

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

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WEDNESDAY 17 OCTOBER 2024

PROCEEDINGS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

The House met at Nieuwmeester Marquee at 14:01.

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The SPEAKER: Hon members, my apologies. We just had to address the issue of communications it had a glitch or a little problem. I'd like to welcome you back to the House after we've been on our constituency work. I had a welcome party here, even though Bab Radebe is not here, who has invited us.

But this is not the is, the sitting of the House. As Members know that we had promised through the Whipery that we would try and do what is possible to make sure that we can come together and have a full sitting as the House.

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Public Works had indicated to the Whipery that they are busy with the bringing of the dome and whatever that needed to be fixed. Finally, the Minister and his team will ensure that by January next year, the dorm will be here fully fledged and will allow us to continue the work as this House, as our Parliament is being rebuilt.

Hon embers, before we proceed with today's business, I wish to announce that the vacancy which occurred in the National Assembly owing to the loss of membership by Mr R Gouws in terms of Section 47(3)(c) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996, has been filled by the nomination of Ms F Mbiko with effect from 7 October 2024.10.23

The member has made a subscribe and subscribed to the oath with the Speaker and I would like to welcome Mme Mbiko as the member of the National Assembly. Thank you very much. She is seated there towards the back. Thank you, you may be seated.

Today, as we know is the questions to the President, and this is the only item on our Order Paper. There are supplementary questions on each question. Parties have given an indication of which questions their members wish to pose as supplementary

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questions. Adequate notice was given to parties for this purpose.

The members who will post supplementary questions will be recognised by the Presiding officer in allocating opportunities for supplementary question. The principle of fairness, among others, has been applied. When all the supplementary questions have been answered by the President, we will proceed to the next question on the Question Paper. The first question has been asked by the hon SOR Mahumapelo. The question is about the need for the urgent reform of the United Nations Security Council to include African representation and the measures to ensure that this reform is advanced urgently. I'll now invite hon the President to the podium to answer to the question, Hon President.

QUESTIONS - PRESIDENT

(Questions for Oral Reply)

Question 7:

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Hon Speaker, hon members, the reform of the UN Security Council is vital to global efforts to advance peace and stability in the world. South Africa

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participates in the United Nations General Assemblies Intergovernmental negotiations on the Security Council. It does so both in its capacity as a sovereign member state and as a member of the Africa Group.

South Africa maintains that the international political and economic system remains unequal and unjust. It reflects the world as it was more than 70 years ago not as it is today. We therefore continue to call for the urgent reform of the Security Council based on the African common position.

This position which is articulated in the Ezulwini consensus calls for two permanent seats and five non-permanent seats. On the UN Security Council for Africa. It calls for the abolishment of the veto right and prerogative that is currently held by five members. But it also says that for as long as the veto exists, it is a privilege and a prerogative which should be extended to all new permanent members as well.

In this current configuration, the UN Security Council has failed in the execution of its charter mandate, because of narrow national interests that are pursued and the quest for further geopolitical influence. It has not been able in recent years to prevent or to resolve several damaging conflicts

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around the world. This is evident in conflicts currently underway in the Middle East, in the Sudan, in the East, part of the Democratic Republic of Congo and between Russia and Ukraine.

The shortcomings of the UN Security Council have had a disastrous impact on the African continent and the global South which in many ways often experiences the social and economic effects of conflicts that are taking place elsewhere. Geopolitical realities have changed since the UN was established.

Today, African Member states make up quarter of the 193 states that are members of the United Nations, yet not a single African country has a permanent seat at the table where decisions on the maintenance of international peace and security are made.

This is a particular concern when many of the issues on the agenda of the UN Security Council relate to matters on the African continent. South Africa is a strong advocate for tax-based negotiations in the intergovernmental negotiations. During the 79th session of the UN General Assembly. There was an acknowledgement by some of the permanent five Security

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Council members that Africa should indeed be granted two permanent seats. However, there is no clarity as to the issue of the veto.

It is significant that there is also a recognition by some permanent members that text based negotiations are necessary to move the reform debate forward. South Africa was amongst those UN member states. That successfully advocated for the recently adopted pact for the future to commit to urgently reform the Security Council.

South Africa will remain an ardent voice for the urgent reform of the UN Security Council and the needs to correct the historical injustices committed against our beloved continent. I thank you.

Mr M S MOELA: Considering South Africa's upcoming G20 Presidency, what specific strategies will our administration implement to prioritise the reform of global governance institution, ensuring they are more representative and inclusive of Africa in particular and the global South in general? Thank you.

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The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Hon Speaker, we as the incoming President of the G20, have selected a theme that talks to solidarity, equality and sustainable development. Embedded in this theme is really the equal treatment of all nations in the world. And particularly the equal treatment for our continent, which has for the longest time been excluded from key positions where decisions affecting the world are made. So we will be arguing and putting forward very strong views, which hopefully will be adopted in the declaration that we will put forward to the G20, that the reform of the UN Security Council, and indeed various other global institutions, should take into account the views of those countries that have been excluded for the longest time in participating meaningfully in such structures.

Our G20 process will be aimed at promoting the interests of our continent as well as the global South. We see this G20 which will be held for the very first time in Africa as a great platform for us as South Africa to promote the interests of our continent and the global South as well.

So the issue of representativity in global institutions is going to be quite prominent. We rather please, Madam Speaker, that what we have been advocating for years now in various

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platforms around the world is beginning to gain traction. And we are hoping that with a further push, at forthcoming events or summits, such as the one that we will be going to next week in Russia, the BRICS summit followed by the G20 in Brazil, we will advance the argument for the representation of those countries that have been excluded.

So, the G20 for us is going to be a key moment and it's a moment that we would like to mobilise our nation around so that our nation, all formations in our nation, should see the G20 as being a national project, having national interest and objectives so that we are able to advance indeed the interests of our continent and the global South. Thank you, Madam Speaker

Ms E L POWELL: Mr President, the DA acknowledges the importance of Africa securing permanent representation on the UN Security Council as the continent of the future. However, the recent democratic backslide across several African countries is deeply concerning. This includes rigged elections in Zimbabwe and the continued detention of pro democracy activists in countries like Tanzania, Zimbabwe and Angola.

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Many governments on our continent seem indifferent to human rights and the principles of the UN Charter. So, should we achieve UN reform? Will South Africa support the candidacy of countries simply because they are African, or will their adherence to the principles of human rights and democracy be a prerequisite for South Africa's support?

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Our support for Africa's representation on the UN Security Council and indeed on many other structures that involve global governance is obviously based on the principles that have been adopted by the UN itself, as well as the principles that have been adopted by the African Union as well as SADC, where our country resides or is located,

So these three organisations, including a few others that we are members of, have adopted principles that speaks to governance, human rights and we also base our approach on our own Constitution that continues to guide us in terms of what we do globally to promote a better world and a better Africa.

So our participation and our argument for Africa to be included clearly is going to be in accordance with those principles and in the end, it is the African Union that is

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going to take their decision as set out in the Ezulwini consensus on which countries should be represented on the UN Security Council.

The Ezulwini consensus was very clear that at the very least, we want 2 representatives and if we get more, of course we will be very pleased. But the decision it's not going to be taken by South Africa, nor will it be taken by a single particular country. It will be taken by the African Union. And it will be taken on the basis of representativity as well as on the basis of capacity. That is what the Ezulwini consensus put forward.

So be rest assured that our position is going to be based on what the African Union decides. As you may well know, we are not the only country that is represented on the African Union. We are just but one of the many countries on our continent, much as our voice is quite vocal, so are many other countries voices vocal as well because we are part of a collective. We don't act alone. Thank you, honourable Speaker.

Mr V G REDDY: Speaker, I find it very hard and I need you to help me here in believing anything this President says and I'm not the only one. I'm supported by the majority of South

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Africans as well as members of his own party who are deserting the ANC at phenomenal numbers. While his call for the urgent reform of the UN Security Council may sound bold on the international stage, we must ask ourselves how can we trust these promises on this matter when here at home, objective evidence shows that he's consistently failed to deliver on promises to improve the lives of the overwhelming black majority. Under his leadership, the government has defied the progressive posture of his own alliance by accommodating International Monetary Fund and World Bank policies that impose neoliberal austerity on South Africa, ensuring that western capital dominates.

The SPEAKER: Hon members, can you please not debate across the floor? President will answer the question. Order! Allow the President to make his remark whether he answers. How he answers the President has the right to respond to the member. Mr. President.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Honourable speaker, I am struggling in my head. Quite honestly to. Find a thread that from the honourable Members articulation what the question was. And I heard him talk about failure to deliver members of my party leaving my party the IMF and the World Bank

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neoliberal. So, to be quite honest, I I would have liked to answer a clear question and I'm struggling quite frankly.

Question 8:

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Madam Speaker, the main focus of the 79th session of the United Nations General Assembly was the summit of the future? And its key outcome document, the Pact for the Future. The Pact in itself seeks to forge a new global consensus for the global community to protect the needs and interests of present and future generations. And the Pact covers a number of areas critical to the progress of humanity.

Before I continue, let me say that it was a real honour and pleasure for us as South Africa to participate in this debate, a debate and a process that was ably led by Namibia and Germany. It was a proud moment to see a sister country on our continent and in our region leading a process of this nature that resulted in a global agreement that involved a number of people, including heads of government, observers, non-governmental organisations, the organisations of the United Nations system, civil society and a number of other organisations, think tanks and many others.

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This was for a broader push to increase the engagement of diverse actors and the formal summit itself was preceded by another process which Namibia and Germany led in which included, we were told, up to 7000 individuals representing all segments of society. So, the summit process and the Pact were deeply enriched by contributions of millions of voices and thousands of stakeholders from around the world. Yes, we were proud to work alongside Namibia and our representatives were closely involved in the whole process and world leaders representing many countries adopted the Pact for the Future. And the Pact itself is a wide-ranging international agreement that has been in the making for many years, covering entirely new areas as well as issues on which agreement has not been possible over many decades.

The document aims to ensure that international institutions can deliver in the face of what the world is going through right now. As the Secretary General said, which was observed by hon Reverend Meshoe. He said, and I quote:

We cannot create a future fit for our grandchildren with a system built by our grandparents.

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That in many ways encapsulates the key objective of the Pact for the Future. And the Pact covers a broad range of issues, as I said, including peace and security, sustainable development, climate change and the new area, which was debated and agreed upon after lengthy discussions, was the digital corporation, human rights, gender, youth and future generations. All these matters culminated in this Pact of the Future. For us, as South Africa, this spoke to precisely what we stand for, as clearly articulated in our Constitution, and also articulated in the Freedom Charter, a base document that is widely supported also in our country and by a number of political parties that are represented in this Parliament.

On sustainable development, climate change and financing for development, one could say that the entire Pact is designed in a way to speed up the process of implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, SDGs. There was consensus on a detailed agreement ever at the UN on the need to reform the international financial architecture so that it can better represent and serve developing countries, particularly countries in the Global South including giving developing countries or economy countries, as I call them a greater say in how decisions are taken at international financial institutions level. It also included mobilising more financing

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and multilateral development banks, to help developing economic countries to meet their own development needs and reviewing the sovereign debt architecture. All these matters we found as important for the future but also focusing on future generations.

The Digital co-operation Pact is a comprehensive global framework for digital co-operation. And at the heart of the compact is a commitment to design, to use and govern technology and to make sure that technology works for all. And on human rights and gender, the Pact aims to strengthen our work on human rights gender equality, as well as the empowerment of women. For South Africa, the Pact for the future reflects many of the key elements of our international agenda, the effective implementation of the actions contained in the Pact for the Future will make a significant contribution to building a better world and a better Africa. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Rev K R J MESHOE: Thank you, Speaker, and thank you President for your reply. The ACDP believes that godly values such as love, respect, and care for others that our grandparents instilled in us helped to build a solid foundation for our children and grandchildren. These are some of the values that

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have kept African families and cultures intact. The Pact for the Future the is controversial in that it lays the foundation for the UN's new Global Order that will see the transfer of power from sovereign nations to the UN. While some may consider the Pact for the Future a progressive step towards global co-operation, it presents certain dangers and disadvantages that will need careful consideration. Of significant risk is the potential erosion of our national sovereignty.

Mr President, noting all the positive you have stated, my question is whether you can assure this House and all concerned South Africans that you will not support or allow the sovereignty of South Africa to be eroded when the UN's Pact for the Future is implemented?

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Thank you, hon Speaker. When we participated in the various discussions that have been taking place through a number of formations, both on our own continent and in various other organisations in the world, we were, as a country, always aware that we have got to promote our own national interests. Interests that are clearly encapsulated in our Constitution, and interests that are also clearly well-articulated in our Charter at the AU level. In

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doing so, we joined many other countries in the world. And I hope hon Reverend Meshoe will have listened carefully when I described the process that has led to the adoption of this Pact. Because it was thoroughly debated over a number of years, involving at the very last moment, more than 7000 individuals and many countries that finally adopted this, Charter. And I would never believe that any of the countries that participated would have wanted in the end to erode their own sovereignty, they would instead have wanted to strengthen the United Nations, because the through the United Nations, we are stronger. Through the United Nations, we are able to strengthen our own sovereignty. I have never seen the United Nations eroding a country's sovereignty, as the United Nations through the Charter that was adopted, aims to promote all what I would say is good that every country would want to see promoted. So, we participated with a great deal of confidence knowing that in the debates in the exchanges, we are not undermining what we stand for and what our Constitution sets out. Thank you, hon Speaker.

Mr M C MASINA: The Pact for the Future articulates a number of aspirations, as observed by the UN Secretary General ...

[Interjections.] ...

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The SPEAKER: Hon member, please speak closer to the microphone.

HON MEMBERS: Howling.

The SPEAKER: Order. Hon members, allow the member to express himself. Hon Masina, bring the mic closer to you.

Mr M C MASINA: ... The Pact for the Future articulates a number of aspirations, as observed by the UN Secretary General. Mr President, can you please tell South Africa what South Africa posited on the following issues firstly, on the need to reform the international financial architecture so that it can better serve developing countries and on the review of sovereign debt architecture to ensure that developing countries can borrow sustainably to invest in the country's future. Thank you, Speaker.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Hon Speaker, yes, we made our positions very clear when it comes to not only the reform of the United Nations Security Council, but also the reform of the financial institutions, the financial architecture, the various international organisations such as the International

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Monetary Fund, IMF, the World Bank and a number of others that operate at a global level.

We argued and continue to argue that Africa needs to be well represented in such institutions that take decisions that are of global impact. And we have been clear about what we have been putting forward. Hon member Masina might recall that during COVID-19, the issue of the representation of our continent on these institutions, as well as the issue of the sovereign debts, came up very strongly. We were then the Chair of the AU and we led the process of arguing for debt forgiveness for those countries, particularly in the global South that are in deep debt, debt stall or debt stoppage of paying interest that should happen, and that there should also be debt cancellation and debt restructuring. So, we led that process.

We have even addressed important issues that the IMF and the World Bank are dealing with, such as the Social Relief of Distress Grant, SRD, which has been made available to the more developed countries on a large scale, and that this should also be made available to the African continent or the Global South. We have managed to make this process a success to a

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certain extent, but we believe that it has not been successful enough.

So, hon Masina, we continue to argue for debt forgiveness, we argue for that cancellation because the number of countries on our continent are heavily laden with debt, and many of them are having to spend quite a lot of their own resources on security matters, on disasters that befall their own countries due to climate change. We argue that the world's financial institutions should come to the aid of these countries and support them. But above all, we want to be at the table where all these issues are discussed.

So, we continue to advocate for fairness and equality. And as you would have heard in the theme for our Presidency of the G20, we are prioritising the issue of solidarity, that there must be solidarity and the solidarity we are talking about must be inclusive. It must also include issues such as the equal treatment of sovereign debt, which is part of our theme and must lead to equal treatment. We must also be represented as Africans and in all the organisations of the global financial architecture that make decisions that affect many nations.

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Our campaign will not stall. It will even gain momentum now that we have the seat of the G20 President in November, and we have the support of many countries on our continent and in the Global South to continue to argue for these positions, so we will not tyre of continuing to articulate them. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Mr J S MALEMA: Thank you very much, Speaker. Comrade President firstly, I want to thank you for according to comrade Tito an official funeral, because when it comes to us, that side we always struggling. I still struggle with the fact that Peter Mukaba was never accorded a state funeral, and I am happy that you gave to comrade Tito a deserving Special Official Funeral Category 2.

President, we must appreciate the role that you have played when it comes to the International Court of Justice and the fact that South Africa mobilised the international community in support of the Palestinian question. We appreciate that the Pact for the Future has progressive resolutions in relation to Palestine and this Parliament, in line with Pact for the Future, took a resolution that we must close the Israeli Embassy and cut all diplomatic ties with Israel. Till to date, you are so reluctant to implement that decision. And the one

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behind you in the name of the Speaker cannot also explain as to why is that resolution of Parliament, which was taken by the majority of our people here in Parliament, that we must cut the diplomatic ties with Israel and close the Israeli Embassy, because we cannot share territory with murderers, with rapists and people who kidnapped women and kill children and one to erode the Palestinian nation.

So, I am asking you Mr President, what is your reluctance, because that resolution was taken when you were the President of South Africa, committed to the people of Palestine, you must take a practical action like Brazil did. Brazil said the ambassador of Brazil must be withdrawn completely from Brazil. Why are you scared to withdraw our embassy and close the Israeli Embassy in South Africa? [Applause.] - Hon Masina, you do not have to read for that.

The SPEAKER: Order, hon Malema. You can take those matters outside they are not for the House.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Thank you, hon Speaker. Hon Malema,

Sepedi:

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... o be o e tla gabotse, o bolela dilo tše di botse tše o re di dirang. Bjale o nagana gore ...

English:

... we are reluctant, cowardish. This is not the case. The executive has taken note of what the National Assembly has decided, and we have said, as we have been asked, that this matter is being considered and that we also examining the various broad issues in this regard. Our support for the Palestinian cause is irrevocable. And we have expressed that here from time to time, and the various other aspects aimed at putting pressure on Israel to do what is right for the Palestinians are also matters that are under consideration and a number of proposals have been put forward, so be, rest assured, hon Malema, that these are matters that the executive is considering. Being the person you are, you are naturally impatient. You want everything done yesterday. I know that. But it is a matter that is under very active consideration and in due course we will be able to articulate precisely what the executive's response to the National Assembly resolution. Thank you, hon Speaker.

Ms E L POWELL: Thank you, Speaker. Mr President, the Pact for the Future aims to accelerate progress towards achieving the

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Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. Like many nations, South Africa is behind on its targets. The Democratic Alliance's economic justice policy offers a data-driven approach to fast-tracking these goals by shifting away from race-based economic policy. Instead, it proposes prioritising companies that make the greatest socioeconomic input as measured by the SDGs, when competing at equal levels of price and functionality.

Would the executive be open to considering this evidence-based proposal as a pathway towards meeting our SDG commitments, even if it involves rethinking narrow race-based empowerment policies?

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Hon Speaker, I would like to believe that the hon member is clearly aware of what our Constitution says about us as a nation having to redress the imbalances, the inequalities of the past that is clearly articulated in our Constitution. And even the preamble to our Constitution speaks to that. The hon member ascribes what one would say is redressing the imbalances of the past to being raised based empowerment policies. I would say with the greatest respect, when you redress the imbalances of the past and deal with the ugly past that this country was subjected

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to, you have to take demonstrable actions, and our Constitution says some of those must be legislative.

It is clearly set out in our Constitution that we have got to take legislative actions and a whole number of other means and initiatives to ensure that the ugly past that we have come from becomes a short shadow of our past. And through that, yes, there has got to be empowerment, and that empowerment is not only based on the colour of people's skins, but also on things such as regionality where people have originated from. It is also based on gender. The women of our country were forever suppressed, and they lived under poverty and inequality. I then wonder whether by just continuing as normal as it was done in the past, whether we would ever be able to uplift the women of our country, the young people of our country, people that live in rural areas, and indeed the black people of our country. It has become globally well-accepted that you have got to take active steps to deal with a past that holds us back from moving forward to the future, and this is a precept that is clearly articulated in our Constitution. I would not know how one deals with it.

The difference with what we are doing now is what they did in the past. In the past, those who ruled this country were

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blatant racists, they were unashamed, they were unapologetic, they just, on a race basis, suppressed the majority and advanced the interest of a minority. In this country we are advancing the interests of all. And I think it is disingenuous to then say as we advance the interests of all our people from a regional point of view, gender point of view, youth point of view and yes, national group point of view, that in itself works against the development and the attainment of our SDG.

I can say without any equivocation we will not depart from the path that we have embarked upon for empowerment and transformation. That is something that I will put up here clearly because it is in our Constitution. Thank you, hon Speaker.

Question 9:

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: The Executive Members Ethics Act of 1998 provides a legislative basis for the promotion of ethical conduct by all members of the executive. The law makes provision for a code of ethics that prescribes standards and rules in support of open, democratic, and accountable government. The Executive Ethics Code, which was promulgated on 28 July 2000, says that members must, to the satisfaction of the President or Premier, perform their duties and exercise

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their powers diligently and honestly. It requires that they act in all respects in a manner that is consistent with the integrity of their office.

Among other things, the code says that members may not use their position to enrich themselves or improperly benefit any other person. They may not expose themselves to any situation involving the risk of a conflict between their official responsibilities and their private interests. To promote transparency as well as accountability, every member must disclose to the Secretary of Cabinet on an annual basis their financial interests and those of their spouses, permanent companions, or dependant children. To provide an additional layer of assurance, the act requires the public protector to be in a position to investigate any alleged breach of the code of ethics on receipt of a complaint by the President or a Member of Parliament. This establishes what I would call a robust mechanism for ensuring that members of the executive adhere to the code and that they generally uphold the ethical standards that are required or expected of them. I have made it clear to the members of the executive that I appointed on 30 July 2024 that they are expected to meet the standards established by the Executive Ethics Code and to uphold the oath that we all took and that they should abide by the oath.

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This is what we expect of every member of the executive. I thank you, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr President. The supplementary questions come from Adv G Brettedbach.

Adv G BREYTENBACH: Thank you, hon Speaker, and good afternoon, Mr President. Given that this matter raises serious questions about the integrity of the Minister's financial dealings ...

The SPEAKER: Hon member, we cannot hear you.

Adv G BREYTENBACH: May I sit down?

The SPEAKER: We can hear you now.

Adv G BREYTENBACH: Given that this matter raises serious questions about the integrity of the Minister's financial dealings and the glaring conflict of interest on the part of the Minister, with the startling contradictions in the dodgy loan agreement illustrated by the fact that the Financial Sector Conduct Authority yesterday debarred and fined the Minister's financial adviser for his part in the VBS debacle, will the President remove the Minister and make the findings

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of this review public to uphold transparency and accountability in government? I thank you.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Thank you, hon Speaker. I did say, and with the active participation of the Minister that I have requested the Minister to submit to me a report on exactly what has happened. That document report has been submitted together with various annexures, and that is a matter that I am giving consideration to. Thank you, hon Speaker. Thank you, hon Van Rooyen.

Setswana:

Rre D D VAN ROOYEN: A re leboge Mmusakgotla.

English:

Mr President, as the MK party, we take it as a common cause that in order for you to objectively handle the matter concerning Minister Simelane, you will effectively require that law enforcement agencies should act in a consistent and impartial manner in their interpretation and application of the law. But we all know that reality dictates otherwise. For example, the National Prosecuting Authority, NPA, itself, as our prosecuting authority, is not without its own blemishes.

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The Centre for Development and Enterprise just recently on its report on the 1st of this month, lamented what it characterises as a dismal record when it comes to initiating prosecutions and securing convictions. The centre says there are rogue elements and obstructiveness in NPA. The straightforward question, Mr President, is that: Can the President take this House into confidence on how your government of the DA-led coalition will ensure that the state ... [Time expired.] ... are not used for spurious reasons? I thank you.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Thank you, hon Speaker. I thought I heard the member say something about the government of the DA-led. What we have is a Government of National Unity ... [Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Order, hon members. I am sure you would want to hear your answer. Hon President?

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: It looks like I have pressed a very painful button. [Interjections.] What we have is a government of national unity in which 10 political parties that are represented here participate, as well as some others

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participate in a Parliament of national unity. I can assure the hon member that there is just no way ...

Mr J S MALEMA: On a point of order, Speaker. On a point of order.

The SPEAKER: Yes. Thank you very much, hon member. Sorry, I didn't see you. Hon Malema?

Mr J S MALEMA: I think the President is deliberately misleading the House. There is no Parliament of national unity. There is no such a thing. [Interjections.]

The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member. Mr President?

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Thank you, hon Speaker. There are parties that are not represented in the Government of National Unity that are working together with those parties that are part of the Government of National Unity. However, one describes them is obviously open for discussion or debate. What I wanted to assure the hon member on is that there is just no intention, no action whatsoever that will be taken in the executive that I lead to utilise state institutions against members or anyone. Those institutions are institutions

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that we hold in the highest regard. They've been granted the independence by our Constitution, and we let them do their work without any fear, favour, or any prejudice.

I had occasion to meet with a number of these institutions, together with a number of members of the executive, to deal primarily with their logistical issues, their organisational matters, but I took time to thank them for the work they do. I also gave them the full assurance that we respect their independence, and we want to urge them and strengthen them in their resolve to be independent, to act without any favour and without any prejudice. That I repeated ad nauseam to them, and it is out of adhering to the precepts of our Constitution that we need to do that. We will, hon member, continue to do precisely that, and not seek to use any of the arms of the state to take actions against any citizen in South Africa, and those institutions must act independently, on their own, to do their work, whether it's investigating, whether it's prosecutorial or whether they have to do anything that will advance the interests of the people of South Africa. Thank you, hon Speaker.

Mr N Z BUTHELEZI: Thank you, hon Speaker. Hon President, since the conclusion of the Commission of Enquiry into State

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Capture, there has been little to deter the ongoing association between corruption and public office. A key reason for this is sadly the failure to prosecute many of those implicated. As the first citizen of the country, it is crucial that you set a strong precedent by unequivocally condemning unethical leadership as it robs our people of the opportunity to live in a corruption-free South Africa. Can the hon President, as Head of the Cabinet and Head of State, reassure the nation by explaining how he has addressed this issue in a way that will prevent similar incidents in the future? I thank you, hon Speaker.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Hon Speaker, I have said repeatedly that one of the objectives that we have embarked upon to deal firmly with the period that we went through of state capture is to ensure that institutions are strengthened once again. Many of our institutions had become weak and they had been weakened deliberately. We have sought and continue to do so to strengthen them by ensuring that they have their independence, reassuring them for that matter, and that they should act in accordance with the law, and they should act without favour or prejudice, as I was saying earlier.

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Those who have been referred to in various reports, especially the report on state capture, will in the end have to be dealt with by the various institutions whose job and whose function is to either investigate these matters or to act upon them. The day the President gets involved in identifying certain people to be investigated, to be prosecuted, and to be judged - as I have often said even in the previous Parliament, that is the day we have to run for the hills.

The function of the President is, amongst other things, to strengthen those institutions so that they do their work independently. This, hon members, I will continue repeating, notwithstanding various suspicions that may fly around - suspicions that may even suggest that the President did this, or the Deputy President also did this, and both of us. As we sit at the head of the executive, will never be involved in such activities. We will allow the institutions of our nation to do their work and to give the assurance once again.

Whatever name has been mentioned in the State Capture Commission Report will be dealt with, and will be looked at by those institutions whose job is to do precisely that. By strengthening those institutions and by establishing others that can strengthen our democracy, I do believe that it puts

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South Africa on a much stronger and firmer footing where the rule of law, our democracy becomes stronger and not susceptible to the whims of any individual who may want to take action against certain people that he may like or may not like. That is precisely where we stand as an executive, and that is precisely where I also stand firmly as the President of the Republic. Thank you, hon Speaker.

Mr T K S LETLAPE: Thank you, Madam Speaker and good afternoon, Mr President. We are considered honourable and as such need to be guided by ethics and operate way above the requirements of law, guided by our responsibilities and not our rights. What will it take for the President to allow the Minister of Justice a leave of absence, to clear the cloud that surrounds her and give the President as much time to consider the matter, whilst preserving the sanctity of the Office of the Minister of Justice - to give those of us awaiting justice reason to have hope and faith in the justice system and that the dignity of the Justice Minister be preserved? Thank you, hon Speaker.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Thank you, hon Speaker, and hon Dr Letlape. It will take giving the President the time and opportunity to consider this matter so that finality can then

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be reached. Therefore, hon Dr Letlape, that is precisely what one has been saying. I may have been thought to be saying it glibly when I said I need time and space to be able to do so and I would like to repeat that yes, this matter is under consideration. Thank you very much.

Question 10:

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Hon Speaker, in its first 100 days, the government of national unity, GNU, has indeed proven its value and its worth to the country and its people. The GNU, as we have come to call it, has effectively managed what I would call a smooth transition, from the sixth to the seventh democratic administration. It has ensured stability and continuity. It has promoted inclusivity. Importantly, it has brought together a broad spectrum of political parties to work together to advance shared principles, and also, to pursue a common program of action to address the challenges that confront our nation.

It is significant, hon Speaker, that the GNU has not only agreed on the priority actions outlined in the Opening of Parliament Address on 18 July 2024 but has already made progress in undertaking a number of these actions. Building on the work of the previous administration, the GNU has worked

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with social partners to stabilise the country in a number of ways when it comes, for instance, to one of our recurring challenges and problems, which was electricity supply, and also to improve the performance of our logistics and our ports.

It has introduced a number of other initiatives, such as new visa regulations, to attract skills to our country. However, more importantly, it has generated a lot of interest in our country when it comes to investment and tourism. This morning, I spent time with key players in the auto sector. The auto sector contributes about 5,3% to our GDP and employs close to half-a-million people in its own manufacturing base of cars, trucks and buses, ride down to components. Nearly everyone who spoke at that occasion, which was led by Minister Parks Tau and the MEC for Transport, I think from here in the Western Cape.

Everyone spoke very positively about the climate that is prevailing in our country, the interest that investors, both locally and internationally, are having in the future prospects of economic growth in our country. Work is underway across government, to improve the prospects of inclusive growth, to create employment and training opportunities for

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young people, to improve the quality of health and education, to tackle crime and corruption and to also provide social support to those South Africans most in need. This is what I think we can say.

The government of national unity is yielding. The work of the government of national unity has been positively received by South Africans who are feeling much more confident about the direction that the country is taking now. There is also a marked improvement in sentiment amongst investors and various actors in a number of sectors of the industry or the economy. Whether the GNU approach can and should be extended to other spheres of government is, hon Mulder, a matter that the political parties need to discuss amongst themselves.

The experience of the government of national unity has, to date, been encouraging and also instructive. As a country and as political parties, we should see what lessons can be drawn and if there are other circumstances in which we can apply, precisely, the practice or the lessons that we are drawing from the government of national unity. We should all recall that in the end, the government of national unity was not an instruction from one person. It was a coming together of various political parties by themselves to finally agree on

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the statement of intent and common principles, with a view of taking our country forward.

So, I would, in the end, say it behoves on various political parties having the will, the determination to work together, to take whatever sphere of government forward to address the challenges that our country faces. I thank you, hon Speaker.

[Applause.]

Dr C P MULDER: Thank you, House Chair. Thank you, Mr President, for your comprehensive response. In your first newsletter from your desk, after the formation of your election on 24 June 2024, you wrote the following and I quote, "The success of the GNU will be measured by the extent to which we are prepared to focus, not on who will govern, but on how we will govern together."

As you correctly pointed out, since the election and the creation of a government of national unity, the rand has strengthened with approximately 7%. The bond market is up with 11%, the JSE main board has come up with 10%, inflation has come down, and so are interest rates. The tourism sector has a very strong recovery and the mood in the country has been lifted. It is also shown that the concept of the government of

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national unity has not been extended to the other spheres of government.

The question, immediately, would be: If it is successful at the national level, why would it not be successful on other levels of government? The question I would like to ask is: Is this something that you would like to see being discussed amongst political parties as a first of point of departure in the new clearing house that has been created within the government of national unity? Thank you, sir.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Yes! Thank you, hon House Chair. The answer to your question, hon Mulder, is yes. The participants from the various ten parties had a meeting of what you call the clearing house. Some call it the technical committee, but I see it correctly as the clearing forum, where matters amongst the 10 political parties are discussed. They had their first meeting, really, after I convened all of them over dinner some weeks ago and they discussed a variety of issues.

So, to put it more in a straightforward manner, I would say yes, it is a matter that should also be discussed in the clearing house or in the clearing forum of the 10 political

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parties. It is a matter that we can never say we should run away from. The government of national unity is working at a national level, and as I was saying in my reply, we should draw lessons for how it is functioning.

In the end, we should be able to say other lessons we can draw from this experience that we are going through now, so as to ensure that we meet the interests of our people. In the end, it is the interest of our people that we should focus on and all those positive indicators that you are speaking of have really also been generated by the government of national unity's idea.

Wherever I go internationally, including on our own continent, people keep saying - heads of government and ordinary members, even in the streets of our country, as I am stopped while I take my morning walks - that this was a very good development for our country. We also took the trouble, hon Mulder, to explain it to the world when we addressed the United Nations General Assembly.

We explained exactly what had happened in South Africa and the direction that the country has taken. The Secretary-General of the United Nations, when we met him, applauded us and said

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that you are once again a shining example for how a country and its various role players can be brought together, to work together. [Applause.] So that is exactly where we are. Thank you, hon House Chair.

Ms D R DIREKO: Thank you, House Chair. Hon President, we have noted the positive outcomes of the 1st 100 days of GNU. So, in future, how is the President going to sustain these working relations in terms of our transformation agenda, the statement of intent and the political mandates from different political parties? Thank you.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Thank you, hon House Chair. I would like to say that there is really no magic to this. The real answer lies in how all the political parties that are part of the government of national unity are committed to working together, but also more importantly, committed to finding solutions to the various areas where they may differ.

As we have said, the government of national unity is made up of ten parties that come from completely different ideological backgrounds, in many instances, with different histories, different experiences and compose of people from different backgrounds and different areas of our country. We have also

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said that we will seek to work together and find solutions for whatever challenge and difficulty that we come across, to find compromises.

Indeed, right from the word go, what the 10 political parties did was to underpin their own coming together by agreeing that whilst we have, for instance, different election manifestos, we will try and find what brings us together - what is common amongst us. More importantly, we will try to determine what is in the interests of the people of South Africa. That is precisely what we believe we should focus on more resolutely.

In doing so, we should then ensure that we handle areas where we differ head on, be able to discuss them and be able to find solutions. Some of us were taught by the great Nelson Mandela that there is no problem without a solution. If we hold on to that, that every problem has a solution lying around somewhere, and we seek that solution, we will be able to find it with a view of moving our country forward. Thank you, hon House Chair.

Mr G MICHALAKIS: Thank you, hon House Chairperson. Mr President, if you acknowledge that the GNU has made wonderful progress, then the only explanation for siding with everyone

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but your GNU partners in Tshwane is that you either cannot or will not take a stand against the Premier of Gauteng and lead your own party. [Applause.] Mr President, which one is it?

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Hon House Chair, without being flippant, I am tempted to say what type of a question is that? But then again, to observe the decorum that I should have here, is that in the end, as I said earlier, the issue of how parties work together really depends on their willingness and determination to embrace one another, to find solutions and to listen to one another. In listening to one another, they should be able to seek solutions. However, in the end it also depends on the chemistry amongst the participants themselves.

I think we should also rely on the key area of the principles that those who are participants should adhere to. So, I will not specifically refer to any of the areas where parties are seeking to work together, be it in Gauteng, KwaZulu=Natal, the Western Cape or wherever. That should be left to the participants, guided by key principles that they should all adhere to. Thank you, hon Chair. [Applause.]

Mr M A MAIMANE: Thank you, House Chairperson and to the President. I think it is an undeniable fact that we are seeing

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some green shoots that emanate from the government of national unit. What I am fascinated by, though, Mr President, is the fact that now, as revealed this weekend, the executive is costing the fiscus in salaries over R600 million. When you add VIP protection, travel, et cetera, this now starts to head towards the billions.

We are now heading towards the Medium-Term Budget Policy Statement, and I would like to ask the President, given that we are cutting teachers, health care workers, frontline services, particularly in education, is the question: Could the President at least commit to cutting the executive, more specifically Deputy Ministers, in order to free up resources for students in South Africa? Thank you.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: The issue of the size of the executive is a matter that has arisen on a number of occasions. When we did finally agree to a government of national unity for the seventh administration, I took the trouble to discuss it with the various leaders of the various political parties, and I did say this is the reality that we now face as we establish the government of national unity, as we seek to engender stability in our country.

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I said that, for some time, we will need to bear the cost to ensure that there is stability, and we move forward with the government of national unity. I have said in the past that yes, we do need to reduce our executive, but this time, due to the exigency of the situation that we face, as well as the circumstances that have been that we are subjected to, we had to come to this point. However, we will keep an eye on the costs on an ongoing basis.

In two weeks or so, the Minister of Finance will be delivering his Medium-Term Policy Budget Statement, and we will then be able to have some light in terms of how the finances of our country will continue being managed. It is a matter that is top of mind for me, hon Maimane. It is not a matter that one is just happy with, because we do need to ensure that every rand is spent advancing the overall interests of our people. However, right now, in setting up the government of national unity, we had to get to this point, but we will keep an eye on the expenditure side of our budget. Thank you, hon Chairperson.

Question 11:

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: To hon Letsie, yes, a number of initiatives are underway and are initiatives that are also

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embarked upon by our criminal justice colleagues in a much more focussed manner. In doing so, quite a bit of progress is being made in a number of areas. Areas that include dealing with a number of syndicates. What has also been established and set up are the various task teams that are aimed at curbing criminality in our country. With all that, we are beginning to see greater progress.

The SA Police Service has adjusted its operational response to the threats that are posed by organised criminal syndicates, in particular with regard to kidnapping for ransom and extortion through various internal initiatives that they have embarked upon. For instance, the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation employs what I would call a project-based approach to the investigation of serious organised crimes.

A dedicated capacity has also been established in the Division: Detective and Forensic Services aimed at coordinating investigations into organised criminality. The Organised Crime Threat Analysis process uses a number of mechanisms to identify existing and emerging organised crime threats. This they use as basis of an appropriate multidisciplinary response.

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Operational command centres at district, provincial and national levels further provide for co-ordination between the SA Police Service, the government departments, a number of other law enforcement agencies including the co-operation of civil society partners. With each kidnapping case, a Special Joint Operations Committee is convened to deal with those actions. This consists of multidisciplinary resources to concentrate on the investigation of the kidnapping case as well as to deal with the safe release of victims.

With regards to the proliferation trends in extortion, a priority committee was established at the national level to address the various types of extortion incidents that have emerged. Six distinct work streams have been established as part of this committee. A committee which consists of also a multidisciplinary group of role players from the SA Police Service and both the public and private security sectors.

The external role-players include the National Prosecuting Authority, the Financial Intelligence Centre, Business Leadership South Africa, Business Unity South Africa and the Consumer Goods Council of South Africa. To identify the SA Police Service members who may be involved in criminal activities, the SA Police Service itself employs specific

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counterintelligence measures in addition to routine integrity testing measures such as vetting, the analysis of financial disclosures, as well as lifestyle audits.

The SA Police Service Crime Intelligence capability is an integral part of the SA Police Service's multidisciplinary approach to addressing organised crimes working in collaboration with various other departments. So, I can say that much as we are facing enormous challenges with regard to criminal incidents such as kidnapping, extortion, and many others, the police service and indeed other multidisciplinary agencies are working very hard to ensure that this scourge of criminality is dealt with and dealt with effectively.

We already see a great deal of progress in a number of areas and successes that are being recorded by the SA Police Service working together with other agencies. It might still be early days but I am convinced that we will continue seeing a great deal of progress. Thank you, hon House Chair.

Mr W T LETSIE: Thank you Mr President for your comprehensive answer. These organised crimes are crippling the economy, there's no doubt. They need all of us to work together. I am

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happy you said that there's collaborative work from different uh ... from different uh ...

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: ... agencies.

Mr W T LETSIE: Thank you, Mr President. Parliament must also play a role, Mr President, using our Police Community Support Officers, PCSOs. However, when we use our PCSOs to have collaborative works with the SA Police Service patrollers and the community at large, some police stations are not responsive. They are not coming forward with certain things that communities are asking for. I heard, Mr President, that you are saying there's progress that has been made in all of these things. However, when will the community start seeing the results of this collaborative work bearing fruits? Thank you very much.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Hon House Chair, I am glad that hon Letsie has spoken about the PCSOs, that immediately suggests that in whatever we do to fight the spate of criminality we need to be focused on community involvement. It is through community involvement which can also be executed or done through community policing forums that we will be able to reduce the incidence of criminality. It is quite often that

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criminals are known in the area where they operate. People who perpetrate various crimes are usually known and they can easily be pointed out by people who live in the community.

It is for this reason that we've sought to ensure that we mobilise community policing forums and we also resource them. I know that resourcing them is a huge task and with our fiscal constraints we have not really been able to layout sufficient resources to enable all of them to do their work.

Nevertheless, where they function well we have found that incidents of criminality do reduce quite significantly. It is so that through our PCSOs, we could be able to empower our communities through the various structures that exist in our communities be they community policing forums, school governing bodies, sports organisations, church organisations and including stokvels wherever they are.

If we engage with them and various structures of our own political parties, we should be able to have eyes on the ground that can help in informing the police and various agencies that are mandated to deal with acts of criminality. So, empowering and mobilising our PCSOs would be something of great help. Thank you, House Chair.

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Mr S S ZIBI: Hon President, the rise of extortions is part of a pattern of intelligence failures from the financing of terrorism abroad from within our country, fake business forums, a military training camp in Mpumalanga and now, these extortions and kidnapping pandemic. They all point to a serious failure of intelligence as we are always reacting. Will we see an overhaul of the national intelligence infrastructure to protect the people and our economy? Thank you.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: We are paying attention to the effectiveness of our intelligence structures be they the State Security Agency, SSA, military intelligence and also the ones in the police on an ongoing basis. The various reports that we received either following what happened to the SSA which was led by Professor Mufamadi in all that happened during the July unrest, those reports spoke to, yes, the weaknesses that are prevalent in some of our agencies.

Those are being attended to on an ongoing basis very actively. Also, through the legislative processes that this House has been involved in and we are proceeding to ensure that we renew, we rebuild, we strengthen, as well as empower our agencies to be able to do their work more effectively. It is a

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process that is underway but I am confident that we will be able to succeed in ensuring that our intelligence agencies do actively give out information which can be acted on to prevent spates of criminality and also ensure that there is greater safety in our country. Thank you, hon House Chair.

Mr D M SKOSANA: Mr President, it would seem that the findings highlighted by the Independent Panel on the July 2021 riots are once more corroborated that your failure to convene the National Security Council where all the intelligence matters are discussed was at the center of a poor and reactive response by the police.

Given the persistent failure of the National Intelligence Agency operating in your office to timeously detect the evil work of an organised criminal syndicate and extortionists as evidenced by the reactive and sometimes surprised police, when was the last time that the National Security Council met? What are the reasons that the National Security Council, NSC, is not meeting regularly?

Mr President, please, protect us as well because some of your members are sleeping here. Again, I just want to say to you

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that the DA-led Helen Zille coalition government they won't get Tshwane. I thank you, Mr President. [Applause.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr C T Frolick): Order, hon members.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Hon House Chair, the question was: When did the National Security Council meet? I am pleased to inform the hon member that it met two days ago. Thank you, hon House Chair. [Applause.]

Ms S G KHOJANE: Hon President, we do note with appreciation the increased number of the arrests. Thanks to the ramping up of intelligence. Nevertheless, it is very concerning that there's still high number of police officers and illegal foreigners that collude with criminal syndicates. Not only is this bringing shame to the badge of the policeman but it also demotivates the hardworking and honest men and women in the police force. It also negatively affects the national integrity because foreign nationals have become comfortable in engaging in activities of criminal acts.

What are the mechanisms and the strategies in the interim to protect communities especially the whistleblowers who have to contact the same police stations that are infiltrated by

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members? Also, how will we monitor the authenticity and the impact of some of the measures that you have mentioned like lifestyle audits so that those who are part of high level investigations at present are not infiltrated by the very same syndicates? Thank you.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: The process of ensuring that we monitor not only the activities of members of syndicates but also the members within the police service or other criminal justice agencies is an ongoing one. It is also being pursued quite vigorously to ensure that we do not see a recurring process where these criminal syndicates have their either moles or people who have been captured in our security services or agencies. It is ongoing and obviously processes like lifestyle audit are reviewed on an ongoing basis. There is close monitoring of those and we are heightening our own alertness through the various arms of the state.

In the end as we make progress which you alluded to right at the beginning that there are higher numbers of arrests and intelligence is showing clear signs of improvement, we will continue in that vein to make sure that in the end they do get on top of these acts of criminality both inside our own ranks, as well as outside. Thank you, hon House Chair.

Question 12:

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: On 13 December 2022, the National Assembly resolved not to refer the report of Section 89 Independent Panel to an inquiry. In doing so, the National Assembly was exercising its powers as well as responsibilities as outlined in the Constitution and in its own Rules.

As of today, investigations conducted by a wide range of independent law enforcement agencies have been finalised. The SA Revenue Service, the SA Reserve Bank, the Public Protector, and the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation have all concluded investigations into the matter. I could say that none of these bodies have found that there was any wrongdoing on my part.

As was my obligation constitutionally and legally, I co-operated with each and every one of these institutions without any form of interference. I answered their questions, provided them with information they required and sought, and where requested, made myself available for interviews.

The decision by the Constitutional Court to dismiss my application for direct access to the court to review the Independent Panel's report was not a determination on the

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substance of my application. It should be noted that the Constitutional Court will hear arguments in November on whether or not this House, in resolving as it did in December 2022, failed to fulfil its obligations under the Constitution.

I have full faith and confidence that the court will decide the issue before it in a comprehensive and final manner. The fight against corruption is a priority of this government and will remain so. We will continue to capacitate, as I've said, law enforcement agencies at the centre of this fight against corruption.

We will support the independence of institutions who must act without fear or favour. I would like to repeat that I will continue to support those agencies. I thank you.

The LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Dr M J Hlophe): Mr President, here is the follow-up question, Sir. The MK Party is deeply concerned that, notwithstanding overwhelming evidence, agencies such as SA Revenue Service, Sars, the SA Reserve Bank, the Hawks, the Public Protector, as well as the National Prosecuting Authority, NPA, the heads of all those agencies are appointed by you, Sir. They have cleared you of wrongdoing.

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This contradicts the findings of an Independent Panel, which was appointed in terms of section 89 and chaired by the ...

[Interjections.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr C T Frolick): Hon members, hon Leader of the Opposition, can you just hold it there please. Hon members, the member who asked the question has two minutes to make an intervention followed by the question. Now if we get these types of interjections, it will not be possible for the President or for myself then, to ultimately hear what the follow-up question is. Can we give the member a fair opportunity please. The hon Leader of the Opposition.

The LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Dr M J Hlophe): Thank you.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr C T Frolick): Order!

The LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Dr M J Hlophe): The panel that was led by retired Chief Justice Ngcobo concluded that there was a case to answer in as much as you violated your oath of office, and you were also implicated in the corruption at Phala Phala farm.

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The question is this Sir, given that in South Africa we transact in rand and the report indicates that dollars were found at Phala Phala. Are you now in a position to finally take this House into confidence and tell us the truth that these transactions had nothing to do with a legitimate business, because you cannot conduct a business whilst you are serving as a President of this country? And also, was the person who cleared you at NPA vetted? Thank you. [Applause.]

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Hon House Chair, hon Hlophe has asked a variety of questions. I did say in my head reply that this matter was dealt with by the National Assembly and the National Assembly took a decision. That decision is now subject to litigation in the Constitutional Court. I would like to respectfully say we should allow that process to unfold and it should be a matter that will be dealt with by that court.

The variety of other questions that the hon member has asked were responded to in a variety of institutions that have dealt with this matter, and also dealt with the issue of either the President was conducting business or not. All those issues were ventilated, and the information has been open to the

public, either through court papers or reports that have been issued.

So, I'd like to submit that these matters have been addressed, responded to and the other matter is subject to litigation in a very open and transparent manner through our judicial system. Thank you, hon House Chair.

Ms T MGWEBA: Hon President, South Africa is a country confronted by the scourge of cancerous corruption that deviates public resources towards patrimonialist interest that undermines inclusive development of our country. Corruption does not sit well for investment mobilisation.

Therefore, hon President, what are the practical steps that our government is taking to support and strengthen law enforcement agencies to uproot corruption? Thank you very much, House Chair.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Hon House Chair, yes, the government is committed not only to support, but to strengthen our law enforcement agencies by ensuring that the right people are appointed. By ensuring that they work in accordance with the rule of law. But also, that the agencies have the

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resources that they require. But more importantly, to assure them and to grant them and give them a clear guarantee that they must work independently, without any fear, favour or prejudice against anyone or from anyone.

In doing so, we ensure that they do the work that they must do and they must do it to the best of their ability. If there are any issues or doubts, those should be able to be followed up through our various processes. We have a number of agencies that enable our commitment to rule of law and to our democracy to function.

One of the good things about our country is that we have institutions. A country that does not have institutions that are functional, has a democracy that is wobbly. In our case, the strengthening of our institutions is something that is prominent in my mind and in the determination of the government, to ensure that there is rule of law and that there is commitment to doing the right things through the various institutions. Thank you, hon Chairperson.

Mr V ZUNGULA: House chair, greetings Mr President, greetings to the hon members and greetings to the progressive caucus. Mr President, you are the first citizen of the country. You are

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the person that should inspire confidence that we have systems of law and order that are independent and justice is blind in our country. Yet, after being implicated in serious breach of the law ...

IsiXhosa:

... akukho chaphaza apha kuwe.

English:

Is that supposed to inspire confidence to South Africans? Are South Africans supposed to believe that everyone is equal before the law, when ordinary citizens are arrested for holding undeclared foreign currency, violation of section 34 of Prevention and Combating of Corrupt Activities, Precca amongst, amongst others, yet the SA Reserve Bank, the NPA and the Sars sees nothing wrong with Phala Phala?

The Independent Panel report Mr President still stands and has not been set aside by any court of law. Not only is it legally binding, but it should be binding to your conscience as well. Mr President the question is: Does it not matter to you that a report penned by a reputable former chief justice found that as prima facie evidence that you violated the Constitution. A Constitution that you did not only ... [Time expired.]

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The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Hon House Chair, thank you hon Zungula. It is the first time I ever heard you extend greetings to me. So, thank you so much. Hon House Chair, I did say that it was the National Assembly which I am not a member of, that took a decision on that report. As we speak now, that report has been challenged or the decision of the National Assembly has been challenged and is now before the highest court in the land.

I do think that that process should be allowed to unfold because as I've often said, we have institutions that are meant to guard our democracy, to ensure that there is rule of law. I do believe that that's precisely what we should do and allow that process to unfold. Thank you, hon House Chair.

Mr J S MALEMA: President, you are aware that we are the ones who have taken this matter on review at the Constitutional Court, because we don't believe that what Parliament did was correct.

Sepedi:

Efela taba ye ke nyakago go le bontšha yona mokgalabje ke gore - le a e bona taba ya go swana le ya meyara wa pele wa Polokwane yeo le rego le ya go e lebelela - ba e nyakišišitše

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a sale meyara la e fetša kua Polokwane. Gonabjale le re le yo e nyakišiša. Ke ANC ye e rego e ya go nyakišiša ...

English:

... is double jeopardy. She dealt with that thing when she was a mayor. There was a President here and Bulelani Ngcuka announced that there is prima facie evidence but not winnable. As we speak today, he is in court.

Sepedi:

Le tsamaya gona kua a tsamailego gona.

English:

Unlike the former mayor of Polokwane.

Sepedi:

Ke ka labaka la eng le sa bereke ditaba tše a sa le ka ofising. Le be le swanetše le tšee maikarabelo, le bitše babegi ba ditaba[media], le dule fase ka gore ga go sa na selo, kamoka ga bona ba rile ga lena selo, ba itsebagatša[declare]. Ke ka lebaka la eng le sa bitše babegi ba ditaba le re hlalose tše gore naa matlakala ale a boithabišo a go tšwa ... [Nako e fedile.] ... a fihlile bjang ka kua

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polaseng ya lena [Tsenoganong.] [Nako e fedile.] Le gore naa ditolara di fihlile bjang ka polaseng.

English:

... not because you are answering any case, but because you are taking the nation into confidence. President Mandela did it. Even on personal matters, President Mandela did that. What ... [Inaudible.] [Time expired.]

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Hon House Chair, thank you.

Sepedi:

Karabo yeo ke e filego, mohl Sello Malema, ke ile ka e bolela gona mo. Ke ile ka bolela botse ka re taba yeo e mo matsogong a Kgorotsheko ya Molaotheo ya naga ye. Ebile taba yeuwe e išitšwe ke lena gona kua. Nna ke be ke kgopela gore le e lese gona mouwe, e swarwe ke bao ba nago le tsebo, bao ba tla lebeledišišago dilo tše kamoka ga tšona. Ke yona ye ke e bolelago - ke e bea mo tafoleng. Ke felela gona moo.

English:

Thank you, hon House Chair.

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The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr C T Frolick): I wish to thank the President for his presence to reply to the questions that were asked. Hon members, that concludes the questions to the President. Thank you.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Can I go home now?

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr C T Frolick): Mr President, that is entirely up to you. [Applause.] Hon members, I now request you to stand and wait for the Chair and the Mace to leave the Chamber. That concludes the business for the day. The House is adjourned.

The House adjourned at 16:03.