not follow through on what it commits to. We will immediately focus on them as well.

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There are roughly a hundred municipalities that we are going to look at. As I mentioned regarding water, when we meet next Tuesday, we will focus on these municipalities. Our review will extend beyond water and electricity to consider service delivery more broadly, as the overall performance of municipalities should be a matter of concern for us. So, I will put Matjhabeng on the list.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, Deputy President. Hon members, let me remind you once again that we are not allowed to eat so openly in the House. That's why we have a space for refreshment behind the screens of the dome. I now see that members go there, buy, come back and even put them on the table.

I have seen even some Powerades. I won't say who they are. But, members, can we please just try to exercise restraint? Let us avoid pointing fingers. [Interjections.]

Order, hon members. Just behind you, hon Mkhaliphi, I saw a Powerade. The person who was raising her hand up, I have seen that she has now gone down. Hon members, seriously, let me just remind you once again about what we need to do. I understand you

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may be wanting to snack, hon Mantashe. There is a place where we can snack at the back and then come back. Hon Daniels?

Mr M V DANIELS: Thank you, Speaker. Speaker, it's a very important point that you are raising. Because this was raised in the Chief Whips' Forum meeting. It is now the responsibility of the Chief Whips to ensure that it doesn't take place for the same reasons that you have cited. If it is the hon Mantashe ...

The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon members.

Mr M V DANIELS: If it is the hon Mantashe then ...

The SPEAKER: That is why I was reminding all the members. I am sure the Chief Whips will take the responsibility as they must. The next question, Question 5, has been asked by the hon J S Malema.

Question 5:

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon Speaker, let me thank hon Malema for raising the issue of dealing with conflict in our continent. At the moment, I am a Special Envoy of President Ramaphosa, focusing on the conflict in South Sudan. My mandate is to

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support the implementation of the Revitalised Agreement on the Resolution of Conflict in South Sudan, what we refer to as the R-ARCSS. South Africa along the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, Igad is a guarantor of this process. The Committee for South Sudan, C5. Is tasked with leading the process.

The C5 is made of South Africa, which is chairing at the moment, Algeria, Chad, Nigeria, and Rwanda. It was established by a resolution of the African Union Peace and Security Council on 5 December 2014. The C5 called for cessation of hostilities, release of detainees and intrusive dialogue. Ultimately, the peace process in South Sudan depends on the political will of its leaders for the implementation of the revitalised agreement.

Our role is to support them and not substitute their responsibility. Since I assumed the role of Special Envoy in South Sudan and in pursuit of the peace process, I've already undertaken two working visits to Juba. The most recent was October last year. But when I went there in 2024, I met all the belligerent parties including a meeting with President Salva Kiir Mayardit.

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Minister Naledi Pandor and I at the time held a meeting with the head of the UN Mission in South Sudan, Mr Nicholas Haysom. Hon Speaker, I was sadly informed that he passed on yesterday. A great South African, who was committed to democracy and peace in our continent. May his soul rest in eternal peace.

We subsequently with Minister Pandor at the time, held 15 more meetings with other parties during the four days that we spent in Juba. We were convinced that we are making good progress when we were hopeful that they will hold democratic elections at the end of this year. However, in January this year, fighting erupted once again amongst the belligerent forces and intensified early this month as well, leading to the displacement of 280 people in what they call Jonglei State.

The latest fighting is yet another illustration of the complexity of the search for peace in South Sudan. In January this year, Minister Lamola also led a ministerial delegation of the C5 countries that I mentioned to Juba. This meeting was followed in February this year by a C5 Heads of State Summit which was chaired by President Ramaphosa on the margins of the African Union Summit.

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The summit was also attended by representatives of the UN Secretary-General. The summit then reiterated once more the call for cessation of hostilities, consideration for the release of the First Vice President. When I went to Juba last year, I wanted to see Vice President Riek Machar, but he was house arrested, charged and appearing in court. There are others as well who are charged with him.

The leaders have asked for the release of Dr Machar who is the First Vice President. They have also asked for the promotion of inclusive political dialogue and the creation of a conducive political and security environment necessary for the holding of elections. Last year, all the parties agreed that they will come to South Africa. We can host them for the dialogue including the President. We will be following that up when we engage with them again.

Let me also say that South Africa will also utilise its role on the African Union Peace and Security Council which we will be holding from 1 April to March 2028 to mobilise diplomatic and political, technical and financial assistance required to support South Sudan to hold credible, free and fair elections.

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We recognise the depth of humanitarian crisis precipitated by the conflict in Sudan as well. To this end, we intend to engage the neighbourhoods, wider international community and various non-state actors and NGOs for a co-ordinated response to the unfolding humanitarian crisis which is also exacerbated by the civil war that is also taking place in South Sudan.

I recently met with the regional leadership of the International Committee of the Red Cross and will continue to engage them on the efforts they are undertaking to respond to this problem, not only of South Sudan but of the entire Sudan as we all can see.

Lastly, to resolve this conflict, it is incumbent upon the broad leadership of South Sudan to demonstrate the requisite political will and responsible leadership necessary to implement the revitalised agreement that they have signed. Achieving this will require mutual trust, the cultivation and promotion of political consensus to implement the provisions of the revitalised agreement. I thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. [Applause.]

Ms N V MENTE-NKUNA: Deputy President, the displacement of the people of Sudan is understated as per your answer. It's actually 11 million people that have been internally displaced and

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4,5 million people have fled the country of Sudan to the neighbouring countries, which then is placing a heavy strain and an overconcentration in the refugee camps. This also has deepened the humanitarian crisis which needs the countries that are hosting to put more in terms of humanitarian aid.

But most importantly, Deputy President, is that some of the internal camps where the 11 million people are, especially in the area of Darfur, people are dying. They have shortages of food. They have shortages of water. There is high mortality rate amongst children and the malnutrition of children that are dying every day. There is also issues of cholera that is outbreaking and there is very limited access of the NGOs. I heard you are mentioning the Red Cross, but they don't have access there due to the civil war.

Now my question is: What are the believable and tangible interventions which the African Union is putting to remedy this situation along with the C5? We can have the agreement that they pull out and come in and revive, but at the moment there is a huge crisis. What are the believable remedies? Thank you.

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The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon Mente, you are quite right that you say I underestimated the problem. In fact, let me put it this way, the President appointed me as a Special Envoy to deal with South Sudan, not Sudan as a whole. Now, the challenge with the question from hon Malema obviously is focusing on Sudan. My worry in replying to the way you think I should have is that I was going to give an academic reply. You know when you read books and stuff, I can give you that answer, 11 million people. But I have not arrived there because I was not tasked to deal with Sudan.

But I accepted the fact that it is something the African Union should look at. Remember, Sudan is also part of the African Union, both of them. Even after the liberation of South Sudan, separating from Sudan, but they are both in the African Union and therefore I am convinced that the leadership of Igad and the C5 will look into the matter. I didn't want to reply on Sudan when I have not dealt with it, because otherwise I was going to give you an academic reply of what I have read in the books.

Should the President ask me then to go beyond South Sudan and look at Sudan, I will then be able to answer accurately. Because I think it is important that when we give answers to Parliament,

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we don't tell them what we read in the books. It must be real work that we do. But your concern is taken. You will see that in my answer there, even though I dealt mainly with South Sudan, I do say in this paragraph here, let me just go back to it quickly. I won't take a lot of time, hon Speaker.

I do say here that, we recognise the depth of the humanitarian crisis precipitated by the conflict in that region and we do intend to engage a number of neighbouring countries and also some of the international committees, including the International Committee of the Red Cross because we are looking at the humanitarian suffering that is happening in Sudan itself. So, perhaps in the next round of us coming back here, we would then be able to give you more concrete information about Sudan itself beyond the work we are doing in South Sudan.

I will discuss with Minister and the President to see how we deal with that situation because we won't close our eyes and say no, we are busy with South Sudan, those ones can wait. But we do need the leadership of the continent. It's a matter I think that must serve in the African Union. The leadership of the African Union must look at it and say how they want us to take forward.

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But thank you very much for that concern. Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker.

Mr R SMITH: Hon Deputy President, in January 2024, the President met with the leader of Sudan's Rapid Support Forces to find a resolution to Sudanese civil war. But in October last year, the Rapid Support Forces, RSF embarked on what human rights organisations refer to as summary executions, ethnic cleansing, and acts of genocide as it massacred some 2 000 individuals, including women, children, and the elderly.

By subsequently ignoring the clear evidence of ethnic erasure and failing to address the RSF's genocidal intent, South Africa once again comes across as hypocritical given its response to similar conflicts in other parts of the world. Will the Presidency now do the right thing and condemn the Rapid Support Forces for their genocidal actions and commit South Africa to playing as active a role in ending this ethnic conflict, as it has in other regions outside of Africa?

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon Smith, the President will never ignore genocide and the sufferings of people. What we need to do is to make sure that the intervention in Sudan must be the

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intervention of the African Union. And to the extent that all of us are concerned, obviously we will ensure that the leaders in the African Union look into the matter. There is 11 million people displaced. There is hunger and malnutrition. So, it is compelling that the African Union should really look into the matter.

I am sure the President will engage with the other leaders in the African Union to ensure that we look at the situation in Sudan. We will not ignore that. Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker.

Mr W M DOUGLAS: Hon Deputy President, many conflicts on the African continent, including the ongoing crisis in Sudan and South Sudan, are increasingly linked to geopolitical issues of competition of the strategic resources and spheres of influence even from outside forces. As a Pan-Africanist organisation committed to African peace and sovereignty, the MK Party believes Africa must guard against situations where external powers exploit instability for strategic gain.

In your engagement as Special Envoy, what steps is South Africa taking within the African Union to ensure that the peace process in Sudan is firmly African-led, insulated from external

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geopolitical manipulation, and focused on a negotiated settlement that protects Sudan's sovereignty and long-term stability? Thank you.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon Douglas, thank you for the follow-up. The resolution of conflicts in the continent of Africa is led by the African leaders as we speak. As I said, the African Union is involved, C5, Igad, all of them there. But your observation is also correct that the other forces are there.

When I was in South Sudan, there were people from the United States, Europe and so on. You find them there because they've got interest in the minerals. That's what it's all about. South Sudan is rich with oil and Sudan itself. Many of the African countries have minerals. Some of these people, unlike us in the South, when they get involved to resolve conflict, it's about what they can get out of the minerals of those countries. So, you are quite right that we need to guard against that and ensure that the resolutions of this conflict must be us who drive them, who make sure that they are resolved. We resolve them for the interest of Africans, because these others, they want to take.

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You will see now what's happening in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, DRC and all those countries when these other forces come in. No sooner they are there, they are looking at what to take. I agree with you that let's intensify the leadership of the African leaders to resolve this conflict and make sure that the resources of the African countries, the minerals and everything must be for the benefit of Africans. That's what we're going to do. Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker.

Dr W J BOSHOFF: Hon Deputy President, just two remarks around the question itself and response to it. I think it seems to me that the EFF didn't make an error when they asked about Sudan rather than South Sudan. Maybe it is because of the Pan-Africanist inclination to try and deny that the colonial borders have been changed and that the new state came into existence.

Then also I see the un-African bias even by South Africa in a humanitarian crisis of this magnitude not getting the attention than other similar or less serious circumstances elsewhere in the world. But what I would like to know from you is in terms of the formation of the state of South Sudan as a state liberated from Sudanese domination. How would you justify that in the light of the African Union's stance on colonial borders?

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The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon member, I did say earlier that Sudan is part of the African Union. The reason why I didn't give a detailed response on Sudan is because I'm not working on that yet. My responsibility for now ends in South Sudan. Not that I don't want to deal with it, but so far, I'm delegated to deal with South Sudan. That's why I was saying that I shouldn't answer questions on Sudan as if I'm working on the problems there.

Until such time, the President says, deal with Sudan as a whole as well. Otherwise, I can give you a report about Sudan, the conflict there, and what has been happening until South Sudan got independent from Sudan in 2011. The fight of the RSF and so on. But it will be what I read.

I don't think you're interested in what I read. You are interested in the work I do. And so far, my work ends in South Sudan. It might well be that the African Union leaders will say, Deputy President of South Africa, now move over and engage the conflicting parties in Sudan as well. But I'm saying that we are concerned as well about the humanitarian suffering there, the displacement of people. So I think it's something the African

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Union leaders will be looking at, I'm sure. Thank you, hon
Deputy Speaker.

IsiXhosa:

Nksz N V MENTE-NKUNA: Sekela Mongameli ungabahoyi wena oonyana
bakaVerwoed xa besizama nge ...

English:

... Pan-Africanism ...

IsiXhosa:

... siza kubathatha sibabeke. Bangakhona kwi ...

English:

... Government of National Unity, GNU, we are not part of that.
Since you are mentioning that the African Union is still busy
with the matter, I want to propose to you, Deputy President,
that you consider a recommendation to the Department of
International Relations and Co-operation, Dirco that it must use
the African Renaissance as well as the International Co-
operation Fund to look into providing the humanitarian aid to
the victims in Sudan, so that they can have access to food,
water and especially medical care.

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But also, I want to check why was such an idea never explored during your intervention, even with South Sudan. We have an issue as well, Dirco yesterday came to the Portfolio Committee on International Relations and Co-operation and said there is peace in Sudan, they are ready for elections. Yet we are hearing something else today. Thank you.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon Mente, that hon member does not understand the Pan-Africanism. That's why I didn't comment on it. It's just displaced. [Applause.] The issue you are raising is, of course, important about how we deal with the humanitarian crisis. With respect to South Sudan, we are already tapping into the African Renaissance Fund.

You are saying, extend it to Sudan as well. It is something that I'll discuss with the President because it has to go to the leadership of the African Union to look into that. But there may be also other resources that we may be able to tap with. But as I said earlier ...

IsiZulu:

... abanye bafika nama-ajenda wabo. Banayo imali kodwa ...

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English:

... we need to be careful because when we take their money, something must give. So we need to be careful, but we will take that proposal forward. Thank you, hon Speaker.

Question 6:

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon Deputy Speaker, allow me to thank hon Hadebe for ensuring that we remain focused on issues affecting the youth. On the 11th of February this year, Minister Stella Ndabeni delivered a keynote address on my behalf at the 4th Annual Mining Indaba Business Dialogue convened by the SA Youth Economic Council, SAIEC, a youth-led non-profit organisation that is advocating youth inclusion in South Africa's strategic economic sectors.

The SA Youth Economic Council Mining Indaba Business Dialogue resolved that South Africa must move away from raw mineral exports and focus on sustainable job-creating beneficiation strategies, inclusive ownership, and youth participation in mining value chain.

Through the critical mineral strategy, beneficiation hubs, and youth incubation programmes, we are building industries in

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platinum, manganese, and vanadium that will power electric vehicles and clean energy. This is about jobs, ownership, and a future where young South Africans will continue to lead in the mining value chain.

Hon Deputy Speaker, we agree with the outcomes of this youth mining indaba. We will continue to work with them to ensure that these outcomes are realised. Together with SAIEC, we agree that critical minerals or critical minerals beneficiation is a national priority.

As such, this must be supported by a commitment to expanding local smelting, refining, and advanced manufacturing capacity so that youth-owned enterprises can benefit in this regard.

Furthermore, participants recognise that unlocking the full value of South Africa's mineral endowment requires a coordinated public-private partnership policy certainty and improved regulatory efficiency.

In respect of implementation plans, measures are in place to ensure decisive movement from exporting raw minerals to building competitive local industries. The government is implementing a

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critical minerals and metal strategy that was approved by Cabinet in May last year, and the exploration implementation plan aiming to transform from raw mineral exports to local beneficiation, high-tech manufacturing, and increased local ownership.

The critical minerals and metal strategy is aligned with national efforts to drive industrialisation, promote inclusive growth, and enhance the country's contribution to global clean energy supply chains, including, electric vehicles, hydrogen fuel cells, as well as battery storage, as I said earlier.

Furthermore, the special economic zones dedicated to mineral beneficiations will be expanded, offering tax incentives and infrastructure support. Public-private partnership will co-invest in beneficiation plants.

The government is also implementing procurement reforms and enterprise development programmes that are aimed at expanding market access for youth-owned businesses in both the public and private sectors. These measures are aligned with broader industrial policy efforts to promote local beneficiation,

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strengthen supply development, and broaden participation in the mining economy.

And lastly, hon Deputy Speaker, as government, we are also rolling out technical training programmes through TVET colleges and universities directly linked to beneficiation industries. These include mining engineering diplomas, beneficiation academies and professional certificates in mineral beneficiation, all designed to link directly to the country's industrialisation agenda.

Through this coordinated intervention, government remains committed to ensuring that South Africa builds diversified mineral value chains that create sustainable jobs, expand industrial capacity and broaden economic ownership, particularly amongst the youth of our country.

I thank you, hon Deputy Speaker.

Mr N M HADEBE: Hon Deputy President, thank you for the response. My follow-up question is, given the persistent barriers faced by young people in accessing opportunities in the mining sector, what specific interventions will the Deputy President champion

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to improve access to funding? I'm happy that the Deputy President mentioned rolling out technical skills, but my question is specific to historically marginalised and mining-affected communities.

I thank you.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon Hadebe, one of the things I mentioned earlier was that the Minister of Department of Trade, Industry and Competition Minister Parks Tau, launched the Transformation Fund.

Amongst others, we want these resources to be accessed by young people in our country. There are programmes in the Presidency that are designed to ensure that young people have access to economic opportunities, to funding, and make sure that they can expand their businesses.

We will continue to work with SIAC to ensure that the decision they took at this youth mining indaba are implemented, because it's one sector where we want young entrepreneurs to go into. Sectors like mining and finance have been inaccessible to young people, youth entrepreneurs. Therefore, we will ensure that they

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have access to funding to be able to play a role in sectors like those.

Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker

Ms L SAPO: Hon Deputy President, in reference to the resolutions and the implementation plan that you just articulated, which is clear and practical, now my question is how does the government plan to engage and collaborate with youth structures and key role players within the industry, and how do these plans that you just articulated are going to be monitored to ensure that they become impactful and effective to the young people that are struggling to access the sector that you spoke about?

Thank you very much.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon Sapu, yes, as I said, we will continue to work with SIAC. We've also agreed on the expansion of what we call Phase 2 of the Junior Mining Exploration Fund, that it should be made available in this regard for this purpose to support these young entrepreneurs.

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We will expand funding opportunities because one of the big challenges in mining is obviously exploration. Which is very costly. That's why you don't find quick entry into the mining sector by black companies or even Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment, BBBEE, companies because of the costs involved.

We need to ensure that they get access to this fund as well to be able to go into this. We will also look at the mining charters and see how we can explore the provisions to ensure that we bring more youth entrepreneurs into the sector.

We are exploring all that and, as I said, we're working very closely with them because they are tackling a very challenging industry, or a sector rather, and are therefore going to need a lot of support from government to be successful in that sector.

Thank you very much

The CHIEF WHIP OF THE SECOND LARGEST MINORITY PARTY: Mr Deputy President, we will only be able to build competitive industries through beneficiation if we meet two conditions. Those conditions are that we have sufficient competitively priced electricity and that those industries are sustainable and

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profitable. What evidence do you, Mr Deputy President, have that demonstrates that either of these conditions are in place?

Thank you.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you for the follow-up, hon Michalakis. Yes, industries need reliable energy, reliable water, reliable infrastructure to succeed. I'm quite pleased that somehow, we have been able to resolve the electricity challenges. We can't say for sure that we'll never have this problem again, but where we are now, we are about 70% or more of energy reliability factor.

Therefore, we are quite comfortable that many of the industries that we want to see thriving will be able to do so. Of course, one of the issues, hon member, that we are dealing with is the price of electricity. As you know, particularly the refineries consume a lot of electricity, and they are the ones who have been complaining about the high price of electricity. But we know that the Minister, through Eskom, made some concessions for those industries so that they must continue to invest in South Africa and create jobs.

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There is a foundation to ensure sustainable growth by ensuring that there's reliable energy supply. We just need to sort out the water challenge. There's a lot of investments now in our infrastructure. We are sorting out the ports, the rail, the roads, and so on.

I'm quite convinced that where we are in terms of pushing for growth, a lot of those elements are in place, not 100%, but I think we are on the road to real recovery in the economy because, amongst others, we have sorted out the energy problem. We are now going to move with speed to ensure that we deal with the water crisis as well. We are moving on the other sectors as well.

Once those things are in place, surely the investors should come in and invest in these sectors. I know that some of the refining companies were saying, oh, we're going to leave because electricity is expensive. We have given them concession now. They should stay and invest, and we will attend to the other challenges.

Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker.

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Mr S LONZI: Deputy President, good afternoon. I prepared a supplementary question, but I think when you mentioned the issue of TVET colleges and mining colleges, it triggered me because a few weeks back, the EFF had presented a motion before this Parliament to deal with the issue of the lack of space in post-secondary education.

We've got many young people who pass matric, but are unable to find placement in universities, TVET colleges, and even in these mining colleges that you're talking about, as well as agricultural colleges. And we said to this House, why don't we mandate Parliament to investigate the lack of space in post-secondary education, give it timelines, give it terms of reference, so that it can come back to this House and say, how can we find a long-lasting solution to this problem of people that pass matric but don't get into post-secondary education?

Is that something that the Deputy President can be able to join us on that call, so that collectively we can rally behind ensuring that once people pass matric, they must find themselves in post-secondary education, whether it's university, whether it's a college, whether it's a TVET college, whether it's a mining college, or any other skills centre?

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Thank you, Deputy President.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon member, I'm not sure if the hon Manamela is here. I cannot see him. In January this year, the President and I met with the hon Manamela and the Deputy Minister of Higher Education, and one of the things we discussed was exactly that.

I'm sure the hon Manamela will confirm to you that the before the President left, he said, go and build more universities and colleges. That directive is out. Please engage him and check how far he is. There is directive because we were concerned, as you are, that we now have a different problem.

In the past, we were worried that we don't have our children in colleges and universities. Now, they've come up and we can't have a situation where we can't provide that space. So, it is being done. The directive has been issued by the President.

Obviously, building a college and university might take two years. In the meantime, might be to create space through other means that can be done. I am aware that in some universities,

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interim or temporary structures are utilised while permanent infrastructure is still under construction.

But definitely, South Africa needs more universities and colleges. Our children are out there in big numbers. They want to study and we shall not disappoint them.

Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker.

Mr N M HADEBE: Hon Deputy President, how will the government ensure that South Africa leverages its critical minerals not just for exports but to establish domestic industries such as battery manufacturing that provide long-term, high-quality jobs for youth, particularly in mining-impacted regions?

Thank you.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon Deputy Speaker, obviously, one of the things we need to do, hon Hadebe, is that we need to ensure that we have requisite skills. Because we have been an extracting economy, exporting critical minerals to other countries, we didn't put more effort in building skills. We are now working

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towards that because when you ask people, why are you not beneficiating? They will say, well, we don't have the skills.

We exported the minerals to other countries, and in turn buy finished goods. We have now decided to benefit from our own minerals. We need to ensure that we have the skills to produce finished goods and export finished goods.

Obviously, in the short term, you may not have all the skills that you need, but those companies that can produce those goods, they have those technologies, should come and invest here in South Africa. Create jobs here, so that we can export finished goods.

Our current approach is to move away from extracting and exporting and ensure that we beneficiate, we strengthen localisation, and whilst we bring other companies that have expertise, we also build local expertise. We train and ensure that the youth have the required skills by the modern economy. That's what we are doing.

Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker.

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THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: That concludes questions to the Deputy President, and I thank the hon Deputy President.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you very much hon, Deputy Speaker. Thank you, hon members. You have been a very good audience. Thank you so much. [Applause.]

**THE ESCALATING CRISIS IN THE MIDDLE EAST FOLLOWING THE RECENT US
ATTACK ON IRAN AND THE IMPLICATIONS THIS HAS ON SOUTH AFRICA.**

(Matter of Public Importance)

Dr M A MAIMANE: Hon members, ...

Setswana:

... bagaetsho, dumelang.

English:

Today we sit and consider this urgent debate about a crisis that is unfolding in the Middle East, which is fast becoming a South African crisis; a crisis that has got far-reaching ramifications and ultimately a reset of our geopolitics. Hon members, the question we should ask ourselves today is whose interests are we

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here to serve? Are we here to serve the interests of South Africans or do we have other interests?

I begin really my debate today with the words by Kwame Nkrumah, who said: "We face neither East nor West; we face forward". It was a statement born out of liberation, not only born out of liberation, but also out of wisdom. His words were visionary. They asked us the question in the midst of geopolitical realignment, which way should we face? And today I would argue we need to face forward.

The second are the words by President Nelson Mandela, who said: "Our foreign policy must be based on human rights and trade". So when you consider the question then of human rights, and then you say to yourself: South Africa has a long history of human rights, I have in my engagements engaged women in Iran and many parts, and they all have spoken about the nature of regimes that have oppressed them. Yet it amazes me that us a South Africans, whose Constitution upholds human rights, we will stand with people who violate human rights.

Fellow South Africans, we need the consistency of message that says to us: whatever the atrocity is, we must stand up for human

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rights. We must be consistent, whether in Syria, whether in Iran, whether in Yemen, or in any other parts. Secondly, the question then becomes about trade. We have a significant trade with the United States. It exceeds over R20 billion annually, while African Growth and Opportunity Act, AGOA, related exports exceed more than R3,5 billion in economic activity. I am glad Minister Tau is in this debate because we need to urgently find a trade deal between us and the United States.

Hon members, this question asks all of us who stand for human rights, who sit at the centre, to say we will not be hypocritical when we take the stance. If you take a view that says you are non-aligned, you need to stand up for that principle. So, as I bring this debate, hon members, I want to urge us strongly to consider the three responsibilities we have; the oversight we can provide. On the first, we need to answer the question for South Africans who are in the region, is our foreign missions helping them return home safely and ultimately making sure that the choices they can exercise are best supported by us. We cannot afford indecision or inaction at moment such as this one. I ask, there are agencies and our foreign missions must respond.

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Secondly, we need to speak strongly about the economic consequences of this issue. What is a conflict in the Middle East is going to be a conflict here. We are a mid-importer of crude oil. It's already at 103 US dollars per barrel and ultimately is poised to increase. Our currency has weakened now to R16,73; meaning that effectively in the month of April, we face the potential of fuel and diesel rising up by R4 and R7, respectively. Ultimately, citizens are going to feel this in their pockets. They are going to know the inflationary pressure. It's in the taxi fares, it's in the bus fares, it's in the food they eat.

I want to say, if we are serious about protecting our people, let us take the court judgment on VAT and say this House has the right to delay the implementation of the fuel levy that has been increased so that we can shield consumers from administered costs and lessen the burden of inflation on citizens.

Thirdly, we must be willing to stand up and condemn wrong when it's done. We must be a rule-based culture, and we must stand up for international legislation. Fellow South Africans, let me raise this urgent matter that I believe can no longer be delayed. South Africa needs an ambassador to the United States

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and needs one quickly. I want to call on the President to act urgently and appoint a competent South African to represent our interests and have a permanent place so that we can settle a trade deal.

We cannot drift into the diet of global rhetoric. We must stand over principle, we must hold it firmly, we must hold it calmly, and we must hold it clearly. We must condemn wrong. We must reform institutions like the UN Security Council and the African Union so that we stand up for human rights and we stand up for trade for the interest of all South Africans.

I close as Kwame Nkrumah reminded us: "We face neither East nor West; we face forward". Africa is our home. Let us stand together to build an Africa that is prosperous; making sure our citizens can find work, protect their interests, work for South Africans, and uphold the rule of law. We do this, we can respond to this crisis. We fail this moment, we will fail the people of South Africa, and our international voice will be weakened. Let this House take its responsibility seriously. I thank you.

The MINISTER OF TRADE, INDUSTRY AND COMPETITION: Deputy Speaker,
hon members, ladies and gentlemen,

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We will stand as one people, united against violence,
unanimous in our commitment to peace and to the rule of law.

These words I borrow from His Excellency the President, Mr Cyril Ramaphosa.

Hon members, as a people that are focused on building a national democratic society, who are advocates for peaceful resolutions of disputes, South Africa's non-aligned stance is not passivity. It is a deliberate expression of who we are – a nation born of negotiated settlement, with an enduring conviction that no dispute is beyond the reach of dialogue. We call on all parties to pursue a peaceful resolution, protect civilian life and return to the table. The world cannot afford another protracted war.

Hon members, the economic consequences of this conflict are grave, regardless of political posture. The trade along the Strait of Hormuz and the Suez Canal-Red Sea corridor has been disrupted. Brent crude has surged past US\$100 per barrel. This is the price of military solutions, paid not by those who order the strikes, but by the people across the developing world,

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including our own. It is a war that has a direct impact on us as a country.

South Africa's trade with the Middle East stood at US\$15,3 billion in 2025, growing at 8% annually. Our exports grew by 14% last year, but it is our imports that expose our strategic vulnerability. Over 70% by value is energy products from Oman, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, UAE. We also import fertilisers, plastic, copper and sulphur. With 93% of imports arriving by sea, we face simultaneous pressure on energy, food production, inputs and export logistics.

A three-month conflict scenario projects US\$820 million in export losses. Yet amid this crisis, chartered flights from South Africa are being used to export meat and fruit to the Middle East. This is who we are. To some, it is called trade; to us, it is Ubuntu. [Applause.]

Hon members, government has put systems in place to prevent a fuel shortage. Minister Mantashe and his department have acted decisively to secure alternative sources of fuel and provide security of supply. The Strategic Fuel Fund remains intact and available. Alternative supply is underway.

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The reality, however, is that the cost of energy is increasing across the board. Fuel price increases are unfortunately unavoidable under the current circumstances. We have to act in concert as government, business and society at large to manage our energy availability in order to navigate the storm and to protect our most vulnerable.

Hon members, this crisis demands a more fundamental reckoning. South Africa imports 60% of its liquid fuel requirements yet sits on world-class offshore petroleum potential. The Orange Basin mirrors the discoveries made in Namibia. The Outeniqua Basin holds significant gas potential, and we have the technology to lead. Sasol's Fischer-Tropsch process 70 years of proprietary coal-to-liquid expertise is a platform for the energy economy of the now and not a liability to abandon.

South Africa controls 87% of the world's iridium, a critical input into green electrolyzers. The HySHiFT Project in Secunda produces 50 000 tons of sustainable aviation fuel per year in Sasol's existing facilities. This is how we must build energy independence responsibly and underpinned by sustainable development principles. Our energy mix is anchored on the principles of a just energy transition.

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Hon members, this crisis is also a warning about food security. The Middle East is a significant source of our fertiliser imports. Foskor, whilst historically challenged, is vertically integrated, based in Phalaborwa and Richards Bay, and holds over 1,5 billion tons of phosphate ore reserves. It is South Africa's only producer of phosphate ore, pyrophosphoric acid and granular fertiliser. Yet our farmers still rely on imports for supply.

The Department of Trade, Industry and Competition, DTIC, and the Industrial Development Corporation, IDC, will engage Foskor urgently to optimise output, cut downtime and secure affordable local fertiliser for our agricultural sectors.

Hon members, diversification is already delivering results. With regards to the export diversification undertaken by the department, over R700 million in export orders were, to date, secured for the 2025-26 financial year. Vehicle exports grew by 21,4% in 2025. Fruit and nut exports grew by 21,6% - our fastest growing export category. The Export Support Desk, created last year in response to reciprocal tariffs and which have been assisting in diversification efforts, is ready to further support exporters affected as a result of the crisis.

[Applause.]

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We will continue to pursue our strategic partners in India and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, ASEAN, region, and expand the SACU-Mercosur Preferential Trade Agreement. From 1 May 2026, China's unilateral zero-tariff access, covering 100% of tariff lines for all African nations, combined with the China-Africa Economic Partnership Agreement, CAEPA, fundamentally strengthens our position in the world's largest consumer market. We will ensure that exporters capitalise from day one.

Deputy Speaker, every vessel rounding the Cape of Good Hope is a reminder that Africa's geography is its greatest asset. The world's trade is rerouting around our shores. Maersk, Hapag-Lloyd and CMA CGM have suspended stress transits. During the 2024 transit disruptions, 66% of container shipping came around the Cape. We are approaching the threshold again, and this time, the disruption is more structural and enduring.

South Africa is strategically positioned. We must use our dual positioning as a peace route for every vessel rounding the Cape of Good Hope. That is why it is the Cape of Good Hope. South Africa has in excess of 2 900 km of coastline and eight

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commercial ports at the junction of the Atlantic and Indian Oceans.

Vessel calls at Durban and Cape Town are already rising. Ngqura is emerging as the continent's deepwater transshipment point and Richards Bay is expanding container capacity fourfold by 2028. South Africa has an established ship repair industry with the skills, facilities and now, the traffic.

More vessels on the Cape route means more demand for dry docking, bunkering, chandlery and marine engineering. Smaller ports like East London adjacent to its Special Economic Zone, SEZ, anchored by automotive engineering capability, have real potential as niche boat building and marine manufacturing centres.

This Parliament must welcome government's efforts to accelerate implementation through the Guided Trade Initiative, the rules of a regional framework and investment in logistics corridors that connect our continent.

Madam Deputy Speaker, one final point. In times of crisis, we must ready all South Africans to survive. We must ready our

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infrastructure to manage the load. We must ready our trade to diversify. We must protect the most vulnerable. And in the words of our President,

Our own history has taught us that dialogue is the most powerful weapon.

Thank you very much. [Applause.]

Mr P KUBUKELI: As I rise on behalf of the MKP, I am going to demonstrate the dangers of the unholy alliance between Israel and the United States. A practice that is still continuing today devastated countries and fuelled wars across continents. Past conflicts such as the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003 founded on unsubstantiated claims of weapons of mass destruction continue to shape international relations and contribute to global instability. Regime changes like the 1953 coup against Iran's Prime Minister Mohammad Mosaddegh and events such as the Iran-Iraq War highlight the dangers of foreign aggression and its long-lasting effects on regional security and humanitarian conditions.

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A wake-up call to those who are turning a blind eye to the back of these aggressive should be Tuesday's resignation of Joe Kent, the Director of the US National Counter Terrorism Centre, a far-right political figure and supporter of Donald Trump. He said:

I cannot include conscience, support the ongoing war in Iran. Iran imposed no imminent threat to our nation and it is clear that we started this war due to pressure from Israel and its powerful American lobby.

These two countries have been on an invasion rampage. Over the years they invaded Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Grenada, Panama, Afghanistan, Mexico, Yemen, Iran, Iraq, Libya, Egypt, Jordaan, Tunisia, the list is endless. Underlying these conflicts is a neoliberal economic agenda that prioritises military expansion and profits over social investment. [Applause.] The resources that could build communities are instead diverted to the military industrial complex, perpetuating a cycle of violence and inequality. Southern Africa has also been victim of this foreign interference.

IsiXhosa:

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Apha eAngola, iAmerika noSirayeli babexhasa iNational Liberation Front of Angola, NLFA, kaHolden Roberto esilwa idabi norhulumente ka-Agostinho Neto. La mazwe ayekwaxhasa amajoni kaJonas Savimbi ukulwa lo rhulumente. EMozambique, iRenamo ka-Afonso Dhlakama ibikhathazana norhulumente kaSamora Machel incediswa nguSirayeli. [Kwaqhwytywa.] Apha ekhaya eMzantsi Afrika, i-IFP ibiqeqeshwa nguSirayeli.

Zonke ezi zinto bebezenza ukhona uMthetho weZizwe eziManyeneyo omisela ukuba uMzantsi Afrika ukwaywe namanye amazwe asemfazweni. Nangona kunjalo, bebengawusi so loo Mthetho. Masigqithise ixesha kancinci, apha kukho ...

English:

... a selective approach of the International Criminal Court. International Criminal Court, during Zuma's rule ...

IsiXhosa:

... inyanzelisa uMsholozzi ukuba abambe, avalele uMongameli waseSudan uOmar al-Bashir ngethuba eze kwingqungquthela yeMbumba yamazwe aseAfrika. Akazange avume uMsholozzi waze waphakamisa ukuba uMzantsi Afrika uphume kula International Criminal Court. Ayizange inqwale le Ndlu kweso isphakamiso. IDA ngowama2023, iye

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kwiinkundla zamatyala inyanzelisa ukuba uMzantsi Afrika ubambe, uvalele uVladimir Putin xa ethe cakatha unyawo lwakhe kweli lizwe lethu ngethuba lengqungquthela yeBrics.

Zibuze umbuzo ukuba yintoni le ebangela ukuba ezi nkokeli zala mazwe zifune ukuba babanjwe sithi aba mongameli. Uyayibona ukuba bafuna ukusithelekisa. IDA yona ingena phi kule nto? Inye ke into ebadibanisayo, badityaniswa kukungafuni ukubuyisela ubutyebi nomhlaba ebantwini. Yiyo kanye le nto ifunwa ngala mazwe ahamba erhwaphiliza.

English:

Hon Speaker, we must resist for our country to be used as puppets of imperialism.

IsiXhosa:

Oonopopi babarhwaphilizi. [Kwaqhwywa.]

English:

This Iran invasion has far-reaching consequences for our country. It already has an impact on our economy, diplomacy, security, political discourse and humanitarian responsibilities. Our opposition to imperialism, neoliberalism and neocolonialism

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is vital as these systems perpetuate global inequality and undermine movements for self-determination. The enemy here is the system. We must remember that the relationship apartheid South Africa had with these countries, led to the invasion of Lesotho, Mozambique, Botswana, Angola, eSwatini, Zimbabwe, Namibia and Zambia.

IsiXhosa:

UMzantsi Afrika, olu gonyamelo kula mazwe aseAfrika ulufunde kula mazwe mabini, iAmerika noSirayeli.

English:

Incidents like the abduction of the President of Venezuela and his wife.

IsiXhosa:

Ezo zehlo zenziwa yinkohlakalo yeAmerika idibene noSirayeli.

English:

Hon Speaker, the people's leader, the world-renowned ANC president, Oliver Tambo, said:

IsiXhosa:

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Sakuthi ukuze sibe siyifumane inkululeko yethu ngokupheleleyo kube kukhululeke namanye amazwe angakhululekanga.

English:

It is therefore our revolutionary duty to stand in solidarity with Iran, Palestine, Venezuela and others facing external oppression. Cubans stood with us when many countries did not want to support our struggle as Africa. America is planning to invade Cuba as we speak.

IsiXhosa:

Siva ukubetha kolwimi lukaTrump.

English:

Let us raise our voices in support of the Cuban International Forces. As legislators, we must champion peace, justice and self-determination, ensuring that affected communities are heard and protected. As MKP, we will continue to advocate for South Africa's withdrawal from the selective International Criminal Court system and for radical socioeconomic transformation to achieve genuine equality, liberation and self-determination. As MK, we realise that power to the people became an empty slogan because power has been taken away from them. They have been made

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to survive on pittance. So now, what we need to do is to take power and give it back to the people. Thank you.

IsiZulu:

Gwaza Mkhonto, gwaza!

Mr R SMITH: Hon Deputy Speaker, the Iran War comes at a time when the world is in a state of flux. Many of the architects of the International Rules-Based Order have abandoned it and much of the world has been relegated to a new reality of every man for himself. However, in this global uncertainty, South Africa's response to the Iran War rings hollow. Trying to simultaneously condemn all parties in this conflict under the guise of the international law means the ANC has failed to see the bigger picture of Iran's decade's long sponsorship of terrorism in the region. [Applause.]

For Iran and its Russian allies are not just a threat to peace and stability in the Middle East, but to global security as a whole.

An HON MEMBER: Who is speaking?

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Mr R SMITH: South African foreign policy under the ANC cannot attempt to weigh into this matter without accurately diagnosing the problem. Any attempt to gloss over Iran's continued role in regional and global instability are disingenuous. Instead, the ANC has employed a childish game of diplomatic tit-for-tat instead of embarking on a mature plan to protect our growth and prosperity at a time of tremendous uncertainty.

In the words of Helen Suzman and I quote, "If you don't know what to do, go and look for the principle." As the world doubt the International Rules-Based Order, South Africa must diligently revert to principle. Yet the ANC has abandoned constitutional principle and instead clings, with desperate tenacity, to its own political nostalgia - at South Africa's peril.

Hon Deputy Speaker, Iran is not our friend! Despite what does and does not justify war, South African diplomacy cannot waver in its constitutional duty to condemn what Iran's Islamic regime stands for, promotes and funds.

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The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order hon members. Order. The speaker is not audible. We have given respect to all the other speakers thus far. Please exercise the same respect.

Hon Smith, please proceed.

Mr R SMITH: Thank you, Deputy Speaker.

For the Convention for a Democratic SA, Codes, negotiations did not commit our country to serve the ANC's whims. The Codesa was a pledge by South Africans from all walks of life to uphold the universal values of freedom, democracy and human rights. This is the path we collectively chose for our country, and this is the path from which the ANC has strayed.

Hon Deputy Speaker, on Saturday South Africa commemorates Human Rights Day. Let me remind the ANC why we celebrate it. Human Rights Day is the commemoration of the 1960 Sharpeville Massacre, where 69 peaceful civilians protesting against pass laws were massacred by the apartheid regime. Sixty-six years later and the ANC has betrayed their sacrifice.

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South Africa has not only refused to condemn Iran for massacring 30 000 innocent civilians in antigovernment protest this year but celebrated the martyrdom of the very man responsible for it. This outrage is shared by the Iranian people themselves.

Allow me to share a statement penned by the Iranian community in South Africa and I quote:

We condemn unequivocally the Islamic regime's 47 years of support for terrorism and regional chaos. We call on the government of South Africa to immediately cease its political alignment with and support for this regime. Standing with the oppressor of the Iranian people is not a position of moral leadership; it is a betrayal of the very principles of freedom and human dignity.

I do not think the ANC got the memo. [Applause.]

Hon Deputy Speaker, I wonder what the 20 000 women who marched to the Union Buildings in 1956 demanding equal rights would say, when they see today South Africa standing with a country that imposes the death penalty, public flogging, and prison terms upon women, for failing to wear a veil in public.

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What will Hector Pieterse say ...

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Smith, please take your seat. Right at the back, hon member, what is your point of order?

An HON MEMBER: Hon Deputy Speaker, can the hon member take a question?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Smith, are you prepared to take a question?

No, he is not.

Please proceed hon Smith.

Yes, hon Michalakis.

The CHIEF WHIP OF THE SECOND LARGEST MINORITY PARTY (Mr G Michalakis): Hon Deputy Speaker, my apologies for interrupting our member. However, Madam Deputy Speaker, you have already indicated to the members that the member at the podium is not audible.

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They have consistently defied that ruling of yours and I would like you to please take a look at Rule 69.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members, hon members!

The CHIEF WHIP OF THE SECOND LARGEST MINORITY PARTY (Mr G Michalakis): Madam Deputy Speaker, the truth is often uncomfortable, and it shows in the reaction of some of the members.

The member at the podium is not afforded the same respect as other members in this debate. I would like your ruling on this.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member. Before I take your point, I will first rule on that point.

Hon members, I have requests. I have seen you, hon member. I am first ruling on this point.

Hon members, I have requested that we respect all speakers even if you do not agree. We follow the constitutional principle of freedom of speech. So, please afford everyone even if you do not agree, the same kind of respect that you expect.

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Hon member, yes, please your hand was up first. What is your point of order?

Mr S L DITHEBE: Is the member prepared to say something about the genocide in Gaza before he concludes his speech?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member, that is not a point of order.

Hon member at the back. What is your point of order?

Please use another microphone.

Mr S T D LOUW: Hon Deputy Speaker, I think consistently, you are allowing that people when you are presiding, they preside again over you. More so when it is your self and it is your party the DA. Can you please be consistent. When you have ruled, you must never allow anyone to raise a hand again. It is wrong. Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member, that is not a point of order and that is totally uncalled for.

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The principle of freedom of speech relates to everyone. All parties.

The hon Mkhaliipi.

Ms H O MKHALIPI: Hon Deputy Speaker, we cannot be abused by the Government of National Unity, GNU, partners here. Please!

We do not enter in their own things! Please! They must not abuse us here! They are now fighting and they are bringing their fight here! No! Please do not abuse us!

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Mkhaliipi, you are totally out of order. You have not been recognised to just make comments.

Hon members, we will now proceed with the debate. I am not going to entertain and spurious questions or comments.

Hon Smith, please proceed.

IsiZulu:

Nk H O MKHALIPI: I-ANC isaba abelungu, Sekela Somlomo.

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English:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Mkhalipi, I am now cautioning you.

Switch on your microphone again without being recognised, you will have a second caution.

Please proceed, hon Smith.

Mr R SMITH: What will Hector Pieteron say to South Africa calling for Iran's restrained when it kills thousands of university students protesting?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members, hon members, order!

If you do not agree, you do not have to drown out the speaker.

[Applause.]

Hon Paulsen! The member may proceed without you drowning him out!

Please proceed, hon Smith.

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Mr R SMITH: Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. The truth clearly hurts.

It is becoming increasingly clear to the world that South Africa's foreign policy is not determined by constitutional principle but by the ANC's subversion of reality. For only in an Orwellian dystopia can expect its citizens and the world to believe South Africa's truth-is-lies approach to navigating international relations.

The ANC does not merely cherry-pick its own history, they seem to reinvent it entirely.

Fikile Mbalula recently stated that Iran was a friend that stood by South Africa in the struggle against apartheid.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Smith, please take your seat. There is a point of order.

The hon Khawula.

IsiZulu:

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Nk M S KHAWULA: Ngiyabonga kakhulu Sekela Somlomo. Awuve uhlonipha. Ngisola ukuthi i-ANC ifanele ngoba siya kwiphasika manje okungenzeka bamhlonipha kangaka nje kwenzeka lento ngoba bacabanga ukuthi wuJesu wabo. Phela siya kuphasika. Ngiyabonga. [Ihlombe noHleko.]

English:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Khawula, that is not a point of order. I have requested that you do not raise spurious points. You are disrupting and interrupting the proceedings.

Hon Smith, please proceed.

Mr R SMITH: Well, the history books have some bad news to share with the ANC. Under the wait of sanctions in the 1980s against apartheid South Africa and Iran, both nations turned to each other for support.

So, Mr Mbalula why you imagine that Iran fought against apartheid, the Islamic Republic traded Iranian oil for apartheid weapons for over a decade.

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The Truth and Reconciliation Commission estimates that 21 000 South Africa's citizens were killed in political violence between 1985 and 1989 alone. We now know that it was Iranian oil and Islamic Republic that fuelled this final bloody decade of terror in South Africa's history. Iranian terror is not only funded and exported in the Middle East today, it kept alive and well the terror of apartheid government throughout the 1980s.

And in the ANC's selective amnesia it forgot Iran's massacre of the South African's Communist Party's friends and allies in the early 1980s.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR (Ms J Nemadzinga-Tshabalala): On a point of order.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Smith, please take your seat.

Hon Deputy Minister, I do hope that this is not spurious.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR (Ms J Tshabalala-Nemadzinga): Hon Deputy Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

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My point of order is: The hon member is irrelevant. He must stick to the debate and not debate about the ANC. What does he know about apartheid?

He must leave the ANC and Fikile Mbalula is not a member of this House!

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Deputy Minister, you are out of order. That is a matter of debate!

Hon Smith, please proceed.

The hon Mahlaule, what is your point of order?

Hon Smith, please take your seat.

Mr M G MAHLAULE: Hon Deputy Speaker, I am confused. What do we do when somebody ask us: What would have Hector Pieterse said? Can we answer that that Hector Pieterse would have asked why did you send soldiers to kill young people in 1976? Do not ask a question when you want an answer.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member, that is not a point of order.

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[Applause.]

Mr M G MAHLAULE: The hon member wanted an answer!

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member, that is not a point of order!

I will not entertain anymore of those points!

We have other speakers who are waiting to speak.

You are delaying other people's opportunities.

The hon Chief Whip of the DA, what is your point?

The CHIEF WHIP OF THE SECOND LARGEST MINORITY PARTY (Mr G Michalakis): Hon Deputy Speaker, I want to refer you to Rule 92(9) which says members may not disrupt proceedings by raising points of orders that do not comply with this rule. Madam Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members.

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The CHIEF WHIP OF THE SECOND LARGEST MINORITY PARTY (Mr G Michalakis): Madam Deputy Speaker, I quoted the rule to you, and I want to refer you to Rule 69 further, which indicates that if members continuously defy a ruling of the presiding officer that they are grossly disorderly. I would like you to please take action against those members henceforth. Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon Chief Whip of the DA, I am chairing the proceedings here.

The hon Deputy Minister. I am not taking any more points you are disrupting.

The hon Mkhalipi. I am not taking any further points. We will proceed with this debate.

Hon members, I did listen and I have not now said that you are in breach of those rules. I have been pleading and making a request for you to be decent in a debate and to show respect but apparently that does not work.

So, hon Smith, please proceed with your speech.

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Mr R SMITH: Hon Deputy Speaker, I wonder what the Tripartite Alliance thinks about Iran's long-standing friendship with South Africa when they remember how the Islamic Republic turned on their socialist allies in the brutal crackdown of political freedom?

Iran is not and never has been democratic South Africa's friend. It is a global source of terror that exports, hatred, violence and religious extremism in the world. The ANC has all but made South Africa, Iran's useful idiots.

Hon Deputy Speaker, as the world burns, South African diplomacy is now forced to tap dance around the ANC's diplomatic double standards.

South Africa demarche the United States, US, ambassador, for undiplomatic comments but refuses to demarche the Russian ambassador for meddling in our democracy. They report the USA to the United Nations, UN, Security Council for invading Venezuela but act as pious mediator when Russia invades Ukraine.

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We go to court against Israel and Gaza but fail to report Iran to the UN Human Rights Commission for funding Hormuz, Hezbollah and the Houthis.

Hon Deputy Speaker, we know that diplomacy today can be fickle, but we cannot respond with political immaturity. Every single foreign policy-decision undertaken by the ANC in this government is dragging us away from our natural allies and kicking and screaming into the arms of terrorists and despots.

Hon Deputy Speaker, the only conclusion one can come to when observing South Africa's schizophrenic foreign policy is that the ANC has sold its principles to the highest bidder.

[Applause.]

Our foreign policy under the ANC is neither principled nor nonaligned. It is a textbook case of a diplomatic ...

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Smit, please take your seat.

Hon Mahlaule, what is your point of order?

Mr M G MAHLAULE: Hon Deputy Speaker, can the speaker sit down.

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The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please take your seat. Hon Smith, please take your seat.

Yes, hon member, what is your point of order.

Mr M G MAHLAULE: Hon Deputy Speaker, I just want to ask if the speaker can take a question.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Mahlaule, you are now honestly interrupting the speaker.

Mr M G MAHLAULE: No, it is the rules! I want to ask a question.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: However, I would ask him.

Hon member, would you like to answer a question?

No, he will not.

So, please proceed you have 45 seconds left.

Mr R SMITH: Our foreign policy under the ANC is neither ...

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The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Lonzi.

Please take your seat hon Smith.

You are now starting to fall foul of Rule 92 and 69. So, what is your point of order?

Mr S LONZI: But hon Deputy Speaker, I am speaking for the first time. I do not understand why you are saying I am falling foul.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: No. The House is.

What is your point of order.

Mr S LONZI: South Africans are being insulted here.

Firstly, they were called stupid. That is not parliamentary language.

Now we are being called schizophrenic.

As the Deputy Speaker, you are supposed to call the speaker to order!

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He cannot call us stupid and schizophrenic! That is not parliamentary language!

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Lonzi, in terms of the rules, and please I would like you - listen.

In terms of the rules, it is unparliamentary if you say that to an individual. However, the courts have ruled that making comments in general is not unparliamentary.

Hon Michalakis I am not going to take your point now. I want the DA speaker to now proceed and continue because we can sit here the rest of the evening.

Hon Michalakis, you are up first.

The CHIEF WHIP OF THE SECOND LARGEST MINORITY PARTY (Mr G Machalakis): Hon Deputy Speaker it is a new point of order.

Deputy Speaker, the DA speaker at the podium has been prejudiced to a great extent due to frivolous points of orders and lost a great deal of his time.

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I will request you to please use your discretion to allow him more time to speak. Thank you.

Mr M G MAHLAULE: Hon Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members, hon members, I am not going to have this to and fro between the members. If you now want to raise a point of order, please quote the number of that rule.

Hon Mahlaule, what is your point of order?

Mr M G MAHLAULE: Hon Deputy Speaker, I rise on Rule 92, a point of order on you.

When the hon Lonzi raised a question that we are being insulted you said it is not an individual insult.

Yesterday, a chairperson was seated there, and the Minister was saying "those people" and he was ruled out of order and he had to withdraw.

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Now this hon member is speaking about us in this House. Why are you not consisted in the ruling that when you speak about people inside this House you are out of order. Please be consistent.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Mahlaule, I will look at Hansard and come back to the House with a ruling on that.

Hon Paulsen that was on record what you said.

Mr M N PAULSEN: Hon Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am waiting to hear because I cannot hear anyone.

Hon Lonzi, what is your point of order.

Mr S LONZI: Hon Deputy Speaker, please be honest. Do not say you are going to consult Hansard. You heard him say stupid. You heard him say schizophrenic. You do not need to consult just make the ruling. He must withdraw. He is insulting this House.

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The DEPUTY SEAKER: Hon Lonzi, when I do make a ruling, I have to be absolutely sure of the whole sentence that was said. Yes. So, I will come back.

Alright. There are so many hands. Let us go over to the ANC.

Mr X NQOLA: Hon Deputy Speaker, it is again an order to you. You are visibly bias on the proceedings of this debate. It is unfortunate that you are causing a threat to the smooth going of this debate because of how you handle the proceedings.

When it suits you, without properly applying the rules you suspend some of the rules to suppress the debate in the House. We seriously do not know where you get the power to suspend those rules when members want to raise point of orders and other issues.

So, in our view hon Deputy Speaker, you are contributing negatively to the smooth running of the House, because you selectively suspend rules to suppress the debate in the House. We have allowed and agreed with you that we subscribe unto the freedom of speech espoused by the Constitution. However, it does not mean that we must keep quiet when the speaker on the podium

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is misleading the country and trying to misrepresent us that Iran is not our friend and this and that Hector Pieterse, deliberately misleading the House and the people of South Africa.

So, we are appealing with you, hon Deputy Speaker, to be fair and consistent on the application of the rules of this House. You are grossly out of order. Thank you. [Applause.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member, I will remind you if you have listened, we had a previous speaker, who had actually referred to a party buying weapons which was not out of order, and no one reacted.

So, that was my consistency. There was a previous matter that I could have ruled out of order for another party, but I did not. You can check the Hansard.

So, we will now proceed.

The hon Nkuna-Mente. That would now be the last one.

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Ms N V MENTE-NKUNA: Hon Deputy Speaker, you do not have power to make such a determination.

Secondly, you do have a remedy. Ask your member, what did he say, do not consult Hansard. Ask him what he said about stupidity and schizophrenia. Ask him to read those sentences again and then you can make a ruling.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: According to what was recorded: South Africa's foreign policy is schizophrenic. That is what was said. Please consult the Hansard if you do not agree with that. We have checked that.

Hon Smith, please proceed. [Applause.]

Mr R SMITH: This is a textbook case of diplomatic hypocrisy, and the expensive price South Africa pays for the ANC's cheap diplomacy. It is the jobs ...

[Interjections.]

Mr G D KGABO: Hon Deputy Speaker, on a point of order.

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The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member, what is your point of order?
Please take your seat, hon Smith.

Mr G D KGABO: Hon Deputy Speaker, I am rising on Rule 92.

I am calling an order on your good self, hon Deputy Speaker. I want to remind you that you do not have powers to tell us that you are not going to take any hand for as long as we are raising hands. It is beyond your powers that one Deputy Speaker.

Secondly, we would like to plead with your good self that stop proving what we have always suspected that you do not understand the rules of this House. Stop being bias and be consistent in terms of application of the law.

Why is it that every time when members of the ANC raise their hands you tell us that you are not going to take any hand.

However, when it is the hon Michalakis there you are ambiguously allowing him to disrupt the proceedings!

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon member, as the Deputy Speaker, I have a wide range of discretion, and it is not only for the ANC, I also direct it to all other parties.

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So, we will now proceed. Hon Smith, you have 34 seconds left.

[Applause.]

Mr R SMITH: This is a textbook case of diplomatic hypocrisy, and the expensive price South Africa pays for the ANC's cheap diplomacy. It is the jobs we shared, the growth we sacrificed and the reputation we tarnished. Freedom, democracy, human rights! The ANC has sacrificed it all for patronage, influence and donations.

IsiZulu:

Senzeni na!

Ms N M MHLONGO: Deputy Speaker, on behalf of the EFF, I would like to once again extend our deepest condolences to the brave people of Iran, to the Islamic world in general and to the family of the martyr, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, the Supreme Leader of Iran, who was killed by the unjustified attack on a sovereign nation by the Zionist state of Israel and the blood thirsty of the United States of America. The late cleric was not just a leader of Iran, he was a voice of reason and authority across the Islamic world.

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His sober mindedness also ensured that even while Iran could develop its own nuclear weapons, it was prevented from doing so because of his commitment to peace. We also extend our condolences to all those who have fallen to the USA-Israel axes of evil across the world. Assassination is the language of cowards, a language spoken by trembling empires, trembling because the world is waking up to their cruelty, lies and barbarism.

Are we, as South Africans, going to remain asleep or are we ready to wake up? We say here today clearly, as the EFF, the names of the martyrs, Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, Ali Larijani and Esmail Khatib, in Parliament, we honour your struggling and condemn the cowards who killed you. You have returned to God and may He have mercy on you for your sacrifice.

Those acts of terrorism are not isolated, they are a cold and calculated strategy to decapitate resistance, silent voices that refuse to bow before Washington and Tel Aviv. We have seen them trying to demonise and isolate South Africa because of our stance to the Israel genocide in Palestine. We have seen them trying to create enemies of everyone opposed to the ethnic cleansing of Palestinians.

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The USA attack on Iran is at the insistence of the genocidal regime of Israel and have shattered whatever prospect of peace in that region. The attacks have also placed the world at a greater risk of economic collapse as a result of the strain to energy trade this has caused. Deputy Speaker, the greatest tragedy in all of this is the terrorisation of whatever power global multilateral institutions might have had.

The United Nation Security Council is powerless in the face of this unprovoked USA attack. The Palestinian genocide and now this war against Iran, has exposed them and left them naked to the truth that they no longer matter and only serve the interests of power, greed and money. The world sees them for what they are and much like the League of Nations collapsed and became ineffective due to the Nazi Germany. The United Nations, UN, too will face the same fate because of Israel and the USA.

Donald Trump kidnapped and imprisoned Nicolas Maduro, a President of a sovereign nation and there is no condemnation from anyone in the world. Donald Trump has enabled and financed the ethnic cleansing of Palestinian people by the international criminal, Benjamin Netanyahu, in the genocidal regime of Israel and yet again the world is quiet. The impunity with which the

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USA and genocidal Israel perpetrate atrocities around the world has destabilising effects across the world.

After Venezuela and Iran who will it be? For how long must the world stand still in the face of imperialism? The world is burning right under the weight of American and Israeli imperialism, apartheid and naked genocide. As South Africa we have a historical moral duty to speak out. Silence is complicity and complicity is betrayal. Betrayal over our own history and our own struggle for freedom. Iran is under attack to pave way for the ultimate destruction of the Palestinian people and for the full control of oil resources of the Gulf region by the United States.

What are we to say about the Gulf state who betray their own neighbours? What of those regimes that align themselves with the USA and genocidal state of Israel by opening their airspaces, their bases and their coffers to imperialist wars while Iranians and Palestinians are dying? Shame on them. Shame on those who sell their humanity, dignity and honour like Judas for a handful of silver. Shame on those who have abandoned Palestine, who have betrayed Iran betrayed humanity and their own faith. They have

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chosen the side of oppression and history will remember them as collaborators in genocide.

We also know that we have here in our midst genocidal sympathisers in the form of the DA, PA, ACDP and the very same Musi Maimane, who sponsored this motion. A man who calls himself a Christian yet has no aorta of love for Christ in his heart. They visit the genocidal entity of Israel, shake hands with a man who legitimised apartheid. Maimane chose to stand with the murderers than the murdered.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Hon Mhlongo, can you, please, take your seat. What's the point of order, hon member?

Mr S N SWART: I'd like to rise on a point of order on Rule 85. The hon member has just cast aspersions against the hon Maimane and I had asked that you rule that it be withdrawn. It is not for her to say he is not a Christian. How dare she say that?

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Hon members, hon members, hon members! Please, I want to listen to the point of order so that we are able to rule. So, if you howl this much we can't hear. You were saying, hon Swart?

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Mr S N SWART: House Chair, the speaker at the podium said that the hon Maimane is not even a Christian and she cast aspersions on him and I'd like you to rule that out of order. He is a respected Christian and that is an aspersion on his character. It is not a point of debate and she said other things. If you don't have the Hansard ... [Interjections.] ... [Inaudible.] ... Thank you.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Hon Mhlongo, did you say what hon Swart is raising a point of order on?

Ms N M MHLONGO: Hon House Chairperson, can you, please, repeat what he said? He was waffling, I could not make out what he was saying. Nevertheless, what I know is that I've called hon Maimane a Christian. And that's what I've done. Unless it's not parliamentary to do so.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Thank you very much. Hon Swart, we will consult Hansard and check what was said then revert back with a ruling. Continue, hon member.

Ms N M MHLONGO: Hon Maimane chose to stand with murderers rather than the murdered. The unacceptable visit to the genocidal

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Israel by the above mentioned parties is not a gesture of peace. It is betrayal of South Africa's moral legacy. The EFF calls for a complete termination of all diplomatic ties with the genocidal state of Israel, as it was a decision of the Sixth Parliament, emanating from the EFF sponsored motion for South Africa to cut all diplomatic and economic ties with the Zionist regime of Israel. To this day, President Ramaphosa fails to defend this motion and has no political appetite to do so.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majazi): Hon Mhlongo, hon Mhlongo, can you, please, take your seat.

The CHIEF WHIP OF THE SECOND LARGEST MINORITY PARTY: House Chairperson, I had my hand up at the same time as the hon Swart. I want to refer to the same rule as him and I want to plead to you. When you do go and consult the Hansard, the hon member at the podium, when she accused hon Maimane of committing genocide, she also said, in our midst, and then referred to two political parties, the ACDP and the DA.

I want to submit to you, that that goes further than just criticism against a political party. But it refers to the actual members in this House representing those political parties. And

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I would like you to, please, consider this when consulting the Hansard.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majosi): Okay, we will consult. As I've said, my ruling is that we will consult Hansard and see ... okay, what is your point of order?

Mr I ISMAIL-MOOSA: Hon Chair, I have a serious problem in the House. Hon Michalakis of the DA continuously brings points of order that compromises the standing of the Chairpersons. It is the Chairperson's right to determine what the Hansard outcome would be. Previously, as well, he stood up three times on points of order. I think he needs to be brought up on points of order.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majosi): Hon member, I gave hon Michalakis an opportunity to speak because on top of what hon Swart was saying, he was adding that there were other words as well that were used. So, I am saying, can we not continue on this issue up until we consult Hansard, please?

Mr I ISMAIL-MOOSA: Yes, hon Chair. That is exactly what I am saying. He continuously defies the Chairpersons.

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The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): No, hon member, no. Hon Mhlongo, please, continue.

Ms N M MHLONGO: We are also of the view that there should be a review of our relations with the USA in light of its enabling of genocides across the world. We would rather stand alone on the side of the truth than be with the multitudes enabling genocide.

The EFF noted the explosive resignation of Joseph Kent, the director of the USA National Counterterrorism Center. The damning resignation was a confirmation of what progressive forces across the world, including the EFF, have consistently asserted, that the current war against Iran is illegal, unjustified and built on deliberate misinformation. We want to tell the Minister of International Relations and Co-operation that the demand that he enforced on the USA ambassador to South Africa is a useless diplomatic act.

What is required is for Bozell to be declared a *persona non grata* and be expelled with immediate effect if we are to protect our sovereignty and assert our stance against imperialism bullying. Now, House Chairperson, we are not surprised by the acts that we are seeing here. People are canvassing for Rebecca

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Oppenheim to fund their campaign. That's why they are here standing up defending America at the expense of our sovereignty and that should never be allowed in this House.

Long live the Islamic Republic of Iran, long live!. Long live the Islamic Republic of Iran, long live! Free, free Palestine! Palestine, will be free! ...

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majози): ... hon member, hon member! ... Please, mute the microphone. Please, mute the microphone ...

Ms N M MHLONGO: ... From the river to the sea! Away with Israel, away! ...

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majози): ... please, mute the microphone ...

Ms N M MHLONGO: ... Away with the Zionist state of Israel, away! Away with the ...

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majози): ... please, mute the microphone! ...

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Ms N M MHLONGO: ... Away with the blood thirsty ... [Inaudible.]
... away! [Applause.]

An HON MEMBER: We invite you to the People's March. You are invited to the People's March on the 21st.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majazi): Hon Mhlongo, hon Mhlongo! That was uncalled for. I have continuously told you that your time has expired. You want us to abide by the rules. Please, also abide by the rules. I will now recognise the hon Deputy Minister of Transport.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF TRANSPORT: House Chairperson:

It was the worst of times ... it was the age of foolishness ... it was the epoch of incredulity ... it was the season of darkness, it was the winter of despair, we have nothing before us.

These words by Charles Dickens in his *A Tale of Two Cities* could very well describe the world we are seeing today.

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This is the worst of times. The escalating confrontation involving the United States, Israel and Iran, threatens to plunge the middle east into a devastating regional war with profound consequences for global peace, security and economic stability.

It is an age of foolishness, with diplomacy too, is easily abandoned in favour of military escalation and whether instruments of war deployed with alarming haste. Decisions are taken in distant capitals that now reverberate across the world, threatening stability beyond the battlefield.

Again, it's an epoch of incredulity. The world watches with disbelief as missile strikes, retaliatory attacks are escalating and escalating threats, pushing an already volatile region closer to catastrophe.

It's an age of darkness where we see war casting its shadow over the Middle East. Civilians bear the heaviest burden, with homes destroyed and lives lost and communities shattered.

The IFP unequivocally condemns the escalation of tensions and violence in the region. This cycle of attacks is unjustified,

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unreasonable, irresponsible and irrational. It undermines the prospects of peace and places the world on the dangerous path.

These acts of aggression and retaliation stand in clear violation of international law, eroding the very principles that govern relations between nations.

We further note with grave concern the United Nations Security Council. The institution charged with the primary responsibility for international peace and security has once again been rendered structurally incapable for decisive action. The veto architecture of the Security Council as presently constituted allows powerful states to shield themselves and their allies from accountability.

This is not merely a procedural failure; it is a crisis of global governance that South Africa is a multilateralist, hon Minister of International Relations, must seek to reform with urgency.

Our call is that we must silence the guns. Firstly, there must be an immediate cessation of hostilities. Secondly, all parties must return to serious diplomatic engagement under the auspices

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of the United Nations. And thirdly, they must be renewed international commitment to regional stability and collective security of the Middle East. And lastly, there must be a consistent and principled defence of international law and the protection of civilian life.

Whilst we call for peace abroad, we must now turn our focus here at home. Conflicts of this magnitude inevitably have consequences far beyond their immediate theatres. South Africa is not an island, and as an active participant of the global economy, events beyond our borders and continents inevitably have an impact on us today, in today's interconnected world. We are not immune.

We remain concerned by trade and oil disruptions due to the blockade of the Strait of Hormuz. Moreover, as economic analysts indicate, the country's vulnerability to fuel supply will be most exposed as never before.

Therefore, South Africa must undertake parallel processes for preparedness and reflection. We must be ready for what lies ahead.

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Concretely, this means the IFP is calling on the Ministers of Finance, Trade, Industry and Competition and the Minister of Mineral and Petroleum Resources to commission urgent fiscal impact assessments, examining South Africa's exposure to a sustained oil price shock, including its knock-on effects on the fuel levy, transport costs and food prices.

We further call on Electricity Commission, Eskom, and the national energy regulator to assess the implications for our already strained energy system. And we call again on the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition to identify strategic routes and supply chains that may be disrupted and begin contingency planning accordingly.

I wanted to say more, but to this new hon member of the MK - you were the ones who issued a statement welcoming Donald Trump as the President of the United States. Secondly, it was you, asked uMsholozzi, what happened to Gaddafi. We must ask you ...

IsiZulu:

... sinishaye nanaba kwaNongoma. Nanaba nathi thwi.

English:

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... want to stage here and to seek to insult us ... [Inaudible.]

...

IsiZulu:

... phela wena ngoba ufuna udumo, uyilungu elisha. Uyaphapha la, uyabheda la. Sizokushaya unabe. Le nto oyikhulumayo ayikho, iyabheda yimbudane. Uyisikhulumi esingazi lutho. Indaba yakho udumo ... [Ubuwelewele.] ... ongazi lutho.

English:

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Hon Hendricks ... hon members, hon members, hon members ... hon Hendricks, can you please take a seat. Hon members, the way you were so shouting, even if you would raise a point of order, I wouldn't have heard what the Deputy Minister might have said. The way you were so shouting. Can you please, please ...

IsiZulu:

Asehliseni umoya. Akukho lutho olungalungile. Asehliseni nje amaphaphu.

English:

And we continue with the business of the day.

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Ms N M MHLONGO: House Chairperson, on a point of order: we are pleading with you to be consistent in applying their rules. Because the Deputy Minister is a member from the IFP, your party, you allow him to go beyond his allocated time. You don't reprimand him like you have done with me. You keep quiet as he sits down. He continued screaming and screaming way beyond the time. Please call him to order so that we may be able to respect the rulings that ... [Inaudible.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Hon Mhlongo, first and foremost, you don't have the privilege of seeing time. We do here. Secondly, I called out the Deputy Minister when he was leaving because the time had expired. I did call out. So, what you are saying is definitely out of order.

Mr S G MWALI: House Chairperson, on a point of order: unfortunately, the Deputy Minister ...

IsiZulu:

... usehleli phansi kodwa uthe laphaya esiteji ilungu lethu yisilima esingazi lutho.

English:

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That is unparliamentary and ...

IsiZulu:

Siyacela ukuthi awahoxise lawo mazwi bese uyaxoliswa kulungu lethu elihloniphekile. Ngiyabonga.

English:

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majazi): Hon member, this is what he was saying. You see, it's exactly the issue that I was addressing, that when you howl, I can't hear, as the presiding officer sitting here. So, I will ask if the Deputy Minister did say that. But now I've afforded the time to hon Hendricks. And hon Hendricks will speak because you did not raise the point of order while he was at the podium.

Mr E HENDRICKS: House Chairperson, Members of Parliament, let me just take this opportunity first, to congratulate the fastest growing party and that is the PA for their win in Ward 7, Dr Beyers Naudé, Graaff-Reinet.

The PA rise to address the hard economic realities that are landing on our doorsteps, following the recent escalation of hostilities involving the United States, Israel and Iran.

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It presents South Africa with a critical foreign test. Let there be no misunderstanding or emotions. Our moral compass is straight. The PA has and remains unequivocal in its believe in a two-state solution. We believe in the right of the people of Israel to live within secure, recognized borders and we equally believe in the rights of the people of Palestine to have dignity, self-determination and their own sovereign state.

We are against killings of civilians on all sides, whether in Gaza, Tel Aviv or Tehran. We believe in coexistence. However, why we debate foreign policies? A more immediate crisis is ... [Inaudible.] ... towards our shores, one of fuel, food and financial stability.

Let me just put some facts on the table. South African ... [Inaudible.] ... data reveals a stark imbalance between economic realities and diplomatic posture. South Africa trades approximately 430 to 450 million, annually, with Israel, while total trade with Iran is roughly 12 million. This means South Africa's trades nearly 30 times more with Israel than with Iran. Yet South Africa has signed more bilateral cooperation agreement with Iran than with Israel.

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Just an *exempli gratia* e.g. around nine agreements with Iran, four agreements with Israel. This suggests foreign policy approach that prioritize ideological positioning over economic outcomes.

The conflict in the middle east is no longer a testing geopolitical issue we observe from afar. It is a domestic economic crisis in the making. As we speak, all facilities in the United Arab Emirates, UAE, have been set ablaze by drone strikes and global shipping lanes are paralyzed.

The result - brent crude oil has surged past \$100 a barrel for the first time since 2022 and here is where South Africa's vulnerabilities is exposed. In the past two weeks alone, we have seen rand weakening significantly. The benchmark ...

[Inaudible.] ... government bond yield has been seen its worst sale of since the pandemic, spiking to over 8,8%, according to Modelling by EY Parthenon.

If this conflict persist for six months or more, the rand could tumble to nearly six rand sixty-three cent to the dollar. And our economy ... [Inaudible.] ... as much as 40 billion. That is not a statistic. That is jobs, that is livelihoods. That is the

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erosion of the little disposable income our people are left with.

Hon members, food inflation is not an abstract economic indicator. It is the difference between a family having three meals or one meal. Thank you. [Time expired.]

Ms M P KOBE: House Chair, as the US-Israeli war with Iran enters its fourth week, a proverb comes to mind, 'when elephants fight, it is the grass that suffers'. Today, we are witnessing the devastating consequences of this escalating conflict, and as always, it is the innocent civilians who pay the ultimate price for this violence. The Action SA firmly believes in the rule of law. As South Africa is a signatory to the Charter of the United Nations, we call on all parties to immediately return to the negotiating table to prevent further loss of life, the displacement of civilians, and the destruction of critical infrastructure. While bombs are falling thousands of kilometres away, the impact and consequences are already being felt here at home in the pockets of South Africans.

The disruption of global oil supply, particularly through the strategic Strait of Hormuz, has sent shock waves through the

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energy markets. Oil prices rising 40%, and with them, the cost of living will inevitably follow. What does this mean for our people? It means the following: Petrol and diesel prices will skyrocket, a domestic worker in Khayelitsha will pay more just to get to work, the cost of transporting goods will rise, farmers already on the strain will pay more to produce food, and ultimately, every South African in this place will pay more at the till. This will act as a handbrake on an already limping economy, leaving millions trapped in poverty, unemployment, under the watchful eye of the Government of National Unity, GNU.

When a global crisis strikes, a capable and caring government acts decisively to cushion its people from its shock. Instead, what we are witnessing is a familiar pattern and a paralysis under the GNU in the face of a crisis. As Action SA, we believe that there are immediate practical steps that must be taken. Firstly, our government must implement the temporary levy relief to shield customers from extreme price shocks. This was done during the onset of the Russia-Ukraine War, and it can be done again. Further to this, we cannot allow fuel price gouging by opportunistic actors who may seek to exploit this crisis, much like what we saw during the COVID 19 pandemic, where bad faith actors sought to profit from the crisis.

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Second to this, we must urgently accelerate energy diversification. Our overreliance on imported fuel leaves South Africans dangerously exposed to geopolitical instability. Investment in alternative energy and local refining capacity must move beyond rhetoric. South Africans need a government that acts, and if this government cannot act, then South Africans must answer the simple question: How much more must South Africans pay for this inaction? I thank you very much, Madam House Chair.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Hon Meshoe. Hon members, can we please afford an opportunity to hon Meshoe.

Rev K R J MESHOE: House Chairperson, King Solomon in Proverbs 18:21 said: "Life and death are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruit". For about 47 years, Ayatollah Khomeini and his supporters have chanted, "Death to America" and "Death to Israel". They also threatened to raze Israeli cities and wipe Israel off the map of the world. As a nuclear-capable country, this clearly makes Iran an existential threat to them. We know that on 7 October 2023, Hamas attacked Israel and massacred more than 1 200 people, most of whom are innocent children. In October 2024, Iran itself launched

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hundreds of ballistic missiles, and it is reported that it was the largest missile attack in human history against a small country that is just the size of Kruger National Park. House Chairperson ... [Interjections.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Hon Meshoe, can you please take your seat. Hon Mhlongo, what are you rising on?

Ms N M MHLONGO: House Chair, the hon Meshoe, uMfundisi [the Reverend], is misleading the House; he is really misleading the House, and we are allowing him to do that. Hamas was defending itself; it was self-defence. Now, he has never said anything about it, Chairperson.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Hon Mhlongo, you are out of order. That is a point of debate; it is. Hon Meshoe.

Rev K R J MESHOE: The ACDB supports and ... [Interjections.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Hon Meshoe, can you please take your seat again? Hon Mahlaule.

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Mr M G MAHLAULE: I am waiting for the pastor to sit down. House Chair, is the speaker on the podium willing to take a question?

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Hon Meshoe, are you willing to take a question?

Rev K R J MESHOE: [Inaudible.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): He is saying, after he has finished speaking.

Rev K R J MESHOE: I said, the ACDP supports the Bill ...
[Interjections.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Hon Meshoe, can you take a seat again. Hon Douglas.

Mr W M DOUGLAS: Hon Chair, I just want to say that, according to the Rules, it says you cannot mislead the House. Iran is not a nuclear power ... [Interjections.]

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The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majazi): Hon Douglas, you are out of order. That is not a point of order, and I know that you know that. Yes. Hon Meshoe, please proceed.

Rev K R J MESHOE: The ACDP supports and believes in the right to freedom of speech. However, even our Constitution limits those rights. We strongly condemn Israel's calls for death and destruction and clearly seek to incite violence and destruction upon other countries. We appeal to the international community, particularly the UN, to seek a ban on Iran's provocative, hateful rhetoric of "Death to America" and "Death to Israel". We also urge the South African government to consider banning provocative speech that glorifies violence and destruction in our country, such as, 'Kill the Boer, kill the Farmer'.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majazi): Hon Meshoe, can you take a seat. Hon Deputy Minister, what is the point of order?

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF WOMEN, YOUTH AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES: House Chair, I would like to check if hon Meshoe can take a question?

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The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Hon Meshoe, can you take a question?

Rev K R J MESHOE: [Inaudible.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): After he is done. Hon Mhlongo and hon members, as well, you can't always raise point of orders, which are point of debates. I am giving you a fair opportunity for you to raise your point of orders. But now, I think I will refer to the Rules, so that when a member stands, you must then say which Rule are you rising on. Hon Mhlongo.

IsiZulu:

Nk N M MHLONGO: Ngiyabonga, Sihlalo.

English:

I rise on a point of order, Chair.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): You are rising on which Rule?

Ms N M MHLONGO: On Rule 92. Now, can I proceed, House Chair?

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Yes, proceed.

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Ms N M MHLONGO: Firstly, hon Meshoe is misleading the House.

There is a Constitutional Court judgment on 'Kill the Boer, Kill the Farmer'. That it is not hate speech. It is acceptable in South Africa. So, he can't mislead the House and say...

[Interjections.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Hon Mhlongo.

Ms N M MHLONGO: Under which Rule, Chairperson?

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Hon Mhlongo, that is a point of debate. Hon Swart.

Mr S N SWART: Hon Chair, I rise on Rule 92 ... [Interjections.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Hon Swart, can I use my discretion and ask you to sit, because we can't hear you, so that you get closer to the mic, yes.

Mr S N SWART: I rise on Rule 92(9), and I would submit that the members are disrupting proceedings by raising points of order that do not comply with this Rule. Therefore, I ask that you

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rule in that regard, that these spurious points of order are not permitted, so that the speaker at the podium, the leader of the ACDP, can continue and complete his speech. Secondly, I would also ask you that the speaker, the President of the ACDP, has already indicated that he will take questions if he has time at the end. So, any person that will ask whether he'll take a question is wasting the time of the House. Thank you.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Hon Swart, I think I have addressed those issues. Can we please continue with the debate, and we allow hon Meshoe to continue with his debate. We should only raise issues or orders that relate to the Rules, and nothing that is not of a debate. Thank you. Hon Meshoe.

Rev K R J MESHOE: Farms and farmers are a vital part of food security in our country. Therefore, they must all be preserved and respected. Ayatollah, obviously, with their workers. Ayatollah Khomeini, who proudly chanted, "Death to America" and "Death to Israel", is now no more. Let us learn from the lesson of the power of the tongue. Be careful what you say with your tongue.

An HON MEMBER: [Inaudible.]

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The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Hon Deputy Minister of Communications, you can't just open your mic without being recognised.

Rev K R J MESHOE: Let us learn from the lesson of the power of tongue, and let us choose to speak life, and not death; let us choose to speak of hope, and not hopelessness; let us choose to speak love, and not hatred and let us choose to speak peace, and not the revolution. The ACDP believes that South Africa's foreign policy must be guided by ... [Interjections.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Hon Meshoe, can you please take your seat. Hon Deputy Minister, what is the point of order? I hope you will point out as well, the Rule that you are rising on.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES: Chairperson, is the member preaching hope when he is celebrating death of humane? Is he preaching hope?

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Hon Deputy Minister, that is not a point of order, please. Hon Meshoe, please continue.

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Rev K R J MESHOE: The ACDP believes that South Africa's foreign policy must be guided by present day realities, constitutional values and national interests, not historical and sentiment. Hon members, we have an opportunity to help build and not destroy. Let us not put petrol when the fire is already raging. Let us use our time to build ... [Interjections.] God bless. [Time expired.]

Mr N L S KWANKWA: House Chairperson, *As-salaamu-alai-kum*. [Peace be with you]. We speak here at a moment history will remember. The war between Iran and the alliance of the United States of America and Israel is not a mere dispute, it is a deliberate attack on a nation's sovereignty, a test of whether the world will uphold justice or bow to brute force that shows no respect for a rule-based system and international law.

Unlike the US and Israel which openly supported apartheid, Iran stood by us in our darkest hours. No, we will not abandon them in their time of need. No, we will not surrender what dignity and independence to US imperialism, even when they entice us with trade and aid.

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As the manifesto of uMkhonto weSizwe, the former military wing of the ANC declares, the time comes in the life of any nation when there remain only two choices: submit or fight.

Today, Iran faces that choice not by desire, but because it has been cornered by unprovoked aggression. One thing is clear, though. Iran has demonstrated significant military capability and capacity to defend itself which challenges the image of unquestioned US military superiority, clearly demonstrating that even the most powerful nations are not beyond contestation. Iran's resilience reminds us that strength is not absolute, and that determined nations can resist ensuring that the powerful do not impose their will on the less powerful.

The architects of this aggression Donald J Trump and Benjamin Netanyahu must answer for decisions that cause death, destruction and displacement on a massive scale. They must face accountability before the International Criminal Court. Anything less is a stain on humanity.

Needless to say, war destroys lives, families are torn apart, economies collapse and infrastructure crumbles. Generations are robbed of education, opportunity and safety. History is

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unanimous, wars do not solve problems, but they deepen them. They create cycles of hatred and instability that far outlast political calculation.

Yes, Iran must be condemned for its human rights abuses, but we must equally condemn the US and Israel militarism and refuse to be fooled by the Western propaganda. What is the solution? Dialogue, more dialogue! As true leadership is measured not by the bombs you drop, but by the conflicts you prevent. To the people of Iran, in the face of intimidation and violence resilience is your greatest weapon. Stand firm, stand united. The strength of the people united in defence of their sovereignty is more powerful than any army and more enduring than any empire.

Arabic:

As-salaamu-alai-kum. [Peace be with you]. "Shukran" [Thank you].

Xitsonga:

Tat S M GANA: Mutshamaxitulu..

English:

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... hon members and fellow South Africans, we live in dangerous times, times in which the US President acting without the authority of the United Nations or even his own Congress may decide on a whim to invade another country. Such unilateralism does not enhance global security. It undermines it. It fuels instability, provokes retaliation and risks triggering both conventional and nuclear arm races. The world becomes less safe, not more.

We must therefore be unequivocal. We condemn this needless war of aggression. It represents a grave violation of international law and long-standing global norms, including the unacceptable targeting of heads of state. Thousands of lives have already been lost. The entire populations across the Middle East now live in fear and uncertainty. This is not only unjust, but also wrong and it must be called out as such.

But this conflict is not distant from us. Its consequences are already reaching our shores. The price of diesel is projected to rise sharply by as much as R8 per litre placing enormous strain on households and businesses. I hope those who celebrate this war can explain this to South Africans next week. Fertilizer costs will follow driving up food prices and deepening hunger in

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a country already grappling with inequality and poverty. This war is not abstract. It is economic pain that will be felt by many South Africans.

In this context, four national imperatives arise. Firstly, South Africans must actively support international efforts to de-escalate this conflict. No ordinary citizen benefits from war. Only political extremists in the US and Israel benefit. Secondly, we must urgently secure alternative supply chains for critical energy resources and goods. We must also confront a hard truth. As long as reckless leadership prevails in major powers, global instability will persist. Thirdly, the Minister of Finance must present to Parliament a revised economic outlook in this Budget cycle, enabling us to reassess spending priorities to shield our people from external shocks. Finally, we must strengthen our defence and security capabilities. The world has changed. We need a modern, well-equipped force capable of responding to emerging threats. South Africa cannot afford complacency. The ripple effect of global instability will reach us whether we are prepared or not. Let us choose preparedness. We must be prepared.

Xitsonga:

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Ndza khensa, Mutshamaxitulu.

Mrs N L HLAZO-WEBSTER: House Chair, having listened to this debate thus far, it's been concerning that the House has chosen to take sides in global conflicts. We've even seen some mudslinging against one another rather than focusing on the subject of this debate, which is about protecting South Africans. We've heard this House pulling in two directions, one ideological and the other moralistic. But not any of them is rooted in the immediate reality that faces South Africans today. That's the first.

Secondly, this debate exposes a deeper challenge, that is, lack of coherence at the centre of the government of national unity, GNU, itself. The truth is that South Africans cannot afford the division that we have seen amongst the GNU at a time of crisis. They need clarity, they need consistency and they need leadership that is focused on their reality.

To be fair, we heard from government by Minister Parks Tau an outline of the areas where South Africa must strengthen its position, that is, from energy, trade to logistics. This is important. But the real test of leadership in crisis is not in

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long-term plans alone, it is in how we respond to the immediate pressure that South Africans face today.

I wish to reiterate what this debate is about. It is about the safety and security of South Africans who are in the Middle East and wish to return home. It is about upholding human rights equally and consistently across the globe. It is about acting to mitigate against the harsh economic consequences that a conflict like this can impose on people in our country. These consequences are not abstract. They are not theoretical. They're felt at a petrol pump, they are felt at a taxi rank and they are felt at the till at a supermarket.

The Middle East conflict will inflate oil prices. There's a predicted R4,00 a litre fuel increase next month, which will cost approximately R200 more to fill an average car tank. Taxi fares will increase. The price of bread will go up. Small businesses will be forced to cut jobs or close doors altogether. That is the impact that South Africans will feel. The general fuel levy alone now stands at R4,15 per litre. South Africans are already being punished by global events, and they shouldn't then be punished by their own government. We won't join those who reduce this moment to an ideological fight. We won't be

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satisfied with plans that don't translate into relief. That's why I want to reiterate the call by the sponsor of this debate, Dr Mmusi Maimane, for this House to reject the 21 cents per litre fuel levy increase that is set to come on 1 April.

Lastly, we cannot be anybody's proxy, and we cannot be anybody's project. We cannot be answerable to global power blocks. Who must we answer to as the people of South Africa? Thank you.

Mr V ZUNGULA: House Chair, the Middle East has endured decades of instability due to foreign interests and geopolitical tensions. The recent military actions involving the United States, US, and Israel in Iran, which have resulted in the tragic loss of civilian lives including 168 school children, must be approached with the utmost seriousness.

Any loss of innocent life is unacceptable and those responsible must be held accountable. We must condemn actions which violate international law. The war in Iran is Israel and the United States undermining Iran's sovereignty in pursuit of political outcomes aligned with their own interests.

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This sets a dangerous precedent in international relations. At the centre of this matter is the need to protect a fundamental principle, which is the respect for international law, particularly sovereignty and territorial integrity of states. These principles, enshrined in the United Nations, UN, Charter must apply equally across all nations, regardless of power and influence.

There are legitimate concerns globally about the justification for the US and Israel attack on Iran, including whether there was an imminent threat that warranted such force. These concerns go to the heart of the rules-based international order.

Notably, the resignation of a senior US Counter-Terrorism official, Joe Kent, has brought further scrutiny to this issue, as he publicly stated that Iran posed no imminent threat and questioned the motivations behind the war.

As this conflict continues, South Africa must consistently position itself as a nation committed to multilateralism, peaceful conflict resolution and the rule of law. And as such, we cannot be selective in our application of these principles,

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regardless of trade relations. Where international law is undermined, we must speak with clarity and consistency.

It is clear we are operating in an increasingly volatile global environment where misinformation and security threats are becoming more pronounced.

South Africa has already been subjected to misleading claims and propaganda about a so-called genocide of white people and violent land grabs which distort reality and threatens our sovereignty. We must remain vigilant in safeguarding our own sovereignty and national security.

South Africa cannot continue to speak sovereignty while failing to defend it in practice. We must remain principled in foreign policy and pragmatic in our domestic preparedness. Thank you.

[Applause.]

Ms M MODISE-MPYA: House Chair, the DA's schizophrenics left this country and ran to the USA, United States of America, claiming persecution. [Applause.] They are now returning. Not because their narrative has been proven correct, but because it has been proven to be incorrect and misleading the world.

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We are meeting at a moment of profound sorrow and growing uncertainty in our world. As the ANC our thoughts and deepest condolences are with the countless civilians, families and communities who have lost their loved ones in the devastating conflicts that continue to unfold across the globe, including the rapidly escalating war in the Middle East involving Israel, the United States of America and Iran.

Behind every headline about missiles, airstrikes and retaliation, lies a far more painful reality. It is the reality of grieving mothers bearing their children, of families forced to flee their homes in search of safety, of communities watching their futures crumble under the weight of war. These human tragedies remind us that the true cost of conflict is always paid by ordinary people whose lives are torn apart by violence.

Across the world we are witnessing a deeply troubling escalation of conflicts, from the Democratic Republic of Congo, DRC, to Ukraine, from Sudan to Afghanistan and now with the intensified armed conflicts in the Middle East.

Geopolitical tensions are rising at a pace that should concern all humanity. Its new escalation brings the international

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community closer to the wider confrontations and deeper instability.

It is, therefore, imperative that the international community recommit itself to the values of diplomacy, respect for sovereignty and the peaceful resolutions of disputes, principles that must remain essential for safeguarding both regional and global stability.

Developments in the Middle East represent a particularly serious moment in international affairs. Escalations between powerful states in such a volatile region carry consequences that extend far beyond national borders. They threaten regional stability, disrupt global economic systems, as we are currently witnessing with the developments in the Strait of Hormuz.

House Chair, another defining feature of modern conflict is that information itself has become a weapon of war. Across digital platforms and global networks we are witnessing the deliberate production of circulation of disinformation designed to mislead societies. They manufacture consent and deepen divisions. These are not accidental distortions, but they are coordinated narratives that serve political and ideological agendas.

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South Africa itself has been a target of such campaigns, including the false and dangerous narratives of the so-called white genocide. This claim has been refuted and has no basis in facts. It is aimed at undermining our constitutional democracy. It undermines our transformational agenda and sows racial divisions in our society. South Africa has not collapsed into a fiction that they sell to the world. It has remained a constitutional democracy grounded in non-racialism and the rule of law.

The same forces of misinformation are often mobilised to discredit progressive policies of redress, including the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment, BBEE. The BBEE is not an instrument of exclusion but a necessary tool for correcting the structural injustices of our past and advancing inclusive economic participation.

Those who attack the BBEE today must be honest with the people of South Africa. They are not opposing the injustices, they are opposing its correction. You cannot defend the benefits of a historically unequal system ... [Applause.] ... and at the same time claim to stand for fairness. To equate transformation with discrimination is to distort history and ignore the lived

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realities of millions who were systematically excluded from the economy. [Applause.]

As leaders, we, therefore, carry a responsibility not to engage global developments with clarity, but to defend the truth, to protect democratic discourse and to ensure that public debate in our country is grounded in facts, not in fear of fabrications.

Hon members, South Africa's approach to international relations is also shaped by our historical experiences. During the struggle against apartheid the ANC built powerful networks of solidarity across the world. Many nations and movements supported South Africa in our quest for freedom and justice. It is precisely this history that guides our posture in this debate.

Our voice as a nation must, therefore, be consistent. We cannot call for solidarity when it suits us and remain silent when others face devastation. [Applause.]

We will not be lectured on justice by those who distort our domestic realities while remaining silent on global injustices.

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Solidarity is not selective, it is principled and it demands consistency both at home and abroad.

The United Nations Charter emphasises respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity and the peaceful settlement of disputes. When these principles are undermined, the consequences extend far beyond a single region.

As Africans we understand deeply the value of constructive dialogue and the protection of vulnerability.

House Chair, we as a nation, will not be neutral in the face of injustice and we will not be pressured or bullied to abandon our principles. [Applause.] We stand where we have always stood, on the side of peace, on the side of the people and on the side of justice; and that position is not up for negotiation.

[Applause.]

Let us all put aside our party colours and unite in defence of our sovereignty. Our freedom cannot be complete whilst others in the world are not free, and true freedom requires respecting the rights of others. I thank you. [Applause.] [Interjections.]

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Mr I ISMAIL-MOOSA: Mayibuye! [Let it come back] Universal greetings of peace ...

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majazi): Yes, I have recognised you.

Mr I ISMAIL-MOOSA: Universal greetings of peace and blessings in the name of the Almighty, the most gracious and the most merciful. However, can we say that the USA and Israel is most merciful and gracious? You will all agree with me that they are not merciful and gracious. I can prove this, because the case in the *International Court of Justice*, ICJ, has ... ruled ... What have they ruled? They have clearly ruled that the USA and Israel have been guilty of genocide.

We as parliamentarians must admit this. We take this very seriously and we respect the rule of law ... of the ICJ's rulings, although it cannot be effected immediately and it's a failure in terms of seeing what the USA and Israel are doing presently.

So, on this note, let me make it known that mercy and grace is totally absent from the USA and Israel, and I can prove this. I can demonstrate it by the fact that, despite the ICJ's rulings

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and despite the principle of the right to life, the right to life ... human life is not preserved. This is highly disappointing when we see the atrocities and aggression by the USA and Israel.

Yesterday, I attended a session here at the Castle of Good Hope which was organised by the commendable Cape Town Ulama Board. The ambassador of Iran was present and he made it clear there is a well-forgotten fact that Iran is in West Asia and not in the Middle East. He further indicated that dialogue ... was never truly sincere in its efforts to ensure peace, stability and dialogue.

Let us face the reality that the USA and Israel are clear aggressors and in total violation of international law in terms of their conduct and their behaviour.

Now, who started this aggression? Was it not Israel and the USA that first bombed Iran? This is what is important, this is factual and this is truthful. They have compromised world sovereignty ... of each country.

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Now, let me demonstrate who the perpetrators and the aggressors who violate the principles of a simple law, the right to life, are.

That principle which one of our hon members mentioned, that was hypocritical, and that made mention about idiots, is false and untruthful. A typical textbook case is what is actually being conducted by the USA and Israel ... the continuous killing of innocent women and children's lives at the expense of power, dominance, enrichment of resources.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Hon Ismail-Moosa, your time has expired.

Mr I ISMAIL-MOOSA: Thank you. Malibongwe ...

HON MEMBERS: Malibongwe!

Mr I ISMAIL-MOOSA: ... to all the innocent lives of women and children!

IsiZulu:

ILUNGU ELIHLONIPHEKILE: Hhayi wena!

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English:

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majosi): I will now recognise hon Mulder.

Dr C P MULDER: Hon Chairperson, I think this is a very important debate and I think it's very important that we discuss this issue today. However, I also think it's perhaps necessary for us to go back to the topic of the debate for today which is supposed to be the escalating crisis in the Middle East following the recent attack by the USA on Iran and the implications this has on South Africa. I think we should understand and focus on the implications for South Africa in this process.

During the debate it's ... quite clear that there are very strong views on both sides of the House, and colleagues and parties feel very strongly and very emotional about this. I understand that and I want to start off by thanking the hon member from the ANC who spoke just now. She spoke the truth when she said that from the ANC's position this is a question of solidarity in terms of networks that were formed a long, long time ago. I think that's very honest, I think that's very true and I think we must respect that.

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However, the question then would be is that the way that we should implement our international relations now? I think that is the question. I understand where it comes from and I respect that ... the network of solidarity that you referred to.

The problem is that, whether we like it or not, the world has been changing very dramatically, and I would argue that we need to act in the best interest of South Africa. What is the best that we can achieve for our own country during this crisis? Then one realises that Iran is important, but not because it's a big trading partner of South Africa. It's not amongst the first top 30 of our trading partners. It's below that. It's very important in terms of ideological support and in terms of ideological solidarity, and I understand that, but it's not about ... a trading partner.

We have to understand, whether we like it or not, that the United States is a very strong continental power with huge energy resources, that the United States has a huge industrial depth, it can secure sea lanes, it protects its allies, it sanctions adversaries and it dominates airspace. The irony is that even during this war, they have not lost one single plane of theirs and one must take note of that. They have not lost one

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single plane of theirs ... [Interjections.] You know better. That's good to know. They have not lost one, despite the fact that they were assisted with the best anti-aircraft missiles and technology from the Soviet Union, from Russia and from China. We must take note of that.

The fact is that the United States is a reality. They are there, they are a very strong reality in South Africa, and we all understand that they are acting in terms of what is in their interests. We must ask ourselves whether we can ...

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Hon Mulder, can you please take a seat? Hon Deputy Minister, what's your point of order?

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF WOMEN, YOUTH AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES: Why does it sound like the USA is speaking?

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): No, hon Deputy Minister, no, that is out of order. Can you please continue, hon Mulder?

Dr C P MULDER: If you have nothing to contribute, please keep quiet. [Interjections.] Hon Chair? Hon Chair?

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An HON MEMBER: Shut up!

Dr C P MULDER: No, no, no!

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majazi): Hon Mulder, please take a seat. Hon Skosana. [Interjections.]

Mr G J SKOSANA: Hon House Chair, I'm rising on Rule 84. I think the hon member at the podium has used unparliamentary language in saying the hon Deputy Minister must keep quiet. That's unparliamentary. [Interjections.]

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF WOMEN, YOUTH AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES: You're threatening me.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majazi): Hon Skosana, your point of order is not sustained. It would have been sustained if the hon member had said to the Deputy Minister, shut up. But to say keep quiet is not ... you can't say it is unparliamentary.

Hon Mahlaule?

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Mr M G MAHLAULE: Chair, your ruling is fine, but we come from a history where, when somebody behaves like a baas [boss], poking you when he speaks to you, it traumatises us. He's doing that there at the podium. He's very aggressive towards our people, towards the Deputy Minister. He's very aggressive as if it's in the apartheid era ... [Inaudible.] ... we are traumatised by that. Please protect us, hon Chairperson.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majazi): Hon Mahlaule, thank you. Hon Mulder, can we please not use our hands when we speak? Maybe we only use words when we speak.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF WOMEN, YOUTH AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES: No, he's threatening me.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majazi): Thank you. Hon Deputy Minister, I want us to continue with the debate.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES:
Hon member, did you prepare your speech with Rob Hersov?
[Inaudible.] ... prepare your speech with Rob Hersov?

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The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Hon Deputy Minister. Hon Gungubele, that is not a point of order, please. Hon Mulder, please continue.

Dr C P MULDER: Hon Chair, I'm going to leave my speech and I will direct myself to the colleagues from the ANC. I'm very amazed about the reaction. Why this sensitivity? Why this absolute sensitivity when we talk about what the effect of the conflict is on our country? Why so sensitive? Could it be ... No, I'm asking a question. Could it be that it's all about ... [Interjections.] ...

An HON MEMBER: ... [Interjections.] ... we will respond.

Dr C P MULDER: ... ideological networks of support and has nothing to do ...

An HON MEMBER: No, we want to respond to you.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Hon member, can you please take a seat? Hon Mahlaule?

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Mr M G MAHLAULE: Chair, it's very wrong to say we are sensitive because you are talking about America. We are sensitive because you are misleading the House. You even know how many ...

[Inaudible.] ... of Iran are put down. You are misleading the House. Nobody ... [Inaudible.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majazi): Hon Mahlaule, that's ... [Inaudible.] ... Hon member, no. Hon member? Hon Mahlaule? Hon Mahlaule, please. Can we continue? That is a point of debate, not a point of order. Continue, hon Mulder.

An HON MEMBER: No, he can't.

Dr C P MULDER: Hon Chairperson, I honestly believe that we should use this opportunity to act in the best interest of our country and to deal with these issues in terms of what's in the best interest for us. We cannot build our positions in terms of solidarity networks that are outdated and no longer relevant. I really believe that we should act in the best interest of the country, and my apologies if I made you feel very uncomfortable. Thank you.

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The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majosi): Hon Mulder, your time has expired.

An HON MEMBER: You must address the House. Don't address the ANC.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR (Ms J Nemadzinga-Tshabalala): No, we will respond to you, my guy.

Dr L W MAHLATSI: Chairperson ...

Sesotho:

... kgotso, Maafrica ...

English:

... unity Maafrica [Africans]

We rise today to confront a dangerous and familiar pattern, one where powerful nations act without restraint, violate sovereignty and leave the poorest of the world to bear the consequences.

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We strongly condemn the action of the United States, US, and Israel in the Middle East. The recent military aggression against Iran is not about peace and stability, it's about power. It undermines the international law and sends a message that some nations are above accountability. No country has the right to violate the sovereignty of another, and this is not new.

The world has seen similar conduct in Cuba ... [Inaudible.] ... that has brought to punish the nation that chooses its own path.

Today, it is Iran facing military escalation but the principle remains the same, domination over dialogue.

While this conflict unfolds far from our borders, the impact is felt directly at home in Azania. When war disrupts global oil supply, fuel prices rise; when petrol and diesel increase, it is not the rich who suffer the most, it is the poorest. The workers who commute daily, the small businesses struggling to survive, the farmers to produce food, the families already battling with basic needs. This is a harsh reality. Wars fought by powerful nations are paid for by poor in developing countries.

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Hon members, Maafrika, sovereignty must be respected, aggression must be rejected, global power must be held accountable. Azania and the African continent must stand firm for peace, for justice and for protection of the most vulnerable, from the river to the sea.

Xitsonga:

Khanimambo!

Setswana:

Rre S O R MAHUMAPELO: E re ke go dumedise, motl Modulasetilo. Ke dumedisa le seboka sa batlotlegi mo Ntlong mo letsatsing la gompieno.

English:

Hon members, when the people of South Africa gathered in 1955 to adopt the Freedom Charter they did so because they were not schizophrenic, they did so because they were not stupid. When they gathered there in Kliptown they said in one voice that there shall be peace and friendship. I'm saying so because sometimes it is important to provide context, that context comes from the Freedom Charter.

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When the United Nations, UN, in 1966, adopted Resolution 2202, declaring apartheid a crime against humanity, it did so because the United Nations knew that this is a culmination of the struggle of the people of South Africa who are not schizophrenic nor stupid.

The United Nations agreed with the people of South Africa because South Africa was not alone in that struggle against apartheid colonialism. South Africa's struggle was supported by our allies all over the world and those allies that supported our revolution were supporting it because they were not schizophrenic and idiotic.

Now, hon members, to pretend to honour those who fell fighting against the apartheid system is not only stupid and schizophrenic, but it's an extended chronic and incurable dunderheadedness embedded in the psychology of white supremacy. [Applause.] [Interjections.] I think I must repeat this. To pretend to honour those who fell fighting against the apartheid system is not only stupid and schizophrenic, but it's an extended chronic and incurable dunderheadedness embedded in the psychology of white supremacy. [Applause.] [Interjections.]

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The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Hon Mahumapelo, please take a seat.

Hon Zungula, what is your point of order?

Mr V ZUNGULA: Chair, I did not hear the hon member's last point, can he please repeat! [Interjections.] [Applause.]

An HON MEMBER: Listen properly. Listen properly ...

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Even if he would do so, he knows that it will be eating on his time. [Interjections.]

Mr S O R MAHUMAPELO: Hon House Chair, if you give me more time, I will do that.

Hon members, we are here today because of one small but very big problem, the United States of America, USA, sent two people to go and negotiate with Iran in as far as the matter of nuclear energy is concerned. These people, one of them ...

Setswana:

... ke mogwe wa ga ...

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English:

... President Donald Trump, his name is Jared Kushner. The second one, who is creating problems for us is Steven Witkoff, who is the envoy of the President of the United States of America.

The similarity between the two guys, which has put us where we are today, is because they are not atomic experts and science experts, both of them are experts in property development. That is why they could not comprehend, they could not understand the discussions that were taking place with Iran in as far as the matters of enrichment of atomic energy is concerned, which was done through the knowledge of the United Nations.

Fast forward, the US and Israel, despite the fact that Olan Sundry accepted that negotiations were going well with Iran, from nowhere they attacked Iran and that is why we are here where we are today.

Hon members, it is important to distil truth from facts.

Hon Maimane, because you started the debate, it is important to distil truth from facts. And one of the truths which must be

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separated from facts is that the United States of America believes that might is right. And you come here, you run away from the truth because you chase the facts. And South Africa must kowtow under the dictates of the United States of America because of its mightiness of its economy.

We are a sovereign state and the challenges that we face as South Africans, be the economic or otherwise, we will use our collective wisdom of working together to overcome those particular challenges. [Applause.]

The reason why the people of South Africa will be coming together on Saturday on Human Rights Day to march in Johannesburg, they are doing so because they want to appreciate and they will continue to do so, appreciate and honour the struggle that culminated in the liberation of South Africa in 1994.

Now, beneficiaries of apartheid colonialism like hon Smith, who comes here and is confused as to whether he's a beneficiary of a reasonable decision by the ANC to have a Government of National Unity, GNU, or not ... [Laughter.] ... he's also confused by the fact that he doesn't know the lifespan of the GNU and therefore,

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he wants to abuse the platform to the extent that, that GNU will still be in existence.

Now, hon Smith, please know that South Africa is a sovereign state, no matter the mighty force of the United States working with Israel, we will not retreat on defending our sovereignty. [Applause.] Please know that our principle of believing in multilateralism is a principle that no power on earth will make us shift from it. You must know, hon Smith, that you are a beneficiary of the struggle of black people and Africans who sacrificed their life for you to stand up here and speak without you being arrested by the police. [Applause.] [Interjections.] You know no sacrifice of the struggle, that is why ...

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majosi): Hon Mahumapelo, can you please take a seat.

Hon Michalakis! [Interjections.]

Hon members, hon members, hon members!

The CHIEF WHIP OF THE SECOND LARGEST MINORITY PARTY: House Chairperson, I stand on Rule 85 and I want to submit to you that

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the speaker at the podium has taken it a bit too far when he indicated that hon Smith would have, under certain circumstances, been arrested. With respect ... [Interjections.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majazi): Hon members, please, I can't hear the point of order. Can we please stop shouting!

The CHIEF WHIP OF THE SECOND LARGEST MINORITY PARTY: ... with respect, House Chairperson, if the member at the podium has any proof of hon Smith having committed a crime, he must bring a substantive motion. There is no proof of hon Smith having committed a crime ...

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majazi): Hon Michalakis, I didn't catch that. You said the member on the podium said what?

The CHIEF WHIP OF THE SECOND LARGEST MINORITY PARTY: The member at the podium took it a little too far when he indicated that under certain circumstances ... [Interjections.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majazi): Hon members, hon members, no!

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The CHIEF WHIP OF THE SECOND LARGEST MINORITY PARTY: House Chairperson, may I please make my point?

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Yes, please!

The CHIEF WHIP OF THE SECOND LARGEST MINORITY PARTY: House Chairperson, the member at the podium took it too far when he indicated that hon Smith, under certain circumstances, would have been arrested ... [Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: [Inaudible.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Racist? [Interjections.] Okay.

The CHIEF WHIP OF THE SECOND LARGEST MINORITY PARTY: ... implying that hon Smith has committed some form of a crime.

Now, if the member at the podium has any proof of hon Smith having committed a crime, he must bring substantive motion.

[Interjections.] However, not doing so casts aspersions on his character and implies that he is a criminal.

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I would like you to please go to the Hansard and rule on this matter ... [Interjections.] ... because it does violate Rule 85.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): No, I didn't hear the hon member say that, so, we'll have to consult Hansard first and come back with a ruling.

Mr S O R MAHUMAPELO: I can repeat it, we don't need Hansard.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Hon Mahumapelo, please take a seat ... [Interjections.]

Mr S O R MAHUMAPELO: I was just saying I can repeat it ...

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): ...are you ... hon Mahlaule, are you fine? I saw your hand up!

Mr S O R MAHUMAPELO: ... we don't need Hansard, so, I can repeat it!

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Hon ... no ... there's a hand of hon Skosana.

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Hon Skosana!

Mr G J SKOSANA: Chair, I wanted to clarify that it's a point of debate. Hon Mahumapelo was explaining that if it was still under apartheid, hon Smith wouldn't have spoken the way he did, he would have been arrested. So, it's a point of debate, Chair.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majazi): Okay. Thank you very much, hon Skosana. But hon Mahumapelo is willing to even repeat it.

[Applause.]

Mr S O R MAHUMAPELO: In simple terms, hon presiding officer, what is bequeathed to people like hon Smith, here today, is a consequence of the struggle and the sacrifices of black people.

[Applause.] So, context is important if you can't comprehend what I was saying earlier on.

Hon members, South Africa will continue to participate in the United Nations. It will continue to influence those who are in the United Nations Security Council, UNSC, to make sure that conflicts of the world are resolved through peaceful means, to make sure that in the context of building a better Africa and a better world we continue to engage with global forces of the

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south, to make sure that future generations can inherit from humanity that exists here today, a better Africa and a better world.

Setswana:

Ke a leboga, Modulasetilo. [Legofi.]

Mr C HATTINGH: Hon Chair, regarding the debate about implications for South Africa, South Africa's foreign policy is built on the principle of non-alignment: the commitment to act independently, uphold constitutional values, and engage globally without being drawn into competing power blocks. That is our stated position, repeatedly. But the question is whether our actions, especially in defence diplomacy, align with that position. We must ask whether non-alignment has become a label, a very convenient label, concealing a pattern of selective alignment because foreign policy is not judged by slogans. It is judged by conduct. And that conduct is becoming very difficult to explain.

Let us start with Cuba. Under Operation Thusano and its successor, Project Kgala, the Department of Defence entrenched a costly Cuba-linked relationship, repeatedly flagged for

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procurement failures, weak controls, and poor value for money. Irregular expenditure stands at R1,7 billion with no consequence management. Reports revealed open-ended contracts, weak records, poor justification, and clear evidence that these services could have been sourced locally at far lower costs while creating jobs for South Africans.

The issue is not whether South Africa may co-operate with Cuba. The issue is why these arrangements persist despite repeated findings of noncompliance year after year, with impunity and without any consequence. That is not non-alignment; that is preferential indulgence. Now consider Iran. In July 2025, the chief of the SA National Defence Force, SANDF, visited Iran and the reports attributed political remarks to him suggesting solidarity and shared purpose with Iran.

The Presidency distanced itself, and the Department of International Relations and Co-operation reaffirmed that foreign policy is determined by Cabinet and exercised under civilian authority, not by the military. That alone was very damaging because what the most senior SANDF officer appears to freelance politically in Tehran, the world does not see disciplined non-

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alignment. It sees drift; it sees confusion, and it sees weakened civilian control.

Then came Exercise Will for Peace 2026. This is where the issue really moves beyond signalling and into constitutional authority. Head of the exercise, the President, as commander-in-chief of the SANDF, issued a clear instruction that Iran's participation should not proceed. That instruction was communicated, yet Iran participated. The Iranian corvette Iris Nakti took part in the sea phase, and the Iranian Revolutionary Guard, the vassal Shiite Mahdavi, was in Saministan. A board enquiry was announced by the Minister of Defence with a seven-day reporting timeline, but as expected and predicted, nothing happened. Then the President took control of the investigation, removed it from the Minister of Defence, and placed it under the Presidency.

The reason is critical. The investigation is into whether the President's own instruction was ignored or not implemented. This is not diplomatic disagreement. It is a failure of command. When a presidential instruction on a foreign military matter must be investigated by the President himself, we are no longer dealing with foreign policy signalling, we are dealing with a breakdown

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in civilian control. That is exactly the kind of signal that international parties respond to, not explanations, but actions.

Now consider what is happening at the same time in South Africa's military relationship with the United States. The contrast is stark. In 2025, the United States moved to halt military assistance to South Africa, including the collapse of the long-standing International Military Education and Training Programme, the suspension of foreign military financing, and the containment of broader defence co-operation, as well as the US participation in the 2024 Africa Aerospace and Defence Expo that was cancelled. Then Exercise Shared Accord 2025 was cancelled. Shared accords are not a ceremonial exercise. It is part of a long-standing United States-Africa training programme focusing on humanitarian response, peace support, and joint operations.

It is where SANDF has built interoperability, disaster response capability, and international co-ordination. When it was cancelled, South Africa did not lose a photo opportunity - it lost real training, real capability, and a real strategic relationship. So, the trajectory is clear: Military aid halted, training reduced, funding constrained, exercise cancelled, and co-operation declined. This is not neutral drift. It is a

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measurable, consistent downward trend. We now compare the two realities. On the one hand, escalating high-visibility engagement involving Iran, including a presidential authority itself is under investigation. On the other, a steady collapse of military co-operation with the United States. It is not balanced non-alignment. It represents divergence, and it comes at a price.

The United States remains one of South Africa's most important export markets and investment partners. When defence diplomacy becomes unbalanced, the consequences do not remain within the military sphere. They spill into trade, investment, tariffs, market confidence, and jobs. So, we should stop treating non-alignment as though it answers everything it does not. Real non-alignment is not a slogan, it's discipline. It requires balance, it requires control, and it requires credibility.

When presidential instructions are not implemented, when defence signalling clusters in one direction, and when key partnerships decline, then non-alignment is no longer a strategy, it becomes a contradiction. South Africa will not be judged by what it claims, it will be judged by what it does. When a country's

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actions contradict its claims, it does not choose its alignment. Its alignment is chosen for it. I thank you, Chair.

The MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND COOPERATION: House Chair, yesterday, we received the sad news of the passing of one of our finest diplomat and the lawyer, Nicholas Haysom - a patriot who dedicated his life to the birth of a united, non-racial and the non-sexist South Africa. We mourn him not only as a great patriot, but also as an internationalist who served the cause of peace and justice with distinction across our continent and the world over.

I had the distinct honour of working with him in South Sudan. His commitment to democracy and Africa's quest to silence the guns was never in doubt. He leaves an indelible mark on multilateral institutions at a time when they are under unprecedented strain. On behalf of the South African government, I hereby convey a message of condolences to his family and loved ones.

Hon Smith stood here and accused the Government of National Unity, GNU, of which the DA is part, of cherry-picking on human rights. Our answer is simple. Hon Smith and hon Hattingh,

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history offers no record of a people being liberated by bombs falling from the sky, by chemical weapons poisoning their environment or by war destroying their future. Not in Vietnam. Not in Afghanistan. Not in Iraq and not in Libya, certainly not in Iran. [Applause.]

Our response to the situation in Iran has been consistent. Let me remind you what of government has done, the GNU, which the DA is part of:

We supported the rights to peaceful protest, freedom of expression and freedom of association as a universal rights that must be upheld for the people of Iran [Applause.] We supported calls for an independent inquiry into human rights violations by all sides not only one side. And we have made it clear that sustainable peace can only come through solutions that centre dialogue and respect the agency of the Iranian people.

Your straw-man argument, where you denounce the GNU's foreign policy as one-eyed and unconstitutional. You have also repeatedly claimed that this foreign policy will alienate South Africa from the democratic world. But you are wrong.

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Country after country has joined South Africa's case before the International Court of Justice on Israel's violation of the Genocide Convention. The Netherlands and Iceland are among the latest to do so.

Your predictions, and perhaps even your wishes, of isolation have not come to pass. Nineteen members of the Group of Twenty, G20, supported our G20 Declaration except the United States, US [Applause.]

And as for this charge of a one-eyed foreign policy, is it not better directed at those who took part in a sponsored trip to Israel in 2025: the DA, the ACDP and others. And as for this, what did they do? You came back and said you saw no apartheid. After you have seen checkpoints, you have seen segregated roads, you have seen brockages You saw humiliation of the Palestinian people, and you saw their hunger. But you come to South Africa and said you saw no genocide, and you saw nothing.

What would Helen Suzman said about this? You accuse us of one-eyed foreign policy, while it is your vision that is blinkered. When you refused to see what was perfectly obvious in front of your eyes. Therefore, who is a hypocrite? Is the

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hypocrite the one who stand on a principle on a side of human rights of side of non-alignment or is the one whose got one-sided policy? [Applause.] The verdict is clear; the DA is the hypocrite!

Standing at this podium, peddling discredited and unproven conspiracies from think tanks in Washington is cheap political point scoring, hon Smith. [Applause.]

Hon Mulder, the ANC's foreign policy is not anti-America, but it is anti-imperialist - a call to respect our sovereignty in line with article 2 of the United Nation's Charter.

Geopolitics and geo-economics have become intertwined - with trade, technology, finance, food security, energy security and climate policy all being used as instruments of strategic competition.

The blockade of the Strait of Hormuz is a clear demonstration, war is deadly, hon members. The human and the economic cost of war are exactly why our foreign policy calls for the dispute to be settled through peaceful and inclusive dialogue. The principles that guide our approach to conflict have long

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history, and hon Mahumapelo has already quoted eloquently the Freedom Charter in this regard.

When the Freedom Charter was adopted, it was an extraordinary statement by our people who were still shackled under apartheid. And a few weeks earlier, in 1955, in Bandung, Indonesia, the newly independent nations of Asia and Africa came together to affirm the principles of sovereign equality amongst nations, territorial integrity, friendship and peaceful existence. Here the Non-Alignment Movement was born.

To this date, we remain firm behind this principle and we are consistent. Unlike yourselves, we have been very consistent on the sovereign integrity in Ukraine, who have been consistent on sovereign integrity in the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, DRC, who have been consistent on sovereign integrity in Sudan. This is a principled ANC. It is also carried on by the GNU, which the DA is part of.

We have continued to say during this period of a crisis. We called for all parties to cease hostilities and to remain within the bounds of international law. We have also been clear that

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the so-called pre-emptive or ... [Inaudible.] ... self-defence has no basis in international law.

We have also been unequivocal that retaliatory against the gulf countries by Iran violates the UN Charter and risk widening the conflict. Thirdly, we continue to call on all parties to return to the negotiation table through UN-led multilateral processes.

Hon Smith, the woman who marched in 1956, will be very proud of the ANC, to see the ANC condemning the killing of innocent women and the killing of innocent children anywhere in the world [Applause.]

The price that South Africans are paying for continued hostilities in the middle East is too great. Today is almost certain that South Africans will be paying more for transport fare than they did last month, and soon this will lead to food prices increases and so forth.

Meaning the cost of living could once more go high. Just a month after the budget speech have indicated positive indicators for our economy. Thereby undoing some of the good work to reset our economy.

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This is the price of war. It is an ordinary people who pay mostly for it. Eastern and Southern Africa depends on the middle east, particularly the Strait of Hormuz for 75% of their fuel imports and some of the transportation for foods. The impact of the war is already evident. Higher input costs for farmers, higher food prices, rising inflation and shortages of food and other essentials.

We now have a responsibility as the Government of National Unity, which the DA is part of. During a crisis, you don't stand up and throw stones, when you are in government. You show yourself; you say to the people, we know of the forthcoming challenges that you are now going to face. As we have heard from Minister Tau, the Government of National Unity is taking immediate actions to respond to these issues to strengthen policy framework needed to support the greater petroleum exploration. And for a more domestic supply of fuel and energy.

The Upstream Petroleum Resources Development Act was an important step in that direction, and further measures, including reforms in the petroleum products space, are also being advanced.

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It also demands close coordination between the state and industry. The Department of Mineral Resources and Energy, DMRE, is in constant engagement with industry to plan, anticipate risks and secure uninterrupted supply for domestic consumption.

The Department of Trade, Industry and Competition, DTIC, has been tasked to come up with measures to cushion the economy against predatory pricing.

This is what hon Tau has already mentioned, and this is what the Government of National Unity must rise. Mobilize the people of South Africa, as we did during COVID-19, that this moment of crisis calls for all of us, all social actors, private and public sector, to work together to go through these difficulties.

We have done it during COVID-19, we have done it during the July unrest. We have done it during the natural disasters in KwaZulu-Natal, KZN, and in the Eastern Cape. We can again do it now, today in South Africa, and this moment calls upon all of us to work together. To defeat what is coming before us [Applause.]

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We need to use our domestic capabilities. Coal to fuel capability. Gas to fuel capabilities. The biofuel capabilities that as a country we have, and this is what we're mobilizing on that South Africa rise and build on your domestic capability so that you are self-sufficient during this difficult time. It is not a moment for point scoring. Thank you very much. [Applause.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majazi): Thank you very much, hon Minister. That concludes the debate. Hon members you may stand and wait for the presiding officer and the mace to leave the Chamber. That concludes the business of the day. The House adjourned.

The House adjourned at 19:09.