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PROCEEDINGS OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES

The Council met at 14:02.

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Hon members, I would like to remind delegates that the rules, in particular subrule 21, 22 and 23 of Rule 103, apply in this sitting.

In accordance with Council Rule 229 subrule 1 there will be no Notices of Motion or Motions Without Notice.

Hon members, before we proceed to Question 1 I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the Ministers from the Peace and Security Cluster, specifically the Minister of Defence and

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Military Veterans, Minister Motshekga, as well as the Minister of Police, Minister Mchunu, and the Deputy Minister in the Presidency: State Security, as well as the Minister who has joined us in today virtually, hon Minister Ntshavheni.

Also, to welcome all the permanent as well as all the MECs and all other special delegates who have joined us in today in this sitting.

I'm also told that the SA Local Government Association, SALGA, representatives are also in the House, they are welcome.

QUESTIONS FOR ORAL REPLY

PEACE AND SECURITY: Cluster 1A

Question 18:

The MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS: Chair, don't ask me how I know that it's your birthday. Happy birthday.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Thank you very much. I really appreciate it.

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The MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS: Chair, let me also acknowledge my colleagues and also acknowledge all members who are here, and thank you very much for the opportunity to come and respond.

Our response is that, indeed, there is a plan by the department to have these consultations with military veterans. They have been planned to start between this year and next year. They are being clustered.

So, we are going to have the first consultation with veterans in Gauteng, North West, Limpopo and Mpumalanga. It's going to happen on the 24 November.

We are also going to have another consultation with them in the Eastern Cape; Port Elizabeth, PE, and East London is in December.

Free State and Northern Cape have been clustered together and then Western Cape.

Indeed, these consultations or these sessions are really aimed at achieving the parliamentary strategic objective to increase

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and to ensure participation, but to increase access and improve the quality of participation through enhanced programmes and involve the military veterans.

These sessions will be in a form of information sharing, the communication of an event sessions within the department will coordinate the sessions and neighbouring provinces will be clubbed together at central venues.

Chair, if I'm not breaking protocol. Can I sit so that I can take down the questions when are being asked? Otherwise, I'm not sure how I'm going to facilitate ...

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Hon Minister, you can proceed with ... as soon as you are done with the first question you can then proceed to the second one, and immediately after that I'll then open it to the House.

The MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS: So that I can proceed to Question 28? Okay.

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The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Have you responded to Question 2?

If you are done with both, I then open it to the House.

There's one ... under Question 18 there's one and two.

The MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS: Chair, the second question wants to know when are we going to finish, and the response is that the department has already registered 2 078 news applications in the military veterans database since the inception, from a total of 17 171 who have applied.

So, the military veterans who have applied to benefit, up to date, are 1 228, which are already been paid.

But as you can see that the 17 000 that have applied, we've only verified 2 000 and we are only able to pay 1 238. So, that's the second part of the question. Thank you, hon Chairperson.

Mr P A PHALA: Minister, I hear that you we are planning to meet the veterans in around November. We are happy about that, that you'll meet them, engage them and deal with their challenges.

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These are the issues which have been worried about and we really need to see you dealing with them and reaching a conclusion. Because here, Minister, we are speaking about people who were involved in the liberation of this country.

So, we would really want to see their issues being dealt with through those engagements. Thank you very much.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Minister, that was more of a comment. I don't know if you want to say something in relation to what has been said by hon Phala.

The MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS: Chair, indeed the issue of military veterans is very important, very desperate, and that's why we are trying to put everything in place to make sure that we can honour them for the work and the contribution they have made by really giving them the basic things that we have promised them as a country.

So, we are treating it with utmost seriousness and with utmost urgency. And we do commit ourselves that we'll do whatever we can within our powers to make right what we have to make right. Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

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Ms H S BOSHOFF: No disrespect to you, Minister, but on behalf of my party, seeing that I'm the first one to stand up and part of the Government of National Unity, GNU, also happy birthday to you.

Minister, you claim that you are having interactions with the veterans and we heard from Mr Phala the dire straits that our veterans are in and it's been on the table for how many years now and nothing seems to be drawn to a point, and yet the Deputy Minister has also had extensive discussions and consultations with these veterans in April 24.

Would you then say that these issues that were raised have been resolved or are they still on the table? Or do you not trust the outcomes of these meetings that you now need to again, in November, meet with them?

Can you see how it frustrates, not just the broader public out there but the military veterans as well? Because every now and again there's a new date, there's a new date, but nothing gets resolved. Thank you, hon Chair.

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The MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS: Hon member, I can assure you that these matters are being attended to. They continue to be on the table, and I agree with you that these are old matters that were supposed to have been dealt with.

But there have been a number of complications that have delayed, also, the resolution of some of the matters especially, for instance, on the database, where the department has covered that erroneously there were people who were on the database who were not supposed to have been there, there are people are supposed to have been there were outside the system.

So, the verification and the cleaning are taking its time. So, to go and interact is to really assure the members of the veterans that we are dealing with matters that they have raised, and on an ongoing basis and explain to them where we are. Because there are also very sensitive steps which have to be taken where people have to be removed. So, we need to engage them so that people don't wake up in the morning and then they are told that we've really come to a conclusion that you should not be on the database. So, it's to really update members, because you're correctly, these are all matters that

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have been there and the pace is also not adequate. And to really keep on informing them and ensuring them and telling them where we are.

So, I admit that it is important that we communicate, but deal speedily, because these matters have long been raised by the veterans and have always been on the table and they need to be dealt with decisively. Thank you, Chair.

Ms M KENNEDY: Minister, we hear you, but we concerned about the slow pace at which the military veterans are receiving their pension benefits.

What is more concerning is that many veterans are elderly, ill and battling with poverty and hunger.

So, what are the reasons for such delays in payments and which timeframes have been put in place to ensure that all veterans are paid? Thank you.

The MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS: Hon member, indeed, we are all equally concerned. As you have correctly

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said, people who have paid the greatest prize for us to be here and even for us to be speaking.

So, it's people that we have to honour and respect at all times, and make sure that indeed we make good. So, your concerns ... we share those concerns, we share those anxieties.

But as I am explaining that from the reports that I've been getting, there have been some difficulties in the process which you can't proceed without sorting. For instance, one of the processes that we have entered into is to put this matter of pensions to the Government Employees Pension Fund, GEPPF, because they have systems and database to be able to deal with issues of verification and also have a very tight system where you can't add or subtract a person without any strong Information Technology, IT, systems, which the department didn't have before.

So, this matter has been dealt with and it's a matter which concerns overall government. The pension system, the welfare ... because as we say, others are old, some are ill, are

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confronted by poverty and that's what makes it very urgent for us to act with speed.

When we want to finish as soon ... if we could do it yesterday, we could have done it yesterday. But we depend on the systems because it has to be verified.

And we have agreed that at least not more than 18 months, we should have been able to sort that.

So, I'll be misleading you if I can say we'll do it by tomorrow because it's a process and that's why we have to keep them informed of where we are, what the challenges are and resolve those two challenges with them.

But we share your concern, and I agree with you completely.
Thak you, Chair.

Mr J S MAJOLA: Hon House Chair, happy birthday to the hon Minister.

My question is ... [Interjections.] ...

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Hon Chair, my question is: Have all the relevant departments effectively put into an action the provision outlined on the document titled 'Consensus of the technical task team and the liberation struggle war' in relation to support the liberation struggle war veterans? If not, what are the reasons of the delay or non-compliance?

Secondly, what is the current status of the progress made into this point? Thank you.

The MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS: Hon member, you'll be surprised ... this very morning we had a meeting with the Deputy President, who is now responsible for following up on the matter of the Presidential Task Team, where all these matters that you are raising are contained. It was the previous Deputy President who was responsible for the matter.

So, what do we have to do ... because there was a task team which was put in place to deal exactly with that consensus document and have different work streams; about seven of them.

So, what we're doing is to monitor, to see in housing where we are, in health where we are, what are the delays. So, there are processes, there are work streams, we deal with the different areas that have been identified in the document and we do respond to the Deputy President.

The work streams are at different levels of progress - as I say - the pension fund, we have given it to the Government Employees Pension Fund to assist us with the data, to claim the data. Some of the matters are in legislation.

We have the lawyers who are dealing with legislative matters because some of the matters that are in the document are just beyond the department. If, for instance, military veterans want their criminal cases to be expunged, we have to work with the Department of Justice. There's different progress with different departments.

I don't have the document in front of me now where I can tell ... we can really show you progress in different areas. So, there are sections which are making lots of progress, there are sections where we raised with the Deputy President that there are challenges. For instance, in terms of schooling,

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there was an agreement that kids would be schooled. The department has run out of money. So, it's to really get Treasury to open the 2024 registration for children to be registered.

So, all the work streams do report progress and those work streams are coordinated by other departments. All we do as the department is to monitor what other departments are doing and report to the Presidency because the Presidency is coordinating the task team that is dealing with the consensus document.

But we can share the full report in terms of where we are with the different work streams. Thank you, Chair.

Question 28:

The MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS: Thank you very much, Chair. This is about the Defence Review which does continue to be the national policy on Defence. I can share with you today that the Deputy Minister, Deputy Minister Holomisa, is in the department also dealing with the Defence Review which remain valid and appropriate though there are some other areas that we think can be improved. It was also

predicated on certain assumptions that the department will be able to have all the finances to pay for all the things that are in the review.

The review's implementation plan does give us direction and it was developed with a certain budget, and it was approved by the Defence's counsel which was supported by parliamentary committees. Part of this process, the budget task team was set up between the Department of Defence and the Treasury, but I can say disappointingly that we have not been able to get all the funds that were in the review. But I can confirm that we are implementing the aspects which we are able to implement.

Chair, notwithstanding that the plan was not funded due to deteriorating national fiscal situation with a number of consequences that prevented the full implementation of the review. The current strategic dilemma is facing the department. Over the last few years, the department has continuously found itself having to deal with the declining budgets which have affected the implementation. Due to the above mentioned constraints, especially the financial ones, the department has been forced to adopt a short-term view with

increasing constraints value proposition to the South African people.

Thirdly, the significant reduction in the Defence baseline has substantially affected the execution of some of the commitments. The practical resources constraints in the country have affected us. It has become evident that we have to review it and see how we live within our means. That's what we are doing. Under the leadership of the Ministry and the guiding the Secretary for Defence, there are complex issues and intricate issues which we have to deal with and ensure that at all times we have a Defence Force that can do its work despite the constraints. The work must also be done to pose it a long-term Defence trajectory which we are also looking to say we are not short-term but we are able to look ahead. The outcomes of this work will also give rise to fiscal expression and albeit the difficulties that the country is facing financially. We are constantly engaging with the Presidency but with the Treasury to make sure that we are able to live up to some of the very central commitments that are in the review.

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The above things that I have raised should be translated as long-term funding, which is why we are engaging the Treasury on, but also saying how do we use the current limited resources to be able to meet the objectives of the review. We are constantly monitoring it as I said Deputy Minister Holomisa is with the department to monitor the implementation of the review. Thank you very much, Chair.

Mr N GOTSELL: Minister, you have failed to mention priorities. Eleven years after the Cabinet approved the Defence Review the first milestone one has not even partially been achieved. Coetzee and her 10-year-old daughter were burnt to death in a dilapidated the SA National Defence Force, SANDF, issued house in Postmasburg which was declared unsafe for living more than a decade ago. Your department provides superman thinned rooms for the children of generals who earn R2 million a year. The whole out army and our military hospitals are dysfunctional because of the deployment of its members to Mozambique and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, DRC. Those who are there are not even equipped or fed properly yet R126 million has been spent on 12 return cargo flights in the last year. The navy has no combat ready vessels, and it's hamstrung by ineffective Armscor. In 2018-19 it expelled thousand sea hours. Last year,

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it decreased to 2 770. The air force has no strategic ail of capacity. Its members' flying hours has significantly decreased in recent years and it has hardly any capacity to effectively conduct maritime territorial patrols. Our military hospitals don't even have ambulances. You will recall that one of the last going ones was used to take Tata Madiba to a very dilapidated 1 Military Hospital on his death bed and it broke down in the middle of winter.

Minister, do you agree that there is no political will or commitment to implement the Defence Review and that the SA Defence Force is in fact in crisis. If you do not agree, when will our department provide the select committee with a full presentation to the country?

The MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS: Thank you, Chair. Let me start with the last comment. We are willing to, at any time when invited, come and account we will do it and it is part of our responsibilities. Just say, when and we will come and give you the full account. It will even help to also break some of the myths. Some of the stories are true, some of them are rumours and I can't respond to them one by one. If we could give you a full report we can tell you how far we are in

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housing. The challenges are not only with the housing of your former members or their families, but we even have challenges even with the houses of the soldiers themselves. I recently went to one of the bases, and I was also quite unhappy with the state of disrepairs where our soldiers live. In the department we say soldiers first. They are the central piece of our work. But there are still more that we admit that need to be done.

In terms of hospitals, I don't know. I used 1 Military Hospital, and I didn't see the dilapidation. I go there next week. I'm sure there are sections that are dilapidated. If we can give you the report, I went to Military Two. Military Two looks like a private hospital. Obviously, there are challenges, but the exaggerations to say they are dilapidated. To speak about Madiba he went there 10 years back. I personally use 1 Military Hospital for different reasons to make sure that we monitor and engage with the hospital.

In terms of ambulances, yes, they need more ambulances but to say the one that got stuck with Madiba 10 years back is the same one we are using now ... we have got have a fleet of ambulances that's why to be able to answer point by point I

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would accept the invitation through you to come and give the entire report.

To say whether there is political willingness or unwillingness I don't believe that the department would itself spearhead the process of the review, go to Parliament and refuse to implement it. It's really to cast aspersions at the integrity of the very department itself. The problem which I have raised throughout the years the department has been suffering from a declining budget which has affected their capital expenditure.

You are quite right that we don't have enough planes, most of them are in disrepair. Budgets are being identified and the process with Armscor is in place to make sure that we have ... indeed. Also, with the challenges about the navy, yes, I went to the naval base in Simons Town and I did see that there are some of our boats which are not working, and which are supposed to be working. To say that there is nothing is not true. Maybe they had hired one for my presence I don't know. What would help is that we give you a full report and then we would be able to deal with the myths and deal with the truths. I am the first one to admit because I have no interest in hiding. It is in our interest to get the system going. We

constantly engage with the Treasury to say you have to help us before the system collapse because the level of poor funding is affecting the effectiveness of the Defence Force.

You are quite right it reduces their time on air, the number of times in the sea even the number of times ... I went to the military headquarters they were also telling me that, Minister, we are at 50% and if nothing comes it might be dangerous because we do them to have full supplies. I admit to some of the things you are saying, but I am saying you are also exaggerating, member. That's why I am willing to come with a full report and you will identify the areas that you want me to report to. Thank you very much, Chair.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Thank you very much, Minister. We would request that the committed detailed report that you are promising be forwarded within two weeks. We would appreciate it and accordingly forward it to the portfolio committee to interact with it. Thank you very much.

Mr V GERICKE: Thank you, Chair. Good afternoon, Madam Minister. Given the recent setbacks in the Department of Defence with regard to the casualties in the DRC,

international participation in other African peace processes and poor circumstances of soldiers in the country, the EFF is of the opinion that the 2015 Defence Review is outdated, and it does not speak to the current status of Defence in South Africa. Has the Minister put any plans in place to review the 2015 plan, and if so what are the details and by which date can we expect an updated version?

The MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS: Thank you very much, Chair. As I've said before the plans of 2015 are already outdated. Circumstances have changed and that's why there a review of the review. I did indicate, for instance, that I have tasked the Deputy Minister to deal with the review. We are also getting teams to really get us the review of the review because it is in very ways outdated and we should be able to come with a review because I also want to use it as part of the bid to the Treasury so that in the next financial year we come with a realistic request which is informed by the latest information that is happening. We are working on the review.

When will it be finished? I am not sure, but we have to be done before the financial year and the budget process for 2025

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starts because we do want to have preliminary results which will enable us to make an informed bid to the Treasury. In short, I agree with you that the review need to be reviewed, and it's being reviewed.

Ms O D MEDUPE: Thank you very much, hon Chair and happy blessed birthday to you. Hon Minister, once more thank you for the elaborative response. However, I have a question for you. Do you have any plans to engage with the Minister of Finance having indicated all the challenges that are confronting your department to ensure that the Defence budget does not decline any further? Thank you.

The MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS: Thank you. As I said before, to me it is a priority. We've started engaging with the Minister of Finance. We have agreed on the things he want us to do. He wants us to also look at our audit report to say where there's bleeding in the department and we are going to stop it so that we don't ask for money when there's bleeding already, where we can have efficiencies. The whole process of relooking at our current practices and the budget is underway.

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We have agreed with the Minister of Finance that by the end of September we will give him responses to the questions he wants us to address. The engagement is ongoing because underfunding of the Defence Force is extremely dangerous. I don't think it can go beyond this for us to say please we are depended. It is very important that the Treasury appreciate the need for reconsidering the baseline of the Department of Defence and be able to give us more money. It may not be all the money that we need but priority is your ships, your planes, your arms and also a number of things that are necessary, namely, the accommodation for soldiers and the updates of our hospitals which are also very vital. We are going to meet with the Treasury by end of September with the responses that the Minister has asked for.

Mr H J VAN DEN BERG: Thank you, Chair. Minister, just clarify the original question that was referred to regarding the performance agreement with the department. Have implemented the systems of measurement with key performance indicators, evaluation and consequence management that you are actively enforcing in your department? How do you measure success in performance areas in the National Defence Force? How many of these departments do get clean audits? Thank you.

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The MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS: Chair, I think it is yesterday where we got our audit report and I can safely say that two of our entities have unqualified reports and two main ones have qualified reports, your military veterans and your department of finance. The agencies like Armscor and the heritage site have unqualified reports. What we are currently doing is to say which areas have led to the qualification and deal with it. We call it an audit rectification process to really deal with those areas that have been there.

In terms of performance indicators, fortunately, I came department into a department which was occupied by other people. So, I did find those reviews and we are measuring what we are currently finding against what have been put in place and understand what went wrong especially with those other two department and what is it that we need to do to review. I don't have fresh indicators as they are there. I found them there and I am comfortable with them. Thanks.

Question 20:

The MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS: Chair, just about the obligations of peacekeeping vis-a-vis our security,

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the peacekeeping missions' deployments do not at all compromise our obligations to safeguard our country and its people, but also to support other departments for internal security situations. The department, the SA Defence Force, is able to deploy adequately for both internal operations and external missions, up to three deployments simultaneously. The second answer is that participation and deployment of peacekeeping missions in the region, continent and globally is the country's obligation to contribute to peace and stability in our region and in the world. Thank you very much, Chair.

Ms J S MANANISO: Thank you Chairperson and happy birthday. Minister, let me thank you for your comprehensive response and it is encouraging to hear that SA National Defence Force can deploy in external missions and still safeguard the security of the nation. My question to you is that does the declining defence budget affect these deployments in any way? Thank you.

The MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS: Indeed, just the budget constraints do make work quite difficult. But what we do is to make sure that we really don't risk either our personnel or the country's safety. So there's always a struggle to get the balance right so that we can be able to do

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our work internally, but we can also continue the missions outside. So I won't say it constraints or it doesn't constraint because there's always that struggle to get it right. I am confident that we are getting the balance right to make sure that we are able to do our responsibilities in both ways. Thank you very much member.

Mr F J BADENHORST: Happy birthday Chair. Hon Minister, it's a harsh reality that our military infrastructure is crumbling, and it's even harsher that your budget is being cut the whole time. You just answer the question now where you spoke about balance. So my question to you is, how will you balance sending troops to the Democratic Republic of Congo, ill-equipped with the result incurred casualties from attacks on the 26 June 2024, which resulted in the death of two officers and 20 wounded? How do you balance our actions in Africa all the while trying to modernise the Defence Force? I know you said you're trying to balance things. Explain to us how do you balance it? Thank you very much, Minister.

The MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS: Chair, the Democratic Republic of Congo mission is not a South African mission that just walked out of the country went to the

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Democratic Republic of Congo. It's actually a SADC mission which is not only funded by us as the country. So it's not our war. It's a war of the continent, so there is co-funding into it. So it's not like it's taking all our resources from the country. There is a United Nations, UN, funding that comes to support the Democratic Republic of Congo.

In terms of balancing as I have said, it's to make sure that the main things are in place, the safety, the well-being of our forces, and the protection or the fulfilment of the mission. So when I say balance, it's to make sure that the basics are in place. That they have equipment, that they can reach their destination, and unfortunately as you correctly said that the unfortunate thing about war goes with casualties, which is very sad. You don't want any casualties. But from where we sit and from the reports that I get frequently from the chief of the Defence Force, we are coping under very difficult conditions. We are making sure that our soldiers are protected, are well-equipped, and are properly fed and if there are challenges, we are able to respond to them timelessly. As I have said, fortunately, we're not there on our own, we are there as part of the mission with other countries and also with other protection beyond ourselves. So

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that's the balance. Just to make sure that the basics are in place.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Thank you very much, Minister. We will revert to hon Farmer. He has requested a comfort break. Whilst we await his return, I will then move on to hon Chirwa-Mpungose from the EFF.

Mrs N N CHIRWA-MPUNGOSE: Minister, I think our anxiety is that there is an imminent budget drop. But we aren't appraised precisely on what the effects are and what exactly the department is doing in detail. Maybe I am reiterating a very important sentiment, but that's because it's not coming across in the responses of the Minister because the budget drop is affecting the operations. If we create an impression that it's not affecting the operations, then we run a risk of continuing with this particular modus operandi and thus swatting the efforts of the department, which affects a certain group of people and affects us domestically and even affects the continent. I think it's important to note in detail what exactly the Minister and the department are employing to counter the budget drops because the budget drops don't measure up to the inflation rates and we know how that affects

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daily running of operations. But the Minister in the response is not appraising us in detail how that exactly is being responded to. Maybe if you put it in numbers, Minister, then we will be able to see that okay, if the supply chain and management or the resources for the weapons has reduced to this amount, this is how we counter it. Then we get these particular weapons instead of these ones. Because right now, there's a blurry picture of how we are seeing the department employing its efforts in relation to the fact that there is a budget cut that's imminent. Thank you so much.

The MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS: Chair, from the upfront, I said the budget cuts are affecting the department in different ways. A member had asked, I said it's reducing the time even for training young people on air, it's reducing our time in the sea, it's reducing even to deploy younger people to come and replenish the army so that we have younger people's boots on the ground. So it's actually in different areas that there are problems.

So, if you want specific details like we buy these arms for this much, I am not sure you discuss those in a questions session to say which arms we are now buying, these ones we are

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not buying, we are now buying these rifles. I don't know, but I am saying, and I am admitting that indeed with the reduced budget, there are these consequences. So the other matter, ... I can see you raised your hand. I thought you were going to allow me to answer and then when you are unhappy you can come back. Otherwise, I'm not sure if I should continue answering.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: No, continue Minister. Can you please lower your hand hon Chirwa. If there's a follow up just give her an opportunity to respond. We will accordingly allow you time.

The MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS: I really want to repeat that I did admit upfront that the budget cuts are a problem. I did admit upfront that we are engaging with Treasury to really assist the department to stop the further decline in terms of the work that we do. I did indicate what are the impacts. One member had asked to say reduce hours on air, it's true. Reduce number of hours in the sea, it's true. Very scary number of armaments that we need, it's true. So I have admitted to those things. But the details of which arms we use, I don't know if I ... I'll have to get ...

[Inaudible.] ... if we discuss those things in a parliamentary

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question or not. But if the Chair wants me to do it, I'll come and give an answer. But I can't answer what I have not been asked.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Hon Chirwa, please lower your hand. Allow the Minister to finish first. Unless you raise on a point of order.

Mrs N N CHIRWA-MPUNGOSE: It is on a point of order, Chair. It's on Rule 46. I wanted to ask the Minister in relation to ... because we are talking about the question about peacekeeping Minister, and you are saying you are spending less time in the air, there's less young people employed and taken in. So the question is in relation to what are the efforts to counter those issues ... [Inaudible.] ... Thank you.

AN HON MEMBER: On a point of order, Chair.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Okay. There is another point of order. On which Rule because I wanted to rule on what hon member has just done now?

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AN HON MEMBER: Thank you Chair. Then you have covered me.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Hon Chirwa, I told you earlier on that afford the Minister an opportunity to make her response to your question. As she's busy with it, you are becoming so impatient to a point where you can't even stomach the response that she's giving. Whether you like them or not, if there are any gaps in that regard, allow her. Just be patient and be tolerant. Allow her space to finish, as soon as she's done, I will accordingly afford you an opportunity to ask that question for further clarity. Based on information that you feel so strongly that she may have omitted, just be patient. Give her time, and this is for the last time I'm giving you this warning, please. Thanks, hon Minister.

The CHIEF WHIP OF THE NCOP (Mr K M Mmoiemang): Hon Chair, another point of order. When you invited the hon member to indicate the Rule, she made reference to Rule 46, and Rule 46 refers to women in the Chamber. The Rule was not correct. Thank you.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Hon Chief Whip, we have already made a ruling. She stood up on something that she was a bit

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naughty. We have made the ruling in that regard. She is a naughty girl. So, the Minister will just proceed accordingly, and if she continues to be naughty, she will forfeit the privilege that I've just given to her. She just needs to be patient and listen. Over to you, hon Minister.

The MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS: Chair, I thought the answer to the best of my ability. But if the member is not happy then I think she could put it further in writing because what I gave her is what I thought she was asking. But if she has a different understanding and we don't share a common understanding, ... [Inaudible.] ...

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Thank you hon Minister. Any follow up, hon Chirwa? You are fine? Okay, thank you very much. We now move on to hon Farmer to ask a follow-up question.

Mr B J FARMER: Thank you Chairperson and may also use the opportunity to congratulate you on your birthday. I have been awaiting the cake. Chairperson, I am actually covered on my question. Thank you.

Question 7:

The MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS: No, thank you very much, Chair and also thank you very much for the question. The response is that there are multidisciplinary teams that are there in the department which deal with both mental and health issues in the Defence Force, and the Defence Force mental health routinely conduct a mental health assessment, mental health promotion and awareness of the programmes. The routine mental health assessment does form part of the Concurrent Health Assessment which they call CHA, which is performed in order to ensure any identification and management of potential health issues and the mental health assessment is a requirement for every member of the Defence Force to undergo once every 24.

Furthermore, for any member who's already diagnosed with a mental health issue, the relevant intervention is taken, or treatment begins immediately, and continuing through the member until the member is fully recovered or back to optimal functioning.

Any member of the Defence Force who's diagnosed with any mental health, which is immediately allocated to the relevant mental health care practitioners nearest to the members place of work or residents where the mental health care services are provided until the members just say it's optimally functional.

So, information relating to the number of members who may have received any intervention is normally treated as operational information and is classified. However, Chair, I can share with the House that, for instance, the department of Defence has almost 143 social workers that work for the department. There are 197 psychologists. There are also psychiatrists which are part of these teams that work on this CHA. Thank you very much, Chair.

Ms A M SIWISA: Yes, Chairperson ...

Setswana:

... masego le matlhogonolo ka letsatsi la gago la go gola.

English:

Minister, voluntarily, some of these officers or reservists don't come forward because of the fear of being labelled or

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classified as being unfit. So, the prevalence of anxiety and depression is relatively high in the South African military. Depression in military officers is often associated with lack of support from superiors irrespective of youth saying that there are people that are available to give the assistance. For the mere fact of being labelled, these reservists and officers do not come forward and it is often reported that when these reservists report psychological problems they are then classified as unfit and cannot perform their primary duties. They are then at the risk of losing their jobs or not being recalled back to duty, and so due to the fear of losing their jobs, they keep quiet. In light of this, has the Minister considered early intervention and management strategies for high-risk groups? If so, please provide details of these early intervention programmes in place, taking into consideration that there is staff on site, but the reservists are afraid to come forward because they are afraid of being labelled. Thank you.

The MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS: No, thank you very much, Chair, it's all said in the response that before any deployment, I'm told that every member, even the reservist, goes through CHA, which is called your Concurrent

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Health Assessment. So, all of them will go through it and even before problems identified. Sometimes even members are not aware and that every 24 months there's compulsory assessment. But I'm sure like in any other situation, anything in place there'll be issues that fall through the cracks. However, from the question of the member, I assume that already you'll not be very normal, if you do not want to be assessed. So, I don't know why a person would not want to be assessed and assisted for their own good and for the good of the people that are going to interact with. But the question is that or the answer is, member, there's pre assessment, there's ongoing assessment and there are systems in place to support members when problems have been identified. Thank you, Chair.

Mr N GOTSELL: Minister, it's indeed very good to hear about the CHA and about the ongoing programmes. My earlier question was about priorities, which you seem to have missed, but this question too is about priorities. Despite the severe shortages and shortcomings in South Africa and Medical Health Services, one, two and three Military hospitals, which you also denied earlier, the National Treasury has made a substantial amount of money available for the upgrading of the SAMHS VIP unit to attend to the medical needs of the President, Deputy President

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and ex-Presidents, including their spouses. A President receives their generous salary for life and one of their benefits is that the state pays for full medical cover for them and their spouses until they die.

Deputy Presidents are Members of Parliament and therefore do not require a parallel unit over and above this cover to seek to their medical needs. As a matter of fact, some Deputy Presidents have been able to seek medical attention in Russia from time to time, whilst fully covered ex-Presidents are so well covered by the state that they make full recoveries from serious illnesses in record time after having been released from jail. In light hereof, do you agree? That the upgrading of a VIP unit within the South African Medical Health services should not be seen as a priority, but that attending to the well-being mental health and medical needs of South African National Defence force members in active service, should rather be prioritised, and are you willing to give an undertaking to this effect?

The MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS: Chair, the fact that the unit has been upgraded, I am not aware. So, it's a matter that the member knows, and I won't deny it. Whether

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there's no priority to the hospital, the member must go to military too and see the state of art of that hospital. So, from where I am, because even when I went there for a ... [Inaudible.] I went to the ordinary wards. I didn't see this VIP, but maybe it's there. However, you're quite correct. If you have to prioritise, you have to prioritise and that's what I've said in the department. That's the soldier first. So, we have to make sure that the needs of the soldiers and of the members of the Defence Force are put as a priority. Now that they go to Russia and other stories, it's another story, but it is important that. The services for everybody, especially for military veterans, are adequate and up to standard. I know for a fact also that if the facility or the services can't be rendered, they even sent to private hospitals, which I had a problem with to say, we have to make sure that we have adequate capacity because it becomes even more expensive if we source out some of the services. So, it is a priority that our members should be there, than people go to Russia ...

IsiZulu:

... angisayazi leyo.

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Setswana:

Ke tshele eo.

English:

... but it is important that we get our systems in place to save our key members.

Ms S M MOKOENA: Thank you, Chairperson, happy birthday. Good day, hon Minister, the current DOD interventions on all health services discriminate against Military Veterans dependants on non-statutory military veterans. Unlike dependants of former SANDF and Bantu stand military veterans' dependant of non-statutory armies are not provided these crucial services. If the department is serious about comprehensive health, then well-being support for former liberation armies, we'd like the Minister to explain why is it that the dependents are excluded from these much-needed services. Thank you.

The MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS: Thank you very much, Chair, I can confirm with Mme Mokoena that's a matter which has been brought to attention that Military Veterans do want their dependants to be on their medical system. We've costed it because again, when wishes are horses, beggars would

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ride. So, is it viable? But our view is that they have to be in line with what the laws are, even in your insurance, if you have a child who's 42 perhaps, he is dependent on you. He doesn't qualify to be on your medical system. So, what we are advocating for, is that dependants of Military Veterans who are 18 and below who are still at school, should be covered by what the members are receiving. But it's something that is receiving attention and has been costed. We also carefully consider not to overrun what is there, nieces and nephews sometimes, and you know people who are your dependants and your grandchildren so that there's also a proper vetting system to protect fiscus. But the point that you're raising is very important. It has been raised by the Military Veterans themselves that they want their dependants to get the benefits they're getting on health. So, it is a matter under consideration. It has been costed. Thank you, Chair.

Inkosi M NONKONYANA: Chairperson, hon members, good afternoon, and happy birthday Chair from the home of legends. Thank you, hon Minister, for such elaborate reply. Congratulations to you in general. Indeed, the department is in capable hands. Arising from your response, the services that you have advised us with are those services also provided to the members

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deployed in the continent, particularly in the conflict areas. That is the only question that I would like to impose on behalf of the African National Congress. Thank you very much.

The MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS: Chair, I can confirm that every deployment or any quotation going there they go with a full complement of healthcare services. Your South African Medical health section of the department always accompanies any Defence Force, wherever they go. And even the military hospitals are on standby if something serious that can't be dealt with there, they are quickly evacuated and brought into the country. But the long and short, indeed, these services are available to all deployments, and all deployees inside and outside the country. Thanks, Chair.

Question 35:

The MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS: No Chair, it's about the military bases that were found in Mpumalanga ... Let me read what I have prepared as an answer for you if you give me a second, Chair. It's on the system. So, but basically Chair, we can give you details. Basically, what would have happened in Mpumalanga when this military base was discovered, it was through the assistance even of communities. It was a

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joint operation. So, all the time, through the military intelligent, police intelligent but also with community members. These such difficulties are detected and dealt with.

So, what is our plans to protect because we don't plan with the criminals what is going to happen? It's to be vigilant at all times but sometimes things go through the cracks because of some of the problems that happened in this instance where valid visas were given outside the country to our country which means it would have easily escaped the scrutiny of both the military intelligence and police intelligence. But when it was discovered, it was dealt with and fortunately with the support and co-operation of the communities in that neighbourhood these things were detected.

What are the plans the government has to allay and eliminate fears and threatens to national security? We can assure South Africans that I have no doubt that both our military and police intelligence are really on top of the situation. They are able to deal and detect such matters and deal with them decisively.

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So, I don't think there is a need to feel threaten. But what is important is to constantly encourage our people to also be vigilant because they also have to be the eyes of the government. To be constantly vigilant and report any abnormal incidents as this was detected and mainly confirmed by communities who did identify strange people who are white in complexion but who don't speak English, who are very aggressive, and they could see that this people are white, they don't speak English, they don't speak any African languages, there is something funny and they were able to detect. So, we also rely on communities to work with the state and there is no need to panic but to really support the government.

Mr J S MAJOLA: Thank you very much, Deputy Chair. Thank you to the responses through you from the Minister. Well, one hon Minister, is still feel threatened if your responses really state that the most reliable source in terms of sporting this kind of events is still entitled up to the members of the community.

But my follow up question is, do we have at this stage after we have departed back to their places know what was the nature

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of the training? Do we know what sort of equipment during the training were used? Does all the above mentioned, the nature and the equipment complied with the South African legislations. Thank you.

The MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS: Chair, communities are also their own keepers. So, communities have to work with the government to make sure that as a team together we can deal with any threats that confront us. I don't think we rely solely on them. But they are just equally important participants in their own safety.

In terms of the other part of the question, do we know what arms were used? Yes, indeed, the whole audit was done of what was found there. In terms of the legality of the practice hence it had to be shut down because it was against South African laws that only the SA National Defence Force can run any military training. So, it was illegal and that's why there are all these legal processes in place to deal with the breaking of the law. It's only the Defence Force which can do military training. Thanks, Chair.

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Mr N H PIENAAR: Thank you Minister for joining us yesterday in the NCOP. Minister, your party answers all my questions. But more specifically so, many have known for years that these military camps existence in Limpopo and Mpumalanga hence the camp was uncovered was found without your assistance. The locals actually assisted like you correctly said of with discovering these camps.

My question, Minister, has your department anyway involved with regards to intelligence of this military camps before you were made aware by the public? Thank you.

The MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS: I am not sure if I understand the question correctly. Remember, you will assist me. Yes indeed, communities assisted in reporting this clandestine and from there because it was that they are funny people around then military police intelligence went in to search for this and so they discovered. It is not communities that knew where the camps were and who was there. It was the police intelligence and the military intelligence, which was able to follow up, track and find them where they are. So, they were involved. That's how it was found. Communities didn't know. They just need the funny people around.

I think I have missed the other question, Mam. I am sorry I was writing notes, and I missed the second question. You can help if you don't mind, Chair.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): Hon member, would you like to clarify the question, please.

Mr N H PIENAAR: That's fine, Chairperson. Minister, did you clarify before these were brought to the attention of the military and the police? Was your department aware of it without the involvement of the public? Thank you.

The MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS: But if they were aware they would have moved for it. The mere fact that they got information that there were strange things happening they were to investigate, in particular police intelligence and then called in all members of the of the cluster to say there is information that there is something strange and they want to do the investigation and came up with these matters. They would not have investigated what they did not know exist. But they were just using that information to go and do the investigations. Yes, indeed, but the time the camp was

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involved both the police and military got involved in discovering the place. So, that's what I really want to explain happened.

AN hon member: ... [Inaudible.] ...

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): You are out of order, hon Baartman. Hon Baartman, you are out of order.

The MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS: No, you are quite right Johnson. Let me say so because the SA Social Security Agency, Sassa, was also involved. I am sorry. I missed out other departments. So, there is ...

[Interjections.] ... Don't be silly, Job. You are out of order ...

IsiZulu:

... wena uyangijwayela.

Mr K CEZA: Minister, following the arrest of 95 Lybians on 26 July 2024 who were released on 15 August 2024 in white River and given the visible evidence of military activities in the

camp, what measures have been put in place to regulate private military and security companies? What measures has your department put in place to ensure that the training provided by these companies does not turn into military training? Lastly, what does it say about the ability of your department to pick up on these matters before they happened? Thank you very much.

The MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS: Chair, there are adequate laws. That's why it was quite easy to say what is happening there is illegal because there are laws about who can train security officers who cannot train and the role of the Defence Force. That's why it was a straight case because there are laws in place in terms of regulating the training space. So, I don't think there is need for any laws.

In terms of saying the clever member of the DA was educating me, there are mechanism in place to detect otherwise you wont need structures if you are not going to look for problems that they exist. So, those structures are there to do their work. As I said, they started doing their work. That's why they discovered the braking of the law to safe the capacity. They really have lot of capacity in our military intelligence I can

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say, member. I don't even think there are capable men and women who really do a lot to protect and safeguard the country. So, the net joins is a very strong structure. Thanks.

Ms O D MEDUPE: Hon Minister, let me appreciate the communities who worked together with the intelligence services to bring the matter before to actually report the matter and work with our intelligence.

However, Minister, earlier on some of the questions that hon members asked, you touched on the question that I want to ask, however, I would want to continue to ask this question so as we eliminate the fear and threat that is there.

Hon Minister, is the country national security in anyway threaten by the existence of this military training facility?

The MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS: I don't think there is a threat at all to be honest in many respects unless I underestimate or under the threat.

I have lot of confidence in our net joins in terms of trying to confront very difficult situation especially when the

country comes in with hard power then we can be sure that things are under control. So, I have lots of confidence that there is no threat. There would be incidents like this, and I repeat, communities have a responsibility themselves to be part of their own security and the security of the country. There is nothing wrong with communities being part of security and playing their role. It is their responsibility also as communities and support and work with their government to make sure that they are protected. So, there is no threat. I can assure you. And I can assure you again that I am confident that we are up to the task as the country.

Question 21:

The MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS: Chair, in terms of contributing to our strategic objective of job creation and reducing unemployment, there are several programmes that the department has in partnership with other state departments and department continues to play its role in contributing towards curbing the escalation of the high employment rate amongst our young people.

Since 2003, the Department of Defence annually recruits unemployed young people into for Military Skills Development

and these recruits are selected from all the nine province bases and are selected and placed at different areas. We normally recruit your grade 12s or equivalent for applicants who are between the ages of 18 and 22, but we've now increased the age to go beyond 18 and 22.

The second part of the question is that, in giving effect to the broader public service intention programme, the department also has introduced what we call the Department of Public Service Administration or annually recruits unemployed youth who also possess tertiary qualifications and provide them with 24 months' work experience, which enables them to go to the work market.

The Department of Defence in partnership with the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development were jointly involved in the implementation of youth leadership and development programme.

This programme is amongst other programmes aimed at empowering unemployed youth with skills for possible employment in the agricultural sector. Chair, in addition, the SA National Defence Force has partnered with the Gauteng Department of

Community Safety to bolster their safety wardens training programme to fight crimes in Gauteng as one of the examples, but other provinces are following suit and the multidisciplinary programme, which has been embarked on by the department as mentioned above, does contribute towards curbing unemployment.

We can also say the defence industry itself, is generating income to contribute towards the economic wealth of the country where we export arms ourselves to other parts. We export to about 35 countries in the continent. It generates income for the country. So, again it helps with high level skills that young people come and train as pilots, and when they're trained, they can go and find work in other activities. It is quite a big catalyst in terms of job creation, but also in skills development. Thank you, Chair.

Mr E P NOE: Thank you, Deputy Chair of the House. Thank you, hon Minister and the House at large. Let me also wish the House Chairperson a happy birthday. You'll convey that message. Hon Minister, thank you very much for the elaborative response you gave. However, one would like to know, based on the multidisciplinary programme that the department is

engaging on with other departments, whether at the end of the 24 months programme, those who would have been trained, will have raised an expectation within the department on whether the department has got any programme to absorb the same trained young people within the department to give them work opportunity. Thank you.

The MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS: Chair, the answer is yes, the majority of those that are trained will be absorbed in the department for further employment. Those that have not been absorbed will become your reservists, which are called upon on an ongoing basis.

But there's also a programme to divert and lead them to other directions in the Defence Force, where they can go and do further training, for instance, such as divers and pilots and other things. So, there is ongoing employment diversion, but also retention of those that would not have been absorbed to be part of your reserve team. Thanks.

Ms M MAKESINI: Chairperson ...

Sesotho:

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... le nna ke re kgaphu-kgaphu ya mahlohonolo ho ...

English:

... national Chairperson of the House. Considering the substantial portion of the SA National Defence Force, SANDF budget allocation to compensation of employees, how does the SANDF plan effective contribution on job creation Minister, particularly in reducing the youth unemployment, while we are managing with the budget constraint? Secondly, Minister, are there any specific programmes or initiations with the SANDF aimed to create jobs for the youth, if so, what are those programmes that you have in your department? Thank you.

The MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS: Chair, I think understandably a department like the Department of Defence is intensive in terms of infrastructure, but it's also labour intensive. You need many boots on the ground, so you need lots of people. That's why it will be spending a big portion of their budget.

The biggest problems with budget cuts are in terms of your tools of labour, your planes, your trucks, and other things. That's where the problem is and not in terms of the budget.

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And the main aim of the department as I said, it's quite clear that the objective is to defend the country, defend the people, so that becomes your priority.

Your job creations are your auxiliary services to aid the country. So that doesn't become your sole responsibility. So, what you will do, you will try as much as possible to absorb soldiers, to be able to meet your objective. You will cooperate with other government departments to sweat existing opportunities but also skill young people so that they find jobs.

Yes, job creation is very important for the department, but the priority is these salaries that are paid to the soldiers themselves because our objective is to defend the country and its people and then when you have capacity like your training, use it to aid government's objectives and it does play a role without necessarily being deflected because you also don't want to lose focus on your main objective of being a Defence Department.

Mr M M PETER: Chairperson, I've withdrawn my questions. I've informed the secretary of this House. Thank you, Chair.

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The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): There is no response to that. Sorry, I was trying to ... [Inaudible.] ... okay.

Mr D R RYDER: Minister, the defence staff establishment has for years not been aligned to Treasury's budget approval for the department and as a result has cut into other budget areas. It's clear that if the department wants to pursue job creation, it needs to cooperate with the private sector, and I think you've made that point yourself.

President Ramaphosa himself has also confirmed that government should create an environment which promotes private sector job creation. Now, you also correctly identified that the South African defence industry already employs thousands of people, but Minister, the industry regularly bemoans the lack of support from the Department of Defence.

So, Minister, I'm asking you, will you please commit to a meeting with the South African defence industry to engage on these perceived barriers and obstacles with a view to

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improving procurement processes and then report back to this House on ways that we can help you in this regard? Thank you.

The MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS: Chair, I can confidently say the question is late. I just had breakfast with them yesterday and we have agreed with them on time frames of meeting for the first time to sort out the many problems they have raised during that breakfast. All the matters raised about procurement, late payments in all alignments that you refer to.

So, we've agreed that in the first term for now, we'll be meeting monthly just to deal with those, from there, we'll be meeting quarterly, but that meeting has happened, and we can give you a report of what we've agreed on at that meeting. Thank you very much, Chair.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): Thank you very much, Hon Minister, I think that concludes your response. Thank you very much. We appreciate your presence and your response.

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Ms H S BOSHOFF: Hon Deputy Chair, Sorry, right here. Is there any way that we can ask for these heaters to be switched on? Nobody can live under these circumstances. Thank you.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): I've already requested the staff to switch on the aircon, so I think that will be sorted out. I've just informed that it has been switched on hon members, so you can be comfortable.

I've been advised that we now move on to these questions on State Security by the Minister in the Presidency. Is the hon Minister joining us virtually?

All right, the Minister and the Presidency will be joining us virtually. Hon Minister, are you with us? It doesn't seem like the hon Minister is able to join. Alright, okay, I think she's trying to join us from some faraway place. Let's just allow a few minutes.

Is information technology, IT assisting us in trying to get hold of the Minister? Hon members, I have been informed that we can take a five-minute break so that we can try and sort out the IT issues. Can we come back at exactly 15:40, please.

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The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): We now move on to the questions on state security by the Minister in the Presidency. Is the hon Minister joining us ...

[Interjections.]

The CHIEF WHIP OF THE NCOP: ... virtually, hon Deputy Chair, virtually.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): Alright, the Minister in the Presidency will be joining us virtually. Hon Minister, are you with us? It doesn't seem like the hon Minister is able to join. Alright, okay, she's trying to join us, I think, from far away place. Let's just allow her a few minutes.

An HON MEMBER: The Government of National Unity is quiet today.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): Is the IT assisting us? We are trying to get the Minister. Hon members, I'm just being advised that we can take a five-minute break in

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order to try and sort out the IT issues, then we come back at exactly 15h40, please. Thank you.

The CHIEF WHIP OF THE NCOP: Deputy Chair, I propose tea break for five minutes. Thank you.

Business suspended at 15h30 and resumed at 15h41.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): Do we have an indication from IT if the matter has been resolved? Hon Minister, are you able to hear me? It's the Deputy Chair of the NCOP.

The MINISTER IN THE PRESIDENCY: Deputy Chairperson, I am able to hear you.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): Alright, great. If you can just give us a few minutes, we'll just get the hon members back into the Chamber and then we will get started.

The MINISTER IN THE PRESIDENCY: That is fine. Deputy Chairperson, I must indicate that we are in China and zoom is

not allowed. So, I had to join on the phone line, so I'm not able to show my face in case hon members hear the problem.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender):

Hon members, could you please take your seat, so that we can commence with the next round of questions? Alright, thank you very much, hon members. We will now proceed. Hon Minister, we want to extend our thanks to you for joining us from so far away, and we are glad that we are able to connect with you. We will now proceed with the responses to the questions that were asked, and the first question was from the hon Medupe from the ANC. Hon Minister, your response?

Question 24:

The MINISTER IN THE PRESIDENCY: Hon Deputy Chairperson, I need to first apologise that I'm not able to show my face because where I am, zoom does not operate. So, I have to join telephonically. To the question asked by the hon member, in terms of measures that we are doing to prevent misuse and or abuse of resources, we have set up governance system in the organisation to strengthen the controls, and those controls are audited by the Auditor-General and they've got full co-operation with the work of Auditor-General. Thank you.

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Ms O D MEDUPE: Hon Chair, my question to the Minister is that, are there any members who were successfully prosecuted for the commission of these crimes?

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): Hon Minister, I hope you heard the question. Your response, please.

The MINISTER IN THE PRESIDENCY: Hon Deputy Chairperson, I did hear the question. There are cases that have been handed over to the necessary prosecution authorities and they are working on those prosecutions. Within the organisation, there have been disciplinary cases that were undertaken, and in those, some of the members were not found guilty and some of them were found guilty. Depending on the penalty, some were discharged from duty, or some were sanctioned accordingly. Thank you.

Mr J H P BRITZ: Hon Minister, it was reported to this House in 2021 that US\$50 million or R736 million was stolen from the State Security Agency, SSA. Has any person been arrested and has this money been recovered?

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The MINISTER IN THE PRESIDENCY: Hon Deputy Chairperson, the response is that the matter was handed over to the police for investigation and that work still continues from inside the system, but also from outside the system. You don't think or you don't want to think that when we dismantle a two billion drug manufacturing, I don't want to call it a company, and you think that people will sit down and fold their arms. They are going to do a push back, and we should be able to be strong and say we are going to fight with them.

So, as I was answering, I have given, in many instances, and I can still go on with the figures to tell you what we have done in terms of contact crime, attempted murders and every other crime. We are not there yet, but we are going there. At least we see where we are going. I can tell you we will flush out all those who think they can still work with us and also deal with criminals. That's what I'm saying. We are not going back, but we are going forward. So, try us, you will meet us on the way. Thank you very much, House Chair.

Ms L H ARRIES: Minister, there is needs to be more comprehensive approaches in place if we are ever to combat

fraud and corruption in the service. In light of this, which form of oversight support will be exercised so as to completely eradicate corruption?

The MINISTER IN THE PRESIDENCY: Hon Deputy Chairperson, and the response is that there are directives in place, and we are also working on establishing new additional regulations. In addition to the Auditor-General, there is the Inspector-General of Intelligence, who from time to time does oversight work on scheduled matters and unscheduled matters. Some matters are referred to the Inspector-General by the Minister when there are areas of concern, either noted from the Auditor-General or noted during the conduct of the business of the service. Thank you.

Ms S M N MOKOENA: Chairperson. Greetings, Minister. The department has put forward plans to review and revise the legal framework regulating the intelligence services to improve transparency and accountability. We would like to know, have any of these proposals been accepted by the department, and if yes, how long is the department taking in incorporating the proposed reviews into their operational processes? Thank you.

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The MINISTER IN THE PRESIDENCY: Hon Deputy Chairperson, in terms of the High-Level Panel Review work in the end, they had 79 recommendations. Of the 79 recommendations, 47 have been implemented and the outstanding are waiting, and they are coming into effect in terms of the General Intelligence Laws Amendment Bill, GILAB. When the GILAB comes into effect, we'll then complete the remainder of the recommendations that have been made by the High-Level Review Panel, and that work we are satisfied with. If you recall, hon members, some of the details of that work is that there was a requirement that there must be regulations on the co-ordination of the intelligence structures to improve the work of the National Intelligence Coordinating Committee, NICOC, and to make sure that there is no unnecessary nonco-operation.

Those regulations were then gazetted in April this year. We will commit here like we have committed in the National Assembly that as soon as the Joint Standing Committee on Intelligence is established, we will then go and brief members of that Joint Standing Committee on Intelligence on the work done to implement those recommendations, and the work we are

doing to implement the remainder of the recommendations as the GILAB comes into effect.

Question 29:

The MINISTER IN THE PRESIDENCY: Hon Deputy Chairperson, in terms of the process, the General Intelligence Laws Amendment, GILA, Bill in details passed by Parliament, it awaits the President to assent after all the checks that have to be done for, that the law is meeting all the legal requirements of the of the Republic, nor the President does not indicate to the Minister when he will sign the law and that is the second part of the question.

In terms of work done, we are doing well to prepare ourselves to be ready for the new organizations, including how those organizations will operate, including what type of structure we're going to have and what regulations are required to be in place, because it will also need a lot of regulations. And also, to deal with the other provisions of other laws that were not necessarily met. So, that work continues, and the necessary consultations are being done.

We've just completed the skills audit to know the capacity that the organization have, so that we can ready even the capacity of the organizations to the department, to be established when we know what we have in place. Thank you, hon Deputy Chairperson.

Mr N GOTSELL: Deputy Chairperson, I think I caught all of that but, thank you, Minister, that sounds very proactive. Just a further question to the passing of the Bill. Has your department begun drafting the regulations specific to this act, and if so, will they be ready for when the Bill is signed into law and what would the areas of priority thereof entail?

The MINISTER IN THE PRESIDENCY: Hon Deputy Chairperson, we have we have not started to draft the regulations because we have to start the process, the human resource, HR, process to get through and the in terms of the HR process of what we have done. We have developed a migration framework for the organization. I have indicated the skills audit; we have done the change management strategy and the employee wellness plan, for the organization, because that that is important.

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And we have just engaged with National Treasury in preparation of the assenting into law of the GILA to say when the GILA comes into effect, we need to be given time for the migration to the new organization. Initially we had planned for that to take effect from 1st of April 2025. Given that we are not yet there in terms of the assenting of the Bill into law, we will request a delay of that getting into effect and will engage with the Joint Standing Committee of Intelligence, with the level of detail.

But we are doing an audit of the regulations that will have to be put in place, both in terms of the service and in the agencies and how the support functions works and also how the OIC, the Office of the Interception come into effect.

So, those regulations when we have then done the listing, we, are going to go into a process of prioritizing which ones are critical for the organization to be implemented.

I would like to assure hon members that by the time the organizations have to be set up and they have to be split into two, there would be enough regulations, or they will be the relevant regulations that are required for the organizations

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to operate, even if it's at a minimal bases in terms of the regulations that are in place.

And I say this assurance given the record since I took over as Minister in the Presidency. I have made sure that things that were not done for over years, some since the establishment of the organizations, were put in place like the regulations on intelligence coordination, is the first ever done in the history of the intelligence structure, since democracy.

We have put in place now the national security strategy which guides our work. We are going to publish the national intelligence estimate and the national intelligence priorities, which would be the first to be published in the democratic South Africa, so that we can then say when we deal with our annual plans that we are guided by these priorities. Thank you, hon Deputy Chairperson.

Mr P A PHALA: Thank you, Minister, with regard to strengthening the capacity of the service, there were some recommendations made by Mufamadi Commission. How far are you with regard to implementing the rest of the recommendation? Thank you.

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The MINISTER IN THE PRESIDENCY: Hon Deputy Chairperson, as I've indicated earlier, we have made progress in terms of implementing the recommendations that were set up by the various panels. But, specific to the issue raised in terms of the capacity of the agency, we have for the first time completed skills audit of the organization at various times when the skills audit was undertaken, there was less compliance. This time around we've got 96% compliant. When I return, I'm sure I'll get a report. And then from that compliance, we have also started to determine the training requirements of members and the and also the training principles that should operate within the organization.

We have also in terms of building the capacity indicated that we are going to meet the National Qualification Framework, NQF, level requirements on positions in the organization. You will recall there were people who were hired without the necessary qualifications. And we're going to implement those. I'll provide those details to the Joint Standing Committee on Intelligence when it's established and also when we finalize the consultations with the members of the service, because we have commenced the consultation. Thank you.

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Mr H J VAN DEN BERG: Deputy Chair, my question to the Minister, in the interest of insight, if she can explain to us what the advantage would be, in dividing into two separate units, versus functioning as one unit and if separation would have an impact on internal intelligence reporting and communication? Thank you.

The MINISTER IN THE PRESIDENCY: Hon Deputy Chairperson, the splitting of the organization was part of the recommendations made by the commission and I would not want to venture into the high-level panel review. I would not want to venture into defending that decision, but also to legalize the work that were being done, in terms of the State Security Agency. So, when that recommendation was made, our duty was to make sure that we comply with that recommendation.

The advantage that we also see, is that you currently when there are court cases that challenge operation of the domestic branch, by consequence they affect to the operations of foreign branch which will not ordinarily have been affected. I would like to give an example. The Amabhungane Judgement in terms of interception in the country, which is a correct

judgment, it's now tying the hands of the agency, including the foreign branch, to be able to do interception which are foreign, which do not affect South Africans or any operations in South Africa, which then limits our ability to do intelligence or to gather intelligence abroad, which is necessary for national security. Thank you, hon Deputy Chairperson.

Mr V GERICKE: Thank you very much, Deputy Chair, good afternoon, Madam Minister. The State Security Agency is a very important department in the intelligence community. And all proposed laws and amendments pertaining to the roles and responsibilities should be prioritised and expedited. I note that this Bill is pending for a long time, now. The EFF is asking what are the outstanding issues or concerns that hold back the finalisation of this Bill to be enacted? Thank you very much, Deputy Chair.

The MINISTER IN THE PRESIDENCY: Hon Deputy Chairperson, I'd like to respond to the hon member as follows: If you recall, the Bill was outstanding for more than 13 years. When I was appointed into office, within a period of 14 months, we made sure that the Bill was already approved by not only National

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Assembly but also the NCOP. So, in terms of my part, we need that progress to be noted.

In addition, as I indicated earlier, the regulations on the coordination of intelligence were never done. And we make sure that it's done. And in terms of the Bill, it received the necessary support including the legal compliance of Parliament. But the President has the responsibility before he assents into law, to make sure that he has checked all the constitutionality and compliance with legal doctrine. And that process has to be undertaken by the team that then supports the President into that.

And if you recall during the end of the Sixth Parliament, a large size of a number of Bills were then passed in the last month of Parliament being in session, which was the last period of May. And that has affected the volume or the number of Bills that are being considered by the President on his table.

So, we are not worried in terms of the constitutionality, we understand the volume of work that is on his table, and he will sign when he has completed, the ones that came ahead. We

could abuse our position that we are in the Presidency and demand the fast tracking of the Bill, but that would be unfair to other departments whose Bills came earlier. Our Bill is one of the Bills that came last because when the ad hoc committee of the National Assembly, NA was done the process of the NCOP ... there were not joint rules to have the ad hoc committee, being a joint ad hoc committee of both the National Assembly and the NCOP.

So, the NCOP had to do its own round of consultations, which then took longer for the Bill to be finalised. So, given that we were part of the last ones to arrive on the table, we also accept that, we will have to be part of the last ones to come out of the table. But it is not affecting our work, we are able to proceed with our work and to plan for the implementation of the Bill. Thank you, hon Deputy Chair.

Question 23:

The MINISTER IN THE PRESIDENCY: Thank you, hon Deputy Chairperson. Countering terrorism is one of the key priorities of the State Security Agency, SSA, in fulfilling its counter-intelligence and national security mandate. Various

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operational methodologies are utilised to detect and impede those suspected of being involved in terrorist activities.

The country has reviewed the National Security Strategy, the national counter-terrorism strategy and also compiled a National Counter Financing of Terrorism Strategy in order to provide a whole of government's response to counter terrorism and terror financing. In some instances, we are working with other departments that are relevant, in particular with countering the financing of terrorism.

Measures to secure the country's borders and mitigate risks associated with illegal movement and status of undocumented foreign nationals are the primary responsibility of the Department of Home Affairs and its Border Management Agency. The SSA, in accordance with its counter-intelligence co-ordinates the counter-terrorism response through established interdepartmental structures, where all structures in the Security Cluster have a representation.

In terms of the second part of the question, South Africa is in on it in an ongoing process of improving the state's ability and capacity to effectively counter the financing of

terrorism, including the use of crypto and block-chain technology. In this regard, South Africa has recently completed its second National Terrorist Financing Risk Assessment, which identified various threats, risks and vulnerabilities. This process identified various ways in which funds are raised. This process has resulted in the risk of terrorist financing in South Africa being elevated to a high risk.

The SSA is able to effectively identify and uncover terrorist financing. The agency, in close collaboration with the South African Police Service, SAPS, the Criminal Investigations Department and the Financial Intelligence Centre, FIC, has identified cases related to crypto-assets and terrorism financing that have been reported to the SAPS Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation, as these are crimes against the state that are subject to criminal investigation.

These criminal investigations are carried out as part of a Public Prosecutor's Investigation, PGI, which is supervised by the National Public Prosecutor's Office and the Priority Crime Litigation Unit, which presents the evidence in court. The transactions involving crypto assets mostly take place in

different jurisdictions and require the South African authorities to follow the mutual legal assistance procedure to obtain their respective evidence in order to lay charges in a South African court. Due to the increasing use of new financial technologies, law enforcement agencies are in the process of bolstering the necessary specialised capacity to investigate terrorist financing in the form of new technologies.

Whilst enhancing our own capacity through specialisation and technical assistance training, the law enforcement agencies have increased co-operations with financial and private sector stakeholders that may have specialised capacities to investigate and prosecute cases relating to crypto assets and new technologies.

In terms of addressing shortcomings related to the financing of terrorist activities, South Africa has made good progress, as has been acknowledged by the Financial Action Task Force, FATF, South Africa's progress in addressing FATF Outcome 9, related to terror financing. It should also be stated that technological innovations such as block-chain and cryptocurrencies cannot be directly equated to terror

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financing. The SSA is working closely with the South African Reserve Bank and other law enforcement agencies to progressively strengthen regimes around these technologies to mitigate it being utilised as vehicles for facilitating criminal or terror related crimes. Thank you.

Inkosi M NONKONYANA: Thank you, Deputy Chairperson. Hon Minister, arising from your response to the question, are you in a position to advise this Council whether the intelligence services have managed to detect any persons who are using these tricks to channel funds for terrorist organisations?

The MINISTER IN THE PRESIDENCY: House Chairperson, there are currently 23 cases that are being investigated in relation to the financing of terrorism, and as far as the technologies are concerned, I cannot say anything specific because the investigators have not yet completed their work. But there are 23 cases that are being investigated. Perhaps just to add, we will report to the FATF in October under the direction of the National Treasury. That will improve our position in terms of the work that is being done in this area. Thank you, hon House Chair.

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Ms N P MCINGA: Good afternoon. I just want to say happy birthday to the House Chair ...

IsiXhosa:

Anga amazulu angavuleka, imana yeentsikelelo ine kumasebe onke kaSihlalo weNdlu.

English:

Minister, while the intelligence service may have a strategy to counter terrorism, including monitoring the illegal entry of foreign nationals, there have been concerns about the success of these measures, given the continuous flow of illegal entries into the country. How does the Ministry plan to enhance border security and intelligence-sharing to prevent terrorism risks. Furthermore, regarding the financing of terrorism through block-chain and cryptocurrencies, can the Minister provide specific details on the current capabilities and resources at the National Intelligence Service disposal to counter this threat. If the current resources are not sufficient, Minister, what steps are being taken to build capacity and strengthen the intelligence services ability to address these sophisticated methods of funding terrorism? Finally, given the admission that more resources and training

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are required to fight the financing of terrorism through block-chain and cryptocurrencies, how soon can we expect the National Intelligence Service to be fully equipped and to handle these challenges? And what specific partnerships or collaborations are being established with international bodies to keep up with global trends in counter-terrorism, particularly in the areas of digital finance and cybersecurity?

The MINISTER IN THE PRESIDENCY: Happy birthday to you, House Chair. I must point out that border management and the management of the entry of people into the country is primarily the responsibility of the Department of Home Affairs and the Border Management Agency, as I have already mentioned. As a government State Security Agency, it is our job to gather intelligence and then advise both the Department of Home Affairs and the Border Management Agency and the Border Agency through a forum that is established in terms of the Border Management Agency Act, of the law enforcement entities, which includes the Department of State Security.

All the measures that need to be taken to strengthen their work, as we have collected this information, and this work is

the co-ordination of information and the exchange of information, both within the national intelligence structures, law enforcement agencies, but also with the relevant departments, if and when this is the case, has been strengthened by the regulation on the co-ordination and exchange of information. That is a part that I have already explained.

Unfortunately, I cannot detail the resources or capacity of state security, but we have the capacity to respond effectively. But of course, hon members, you will accept and agree that new technologies are evolving. They have not yet reached the stage where they are no longer changing. They are evolving, and that means that we too must constantly evolve and build that capacity for continuous development.

In that regard, we have continued to do both our work in the operations level, but also in what we call the National Communications Centre, NCC, which is the centre that writes technology and is used by all agencies to make sure that we are up to date. The work that we do through the NCC is not only the capacity that we must build in-house, but also leverage on the capacities that come from other departments of

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government and other entities of government, and also from the private sector. Because you will remember that the banking and financial services sector also plays a crucial role, particularly in relation to the financing of terrorism or the financing of crime in general. That is why I referred in my answer to the work that we are doing with the Reserve Bank, but we also have a very strong partnership with fabric, the South African Banking Risk Information Centre, SABRIC, but also with the FIC, the Financial Intelligence Centre. We work very closely together to make sure that we are up to date. And we will continue to build the capabilities of our service members and agents, but also with the use of technology and with the advance of the cyber or digital world and digital currencies and the digital economy.

The unfortunate part of it is also criminal activities emanating from these events, so we will continue to build our capacity, but the work is ongoing and when we are requested by the Joint Standing Committee on Intelligence, we will provide those details, as we have committed to do in the NA, we can also commit to do so in the NCOP, that when the committee is established, we will then also go and brief it in detail on

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our work on cyber security of the country. Thank you, hon House Chair.

Mr N H PIENAAR: Thank you, House Chairperson. Minister, we are sorry we cannot have you in the House today. I would however request if you can, when you reply, speak a bit slowly. I am an old man, and I would like to hear my answer very clearly please. Does the State Security Agency currently have systems in place to track and trace transactions involving blockchain cryptocurrencies like Bitcoin within the Republic? And are they mechanisms in place for recording and monitoring these transactions?

The MINISTER IN THE PRESIDENCY: Thank you, House Chair. I will try to be slower, and I thought I was slow for my record of speaking, but I appreciate the Council. I will try to be slower. In terms of the capacity of state security to track and trace the use of blockchain in terms of its illegal use and other cryptocurrencies and digital currencies. The SSA with its other partners have the capacity to do so. And maybe just to clarify that the capacity that we use, it does not have to be necessarily embedded in SSA but also in the other partners. So, we have the ability to track and trace and to

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monitor within the partnership framework that we work together jointly to deal with this crime. Thank you.

Mr B J FARMER: Thank you, Chairperson. Minister, in light of the recently found of a Libyan training camp in South Africa, would you agree that our intelligence agencies have failed us?

The MINISTER IN THE PRESIDENCY: Hon House Chair, is this a follow-up or a new question?

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr B A Radebe): If you feel that it is a new question, you have the right not to answer it, but what must then happen is that the person asking a question can to submit it for a written answer. Would you do that, hon Farmer?

The MINISTER IN THE PRESIDENCY: Hon House Chair, before the hon member answers you, I ask this because the next question, Question 6, deals with this issue. I think I have another question that relates specifically to the Libyans. So, I would ask that I answer that question, because it has nothing to do with counter-terrorism funding. I will ask that I answer that question when I answer the question about the Libyans that was asked.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr B A Radebe): That is noted, Minister. You will answer it later then, and that means we are done with Question 23. We will now proceed and deal with Question 6.

Question 6:

The MINISTER IN THE PRESIDENCY: Thank you, hon House Chair. The detection of the Limpopo camp, as reported in the media, is the result of what we call intelligence-driven law enforcement work. That intelligence-driven work was from some of the individuals linked to this camp have been known and have been persons of interest to the State Security Agency, SSA, for a period of time. Although another training camp was recently detected in Mpumalanga involving Libyan nationals, the dynamics of the two camps are unrelated. The SSA, in collaboration with other relevant law enforcement agencies, remains vigilant in monitoring, dictating, and investigating the potential existence of additional or other military or security training camps throughout the country. Any potential existence and specific characteristics of these training camps are currently under investigation and are subject to ongoing detection efforts with relevant authorities, which aim to

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determine the legality of the camps and identify any instance of illicit operations.

Investigations are still ongoing to determine exactly how the weapons and ammunition were moved to the camp in Limpopo, and the SSA remains committed to the proactive detection of the illicit movement of weapons and ammunition in line with its mandate. Accountability will be determined only upon the successful completion of all relevant and ongoing investigations. Thank you, hon Minister.

Mr V GERICKE: Thank you, Chair. Unfortunately, the sound is very poor, so I could not get all the information. But be that as it may, madam Minister, headline news was made and expectations created by the department to the public that the SA Police Service, the SAPS, and intelligence are doing a good job. It sounded, however, like a false alarm because the case has fallen flat and has been withdrawn against the Libyans. Can you today assure this House that regardless of the case being withdrawn, that no illegal activities have been found in this camp? And if not, why the arrest of the Libyans in the first place? Thank you very much.

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The MINISTER IN THE PRESIDENCY: Thank you, hon House Chair.

Though I have another question specific to that matter, because this matter was also raised linked to the other camps, I will respond to this matter in this manner. When the Libyans entered the country, they entered the country legally. When I deal with the next questions, I'll go a bit further. However, what was declared that they're going to do when they're in the country turned out not to be what they are supposed to do.

In terms of the requirement, which is a responsibility of Home Affairs, the Libyans had to be deported for entering the country under false pretences. That was done when their visas were withdrawn, and they had to be deported and they were deported. That does not affect the work of the police who is not SSA, to investigate the illegality of the training, because that training is not the type of training that is done for security training as the pretences were. It was a military training. The police, with the evidence provided by the SSA and further evidence that was collected within the camp will then have to submit that case and prosecute that case in terms of the camp in Mpumalanga. They all similarly prosecute the case in terms of the camp in Limpopo, which is delinked from the camp in Mpumalanga. That work has not been withdrawn. That

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work has not stopped. The police continue to do that work.

Thank you.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr B A Radebe): Thank you, hon Chairperson. Hon Minister, you know that the audio here is very bad. We can hardly hear you when you're speaking out there. So, I understand the concerns which are raised by the members in the House here, but I think that we'll have to speak with the Chairperson of the Council, that in the future, all the people who are supposed to answer questions must be in the House. They must be in the House because personally, I lost half of the information which is there. That's why even when coming to rulings, it's going to be very difficult. But I think this one is the first and the last. We will not agree to that anymore. So, can we go to the next follow-up question. Hon Pienaar?

Mr N H PIENAAR: Can I just ask just for information - that this information given by the Minister is extremely important information. We did not get it all because of poor audio. Can we ask that the Minister's response printed version be given to us? Thank you.

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The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr B A Radebe): I think what the hon Gericke is raising is correct. I think this session is recorded on Hansard, but what we also request is that because of the poor audio, the Minister must give a written response so that all the people can be covered of what was the answer so that should this thing arise again in the future, we are able to have a referral point that on this day - on 3 September, the Minister answer it like this - so that we can hold them accountable. Hon Pienaar, the floor is yours.

The MINISTER IN THE PRESIDENCY: Hon House Chair, before you call hon Pienaar, I want to make a request. The first is that the written questions that were sent to me, we are going to submit the oral questions that were sent in written form - we are going to send the written reply. If hon members can indulge us, the follow-up questions that they made and sent us those in writing, we commit to respond to those questions to the level that we provided here. It may not be as it is, but it will give the response in writing. I sincerely apologise for not being there, but that's why I try to explain virtually. I cannot decline when the President invites me to a delegation where we are going to discuss issues.

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The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr B A Radebe): Alright, hon Minister. Hon Minister, I have already made a ruling on that. You are going to give a written response on that - that's fine. It is not your mistake. The President invited you to go to China - it's fine. But next time we are going to share the questions with you accordingly. Hon Pienaar, the floor is yours, brother.

Mr N H PIENAAR: Thank you, House Chairperson. Hon Minister, have any of the illegal military camps discovered so far been directly linked to terrorist organisations? If so, please provide the names of these organisations. Additionally, have any of these camps been connected to foreign countries or governments other than Libya? If so, which countries or governments have been identified? Thank you, Minister.

The MINISTER IN THE PRESIDENCY: Thank you, hon House Chair. I must indicate that that information I cannot disclose in this forum. I'll disclose that information to the Joint Standing Committee of Intelligence because it then compromises the work of the investigation that is being done. Thank you.

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The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr B A Radebe): It is noted - it is agreed. Certain things can be dealt only in the Joint Standing Committee on Intelligence because we cannot compromise the country. I think that that's fair. But I think that the hon Pienaar and whoever represented DA in that joint standing committee will be able to get the first-hand information about the issues.

Mr B J FARMER: Chairperson?

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr B A Radebe): Who is rising? On what point are you rising?

Mr B J FARMER: The answer to my question earlier, I haven't received one yet and it's in the same line.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr B A Radebe): Hon Farmer, I've just made a ruling now that because of the poor audio, the Minister will be able to give written replies on these issues. If that reply is going to compromise the country, that reply will be delivered in the Joint Standing Committee on Intelligence. So, can you take that, please?

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Mr B J FARMER: I have heard that ruling and it's fine, sir, but that doesn't pertain to my question. My question was not about the audibility. My question was not answered completely. [Interjections.]

The CHIEF WHIP OF THE NCOP (Mr K M Mmoiemang): Thank you, Hon House Chair. The ruling was still on the question posed by the hon Pienaar. You must still come to the hon Farmer. He is the last one in terms of follow-up questions. [Interjections.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr B A Radebe): Thank you, Hon Minister. Just to respond to the hon Farmer, I think there is Question 22, which is asked by the hon Mananiso. It is the last question which is going to be given to the Minister. Your answer will be integrated there because it is relevant. So, can you allow the flow of the session, please? I have ruled on that. Please, we cannot go back to that. Hon Minister, you can respond.

The MINISTER IN THE PRESIDENCY: Hon House Chair, I just responded to the question by saying that I will provide the details to the Joint Standing Committee on Intelligence. So, if that was the last question, then we will have to move to

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Question 42. I didn't hear that you're calling me to respond to Question 42. As you correctly ruled, I requested that the other question by the hon Farmer be addressed in detail when I deal with Question 22.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr B A Radebe): Alright. That is noted, Minister. Can we go to the hon Ngcobo from the MK party?

Ms Z N NGCOBO: Thank you, hon Chair. Hon Minister, the discovery of illegal military training camps in Limpopo and potentially in other parts of South Africa has exposed significant challenges in the country's national security framework. This has raised serious concerns about the effectiveness of law enforcement and intelligence operations. What steps does the department plan to take to improve its detection and prevention mechanisms to address such threats in the future? Thank you.

The MINISTER IN THE PRESIDENCY: Thank you, hon House Chair.

The detection of the arrest in both in Limpopo and in Mpumalanga was a result of intelligence work. The arrests were made by law enforcement agencies. That is an indication of the work that the entities, law enforcement agencies are doing.

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Why do I say so? You should remember that the intelligence work and the work of the SSA does not mean there will not be such incidences.

The requirement is that when those incidences arise, are we able - as collectively as the law enforcement agencies - to neutralise them. For some of them to be neutralised and to be able to detect others, one must allow some to exist as one continue to monitor so that one is able to detect other links and be able to deal with the matter comprehensively. So, both the work in the camp in Mpumalanga and in Limpopo were a result of intelligence-driven work by law enforcement agencies led by SSA in terms of the intelligence provided.

Therefore, it is not a lack of effectiveness, it's part of our work. Is there room for improvement? Of course, there will always be room for improvement, and we continue to evaluate that and improve on that. As I have indicated earlier that we have committed as the National Assembly and has made the same commitment now at the NCOP that we will go into the level of granularity of detail that must be provided to Members of Parliament in the safe space of the Joint Standing Committee on Intelligence, so that that committee can do oversight by

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saying that the measures that you are taking to be to improve your effectiveness or your performance are adequate. When you say you have done that, have you done it correctly and could there not be a better way of you reaching the same goal in a different manner. We will do that through the Joint Standing Committee on Intelligence. Thank you, hon House Chair.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr B A Radebe): Thank you, Minister. The next follow-up question is from the ANC, the hon Noe.

Mr E P NOE: Thank you very much, House Chair. Thank you, hon Minister, for the answers. I just want to establish or ask the Minister to inform this House whether the department is collaborating with the Department of Home Affairs in order to curb these activities not to happen again in the future. Thank you.

The MINISTER IN THE PRESIDENCY: Thank you, hon House Chair, and thank you to the hon member for the question. Indeed, the State Security Agency collaborates with the Department of Home Affairs, the Department of International Relations and other departments within the Justice and Crime prevention cluster in terms of the work that has to be done to deal with migration

and the movement of people.

We are also members of the Border Management Agency Interministerial Committee as it is prescribed by the law and we contribute our information there. Before the BMA Interministerial Committee, there is also the technical committee which is constituted of the directors-general and other officers relevant for that work, to make sure that the technical work and the operational work is integrated and there are improvements. So, we are fully co-operating and collaborating with the Department of Home Affairs and also the Department of International Relations. You will recall when the Minister of Home Affairs appeared in the portfolio committee and clarified how the visas to the Libyans, for instance, were issued in ... [Inaudible.]. Thank you, hon House Chair.

Question 42:

The MINISTER IN THE PRESIDENCY: Hon House Chairperson, various initiatives are introduced in line with the 2024/25 Annual Performance Plan, APP of the State Security Agency, SSA, to improve intelligence gathering and operational capacity within the agency. The SSA operational model, guided by the following

three critical principles, performs the bedrock to improve the intelligence gathering and operational capacity. The operational activities of the SSA are guided by the supremacy of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, which is the first principle. Centrality and primacy of analysis in the intelligence process is the second principle and the operational direction that sets out the intelligence priorities.

Organised crime and political instability that result in political killing and assassination is a key focus area in the approved 2024/25 operational directive as it directly undermines the authority of the state. Organised crime, political instability and the assassinations of people is also part of the key intelligence priorities of the country. To improve the intelligence gathering capacity, great emphasis has been placed on the strengthening of our operational analysis, both on the strategic, situational and operational analysis level.

In this regard, through the collaboration with the Intelligence Academy, a sizable group of operational members from all nine provinces were nominated and underwent

functional operational analysis training aimed at improving our analysis capacity. The improvement of the analysis capacity will assist in the target analysis, profiling, understanding the models of branding and the phenomenon of organised crime and political assassinations contributing to quantitative product. For example, national assessment and target specific assessment amongst others.

Informed by the updated National Threat Assessment, operational plans with clearly defined strategic intelligence and operational aims have been reviewed and are continuously being updated through collaboration with Southern African Development Community, SADC partners. Joint operational plans have been reviewed and signed off to deal with the phenomenon of transnational organised crimes, improve co-ordination and information sharing within the internal structures of the SSA and external to the SSA, which is, the SA Police Service, SAPS Crime Intelligence, Hawks and others. Integrated and multidisciplinary teams is a key element of the SSA operational strategies.

You will recall that the Minister of Police has also showed that we are deploying multidisciplinary teams in areas where

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they are confronted with high organised crime incidences such as the Western Cape, Cape Town, Eastern Cape, in Gqeberha and KwaZulu-Natal, for example.

The second part of the question deals with various commissions of inquiry into the work of intelligence, including the High-Level Review Panel of 2018 and the Expert Panel into the 2021 July Unrest. These platforms have diagnosed the causes of intelligence lapses as not necessarily due to lack of intelligence, rather, the challenge was attributed to inadequate intelligence sharing and co-ordination.

To alleviate this challenge, in April 2024, the Minister in the Presidency, after consultation with the Joint Standing Committee on Intelligence, issued the regulations for intelligence co-ordination. The hon members will appreciate that since the dawn of democracy in 1994, there has never been any regulations on intelligence co-ordination, albeit this being a legislative requirement in terms of the National Strategic Act, as amended. Essentially, the regulations compel the national intelligence structures to honour their legislative mandate of supplying intelligence to the National Intelligence Co-ordinating Committee. They also outline proper

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interventions to be undertaken when national intelligence structures default on their legislated mandate.

Moreover, and to ensure that the public is mobilized, to take responsibility for national security, in February 2024, the National Security Council approved the 2024 to 2029 National Intelligence estimates and recommended that a public version be issued as part of National Security Public Awareness Campaign. I had committed to release that no later than October this year. Similarly, the National Security Strategy was approved by Cabinet in March 2024. Again, the recommendation of the public version of the National Security Strategy was endorsed. We proposed to the National Security Council, the National Security Strategy, the public version of it, be released to the public. Similarly, we will release these documents for the public no later than September, in fact, at the latest, in October.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr B A Radebe): Hon Minister, your five minutes is gone. You will just make a follow up on the other questions.

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Ms S M N MOKOENA: House Chair, it is quite a challenge. I am hopeful that there will be a written response because I could hardly follow on the answer, and it was going quite quickly. Could the Minister kindly clarify whether any political office bearers had been found to have abused intelligence services before? If so, what measures were taken to ensure that investigations are free from political interference and that justice is applied uniformly regardless of the affiliation of the person who has abused such. Thank you.

The MINISTER IN THE PRESIDENCY: House Chair, I must indicate that the SSA has no mandate to investigate political office bearers. However, the regulations and the directives within SSA that have been put in place have been strengthened to make sure that nobody includes members of the service or political office bearers abuse the resources of the SSA. Thank you.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr B A Radebe): Thank you, hon Minister. Hon Mokoena, and Kaunda and company there. You know, hon Mokoena asked a good question there and you were disturbing her. She could not follow up the what the Minister was doing.

Mr M BILLY: Which of the root causes for capacity in the Intelligence Services would the immediate implementation of the revised General Intelligence Laws Act address, and will it ensure that the Cabinet Ministers receiving the intelligence reports act and respond timelessly to the risk and threats indicated in those reports?

The MINISTER IN THE PRESIDENCY: Hon House Chair, the General Intelligence Laws Amendment Bill does not only require the Ministers to respond effectively, it also requires the members of the service to respond effectively and immediately. So, also the regulations of intelligence sharing and co-ordination also requires members to respond effectively and there consequences for non-response when members are required to act. Thank you.

IsiXhosa:

Nksz N P MCINGA: Mphathiswa, kuyacaca ukuba kweli sebe lakho kukho ibhinqa kwaye uthetha kamnandi.

English:

While efforts to reform the State Security Agency to improve intelligence gathering and operational capacity are noted, it

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is concerning that organised crime and political assassinations continue to rise, suggesting that these measures...

IsiXhosa:

... uthetha ngazo ngoku...

English:

... may not be sufficient. Could you please provide specific details on how these reforms have translated into tangible results on the ground and what more steps are being taken to address persistent intelligence gaps that contribute to such crimes?

IsiXhosa:

Ndiphinde kwakhona, Mphathiswa, ndithi...

English:

...considering the intelligence failures during events like July 2021 Unrest, what specific mechanism have been put in place to ensure prompt and co-ordinated responses to potential threats in the future? How will the Ministry ensure the public that these changes are not just on paper but are effectively

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enhancing the State Security Agency's capacity to protect citizens...

IsiXhosa:

...abantu bethu? Enkosi.

English:

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr B A Radebe): Thank you, hon Mcinga. I think that even the members of the House must take cognisance of the fact that Rule 228(4) is noticeably clear that the questions cannot have more than five sub questions. So, the Minister will be given a leeway to answer what she can. So, please take note of that. Hon Minister, the floor is yours.

The MINISTER IN THE PRESIDENCY: Hon House Chair, I must also say that I am not an isiXhosa-speaking person and there is no translation service available to me. So, the part that you have spoken in isiXhosa, unfortunately I will not be able to respond to. I will then deal with the question that asked about the measures that have been done to deal with the problems which arose in 2021 July Unrest and whether they are

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improving. In that regard, the Review Panel recommended that there must be improvement in intelligence sharing.

I have earlier reported that we have finalised and gazetted the National Intelligence Co-ordinating Regulations to enable the sharing of intelligence because that was the major failure that led to the 2021 July Unrest. With that we also showed that those regulations are the first ever, in the history of democratic South Africa to be put in place. Since the 2021 July Unrest, we have not heard any other, irrespective of threats by other political parties and other people, to shut down the country. The law enforcement agencies have been able to intervene because of that intelligence sharing to make sure that those unrest are quelled.

I will not want to name examples of the unrest or threats to shut down the country or to disorganise the country because we do not want to encourage those who were planning, to do so again because they would want to assess whether our co-ordination is strong. But since 2021 July Unrest there have not been any event that has shut down this country because there has been improvement in intelligence sharing. That is

why we are confident that the work we have put in place is sufficient and is bearing fruit.

Of course, there would always be room for improvement and as you reach one level of improvement, you always aspire for the next higher level. So, we will not stop in terms of improving our capacity of intelligence sharing and our capacity of effective and quick responding. Thank you, hon House Chair.

Mr P A PHALA: Hon Chair, hon Minister, are there any intelligence operatives continuously being trained to deal with such heinous crimes against the people of this country? Thank you.

The MINISTER IN THE PRESIDENCY: Hon House Chair, as showed in the report, we continuously train intelligence operatives and to gain more capacity and new skills. As I have shown, we have, from all nine provinces, trained intelligence operatives for analysis, profiling and in intelligence gathering in the new era of data analytics and in the use of technology. We have also continued to train intelligence officers on the advent of cyber in terms of the operational environment where they find themselves in. We continue to train them on the

operational and the situational environments in which they find themselves in to make sure that they have capacity. That is why we have the Intelligence Academy that continues to do work.

We have also set a target for the Intelligence Academy to cooperate with other higher institutions of higher learning so that we can beef up the robustness of our training, including international bodies. Thank you, hon House Chair.

Question 22:

The MINISTER IN THE PRESIDENCY: Hon House Chairperson, in terms of this question I'll try to respond in a manner that does not compromise national security and that does not jeopardise the work underway by both intelligence service members and other law enforcement agencies dealing with this. I'm going to divert slightly from the written response. We were aware of or notified about the coming into the country by the people from Libya and also the type of training they were trying to have. We traced them, we followed them and we made sure that we monitored that work. When it was necessary, we alerted the police about this work and we needed to agree on

the police's response and the timing of that response in a manner that did not compromise the other work.

As I've indicated, we are going to provide the details to the Joint Standing Committee on Intelligence in terms of when we became aware of that and what we did to alert other law enforcement agencies as soon as we were alerted. The State Security Agency, SSA, is also playing an advisory role to the Department of Home Affairs in terms of improving South Africa's visa regime as part of the reforms of Operation Vulindlela which is led by the Presidency with a specific focus on the automation of these processes. Members will recall, and it's already been disclosed by the Minister of Home Affairs, that the visas of the Libyans were handwritten and not generated by the system because of that.

The SSA is also collaborating with the Border Management agency and the border police to improve the biometric movement control system and border security, respectively. Thank you, hon House Chair.

Ms J S MANANISO: Hon Ryder, my question to the Minister is as follows. Noting the sensitivity around this matter, I want to

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check if the department has any plans in place to prevent such horrific acts from happening in future.

The MINISTER IN THE PRESIDENCY: Hon House Chair, we continue to put measures ... to improve and we continue to monitor certain operations so that we can learn and then expose. I must indicate that we have had great lessons from the training camp in Mpumalanga as we track other military operations or training camps in the country so that we can prevent the illegal training of military people in our country whether by domestic or foreign forces. Thank you, hon House Chair.

Ms M MAKESINI: Chairperson, noting that this incident has the potential to threaten the safety of state security, what informed the Ministry's breach of trust and integrity, and of state security? How can the people of South Africa trust that the State Security ... is still a reputable institution with an optimal function if it is unable to flag such interceptions over a prolonged period? How are we going to trust that the Ministry is not captured when it is unable to detect such an occurrence? Thank you.

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The MINISTER IN THE PRESIDENCY: Hon House Chair, it's very good that it's not the Ministry that has to do the work because I'm not a trained intelligence officer. It is the department of State Security Agency. I indicated that they had flagged the operations in time and that's why law enforcement agencies were able to act. That operation itself has helped us gather more information which is useful in the work that we are doing to monitor those ... So, South Africans can feel safe because those people were not arrested by anybody else but law enforcement and law enforcement was not alerted by anybody else but the intelligence services.

Of course, media headlines are media headlines and state security agencies do not respond to media headlines. Our job is to ensure that South Africans are safe and that they continue to sleep in peace knowing that there are law enforcement agencies at work, and that we continue to deal with the challenges that face this country in terms of the safety and security of South Africans. Thank you.

Mr M M PETER: Chair, as the UDM we have withdrawn our questions for this House. Thank you.

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Mr J H P BRITZ: Hon Minister, a lot has been said today about the training facility in Mpumalanga. The following question remains. When did the intelligence services become aware of this training camp which was advertised on the internet even before any action was taken? Thank you.

The MINISTER IN THE PRESIDENCY: Hon House Chair, those details will be provided to the Joint Standing Committee on Intelligence when it's set up by the two Houses of Parliament and we commit to provide the relevant details to that relevant committee. Unfortunately, it's information which we cannot disclose on this platform.

Hon House Chair, I would like to make a request in terms of the earlier ruling that was made regarding the responses to the follow-up questions that members could not hear. I know that hon members have written them, so if I can get them in writing then we commit to respond to those. We are going to submit written responses to all the questions that were submitted to us to the House within two hours from now because they are written responses to the original questions that were sent. Thank you, hon House Chair.

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The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr D R Ryder): Minister, thank you very much. We've come to the end of questions to the Minister in the Presidency for State Security. I'd like to thank the hon Minister for availing herself to answer the questions, although it has been a challenging session and has not worked as best as we would've liked. However, we will certainly ensure that we follow up with those questions in writing to you, Minister, in order to ensure that we do indeed get appropriate responses. Hon Minister, thanks again for availing yourself to answer the questions, as I said under trying circumstances.

The MINISTER IN THE PRESIDENCY: Thank you, hon House Chair and thank you, hon members.

Question 10:

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Ms S P Boshielo): Good morning to hon members. The SA Police Service established the Economic Infrastructure Task Teams, EITTs, in 18 districts at provincial level in two provinces namely, the North West and Mpumalanga provinces. The focus of the EITT is to combat illegal mining, essential infrastructure related crimes and the illicit traffic of controlled metals, precious metals like

copper, aluminum, chrome, etc. Dedicated personnel have been allocated to the Infrastructure Task Teams, ITTs.

The human resource requirement in terms of the Police Act, as well as the Public Service Act appointed members have been recruited from existing structures within each province and consist of experienced and knowledgeable personnel within their respective functional environment. The establishment of the EITTs was based on the premise of integrating operational processes, resources and intelligence across all the operational environment of the SA Police Service under a single command structure in order to successfully address illegal mining and essential infrastructure related crimes in a coherent and synergised manner.

The following operation interventions are being implemented to continue the curb and to counter the scourge of illegal mining in the Dr Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality in the North West. In terms of the National Crime Combating Forums, instruction 1 of 2021, an overarching crime combating strategy was registered to run from 01 February 2021 to 31 March 2025. Provincial joint operations and intelligence structures, the Provjoints; illegal mining operations strategy; the

intelligence co-ordinating committee; illegal mining threat risk assessment report; district mine crime combating forums and provincial nonferrous metal priority committee and organised crime threat assessment processes.

The SA Police Service has also initiated Operation Vala Umgodi to address illegal mining. In addition to the establishment of the EITTs, Operation Vala Umgodi focuses on the stabilisation and mobilisation of illegal mining in the country by comprehensively addressing the urgent challenges posed by illegal mining and resultant criminal activities which have led to significant revenue losses in South Africa.

Through the adoption of a comprehensive and integrated approach, this plan aims to target the underlying causes of both illegal mining and associated crimes. The operation involved the SA Police Service working in collaboration with other government department including the SA National Defence Force, the Department of Home Affairs and the Border Management Agency. The crime patterns, crime threat analysis and intelligence-led operations enabled the proactive identification of crime generators which are then responded to

by means of targeted deployments which include the SA Police Service and other government departments.

These deployments are monitored and guided from provincial and district level thereby ensuring that the modus operandi and hotspots are addressed. The deployment in terms of Operation Vala Umgodi also address threat-based and include drone deployments across provinces which are utilised for information and evidence gathering. The Khuma and Kanana Townships fall under the auspices of the Dr Kenneth Kaunda District which executes high density intelligent-led operation in accordance with the provincial Operation Tlotla Molao and Operation Shanela.

All available resources including provincial specialised unit such as the Organised Crime Investigation Unit, the Anti-Gang Unit, the Tactical Response Team, the Public Order Policing, Canine Units and the Illegal Mining Task Team are deployed to address threat associated with illegal mining. In addition, the SA Police Service chairs the provjoints which includes various government departments including Justice, Crime Prevention and Security Cluster to conduct joint enforcement operation. Thank you very much, hon House Chair.

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Ms O D MEDUPE: Hon Minister, thanks for the detailed response. Has there been any marked decline in the illegal mining since the establishment of these operations? I heard you mentioning a number of operations. I am asking myself whether they are yielding positive result for us? Thank you.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Ms S P Boshielo): Yes, they are yielding positive results. If you can see it seems the crime has migrated towards the Eastern Cape and the Western Cape. What we have done in terms of the three areas that we established; Orkney, Stilfontein and the border between the North West and the Free State, we have put the task teams and the national task team in both provinces to be able to do that.

The mining security also are helping us, they are closing in the umgodis (mining holes) so that we do not have to go back to where they are. The army is also playing a very huge role as deployed by the President of the country to do that. So, for sure, you have seen now from the North West that the illegal mining is coming to a stop. Now, they have moved to extortions and all those things because in here we are on them

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and we are making sure we deal with them decisively. Thank you very much, hon House Chair.

Mr N GOTSELL: Speaking of Orkney, Deputy Minister, I recently did a quick visit there and I just want to commend you on a very good operation at that specific police station. Minister, back to the question, to what extent has illegal mining syndicates become the equivalent of drug or crime gangs who fight each other over territories? Is the police's Anti-Gang Unit able to infiltrate? Are they trained specifically to neutralise mining gangs in the same way as they focus on drug and other crime related gangs? Thank you very much.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Ms S P Boshielo): As I have said, it is just that I am not able to disclose exactly how we do the operations but with the task teams that I have mentioned, a part of it I said that it is intelligence driven. If you are talking about intelligence driven, what you are saying also include what we do because you don't want to expose your informers so that you are defeated and people are killed. That is why I am saying, you can see that the type of crimes now have moved from illegal mining to these extortions,

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to killings and other things because now they don't have space to operate on.

Yes, of course, in terms of the gangs, as you see in the Western Cape and the Eastern Cape they fight for that. However, also in those part of the country we are also on them, for sure you know that in the Eastern Cape we were able to arrest almost 772 in terms of extortions and everything. We are still on the ground and we will still be able to do that. I am not able to disclose what we do to get the information. Nevertheless, you hardly hear even the media talking about the illegal mining in the North West but go to extortion and others in the Eastern Cape and the Western Cape. Thank you very much. Also, let's thank our communities which are also assisting us in this regard. Thank you very much, hon Chair.

Ms L H ARRIES: Minister, the EFF has always maintained that there is no political will or strategy for the police to respond to crime especially the crimes involving illegal miners. This is because this office has not showed any or resolved dealings with illegal activities in the mining industry. We want to know what measures you have put in place to strengthen the relationship with the Department of Home

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Affairs to curb illegal mining activities so that they get prosecuted and not only being deported?

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Ms S P Boshielo): Hon member, as we have said that we have the plan and I think I have outlined it. All the teams that we have deployed in terms of illegal mining and I said, you can see the pattern of the crime have shifted from where illegal mining was coming from. So, if you are not able to see it I am not sure what to say.

However, as I said, we have deployed all this and the army is also helping us. Also, the mines are also coming on board in terms of providing security but also in terms of closing the mgodis (mining holes). That is why we call it Operation Vala Umgodis. So, in terms of the strategy, it is working and I think we will continue to make sure that it works. People thought we were done coming for two weeks for the media. It has been there and we want to vala (close) all the mgodis until they go out and there is no crime like that. So, it is not correct that there's no strategy. I have outlined it. Thank you very much. Thank you very much, hon House Chair.

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Mr J S MAJOLA: Hon Deputy Minister, arising from your responses you mentioned that this activity is posing a serious threat in terms of both our revenue enhancement and in terms of our economic growth. Going to the question, you mentioned a number of stakeholders involved and units from the SA Police Service, the EITTs, the ITTs, the vala umgodi and also the army.

It has been mentioned in this House today that the role played by the community members is vital. Do they form part of the operations to fight against this illegal mining? Are they forming part of the stakeholders or strategic committees that are there? Thank you.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Ms S P Boshielo): Yes, definitely they are forming part. In terms of the units that are in the SA Police Service you have the Independent Police Investigative Directorate, IPID; you have the Hawks and you have what we call Civilian Secretariat. The Civilian Secretariat deal with how we deal with the communities. They have the head of the Civilian Secretariat to show that we are serious about working with the communities decided by the Director-General and also in all the provinces. The community

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policing forums and all other stakeholders are then, you know, managed from that unit.

We increased the budget in this financial year so that we are able to equip our community for policing forum and also communities that want to help us in terms of the torches and the badges. Also, we are looking at providing some of the stipend so that they must not tire and be able to assist us in fighting crime. There is no way we can fight crime if we don't involve our communities especially even the Gender-Based Violence and Femicide, GBVF, where it happens in our homes where the police are not even there so.

It is a very crucial element of fighting crime and we really want to it funded very well and we are talking with the Treasury to increase the budget. The agreement that we had now with the Western Cape government is piloted or projected and led by the civilian secretariat so that everybody comes in. Yes, we are doing that and we will still continue to do that. Thank you very much, hon House Chair.

Question 5:

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Ms S P BOSHILO): House Chair, the National Instruction setting of 27 on case docket management describe and regulate the case docket management process, including the closing of case dockets to ensure that each docket is properly investigated and that all possible sources of information have been explored. It should be noted that the fact that the case docket has been earmarked as closed or filed as per the terminology that is used by the SA Police Service does not mean that the docket will not receive further attention.

The case dockets in question were filed or closed in accordance with the categories that are specified in the above national instruction. Certain case dockets are fully investigated and are filed pending the arrest of the perpetrator as a warrant of arrest has been issued for this person and has been circulated in the subcirculation system. The case docket will immediately be reopened should the person be traced and arrested.

Certain case documents are filed pending the recovery of items sort, which would have been circulated on the SAPS circulation

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system. The case docket will immediately be reopened, circulated, and recovered.

Where case dockets are fully investigated but the perpetrator is unknown and cannot be identified, it is also filed but is placed on a Bring-Forward System which ensures that the case docket is re-examined periodically to review the contents of the case docket and determine if nothing more can be done to resolve the case.

As indicated above, a Bring-Forward System is in place to ensure that case dockets that are filed dockets are automatically reopened after having been filed. Case dockets that were filed due to insufficient evidence are brought forward and are reviewed every 12 months. The brought forward process is system-driven as per the SAPS Investigation Case Docket Management System. Case dockets in respect of which a circulated wanted person or a circulated item of property is arrested or recovered will be reopened immediately for further investigation.

Case dockets in respect of which forensic investigation leads have been generated by the SAPS's Forensic Science Laboratory

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are automatically reopened when a perpetrator has been identified by means of investigation leads, which may be based on either DNA or fingerprints. Thanks very much, House Chair.

Mr V GERICKE: House Chair, thank you, Deputy Minister. Madam Deputy Minister, the poor quality of investigations by detectives is not a secret and this is why the National Prosecuting Authority, NPA, in many cases is struggling to process successfully. The public is subsequently deprived of the right to be protected by the state and feel aggrieved by the situation. Can you, in your capacity, assure this House today, that the renewed effort is in place to skill and train detectives to prepare them for more advanced and comprehensive investigations? And the EFF also wants to know by when can the public expect change and transformation in this regard? Thank you.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Ms S P BOSHILO): Hon House Chair, yes, in terms of our detective, we have short courses that they attend to upgrade their knowledge and investigative skills. We also have agreements with other countries that help us to train our detectives, but we also take them through other vigorous courses so that they can up their game.

I don't have to assure this House; we can see that now our detectives are doing a very good job. Unfortunately, after training them, sometimes they are poached by the private sector, which lure them with higher salaries and higher perks. So, if this House can assist us to get some budget, we can be able to match the thing, but they all fish from our own pond, including the metro police, they all fish from the same pond as ours, but we will not stop training and making sure that docketts are done and investigated in a qualitative manner. And for the two months, I am sure you can feel it that we do that.

So, we still have men in blue that are prepared under this circumstance. Unfortunately, you will find that in the current scenario, one detective gets allocated 300 docketts, which is virtually impossible to do. So, to request the House to really support us to be able to get funds to train more, especially those youth who are still young and are not at work, we can just redirect them and train them in the detective and other specialized skills that we need as the SAPS and be able to do what you said we do.

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We are committed, hon House Chair, to make sure that we deal with crime very decisively, but in the process, we want your assistance. Thank you very much, hon House Chair.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr D R Ryder): Thank you, Deputy Minister. Using the opportunity to ask for more budget, well done.

Mr E P NOE: House Chair, I think the Deputy Minister has already partly answered my question as far as the continuous training, but I must highlight the Deputy Minister that the alleged five million dockets that has been referred to it is quite high number that shows there is a big challenge and a case in point that the country has been having an attention on it, which really indicates that there is a serious problem. Some have been before the courts for 10 years now, and one of them is the case of our icon Senzo Meyiwa. I hope the department is also paying attention in that regard. Thank you.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Ms S P BOSHIELO): Hon House Chair, I don't think the five million dockets that have been talked about are there. In terms of facts, we don't have five million dockets. But we take your point that we need to deal

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with the issue. It is just that it is a whole chain system of the justice system. We arrest, like Gqeberha in Eastern Cape, as I said, we have arrested 772, two weeks after going there and put the operations, and the Correctional Services are already complaining that their prisons are full. They don't know where to take ... and we there is no way in which we can stop arresting because there are still people who do extortions, especially to school kids, which is very urgent for us. We saw the principal that was killed. This is very urgent for us.

So, there is no way in which we can say no, now the prisons are full, we are not going to arrest. We are still going arrest. Unfortunately, the supply chain in terms of the justice system and their home - the prison is also ... One of the community members asked why we say correctional services and not prisons because it is prisons.

In terms of the Meyiwa case, it's a very sad case, I must say. I don't even watch it because as a parent, looking at it, it's like a drama, Muvhango. I don't know why we are even flighting it there. You can see the lawyers tackling each other and trying to get publicity. We don't want to give an impression

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that you can be a superstar by doing crime. You stand there in front ... like Bester, who would stand there and want to address the community.

So, we will talk to the media to assist us in terms of dealing with this issue so that we don't promote wrong things. I don't think it is fair for the Meyiwa family, and I don't think it is fair for South Africans and I don't think we should be glorifying crime. That is a crime that is painful. Somebody lost a child. It should be done in a dignified manner. When you look at the court, it's on technical issues and all other issues.

But we are in contact with our Justice Department to be able to see how we can assist each other. Thank you very much, hon House Chair.

Mr N GOTSELL: Deputy Minister, the Service Charter for Victims of Crime in South Africa provides, *inter alia*, that victims have the right to request assistance and, where relevant, have access to available social health and counselling services as well as legal assistance. Do the SAPS acknowledge the important role that victims play within the criminal justice

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system? And do they honour the provisions of the Victims Charter specifically to be legally represented, but, moreover, do they appreciate that the input of victims or their representatives can contribute to the success of an investigation, and are you willing to give me an undertaking in this regard?

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Ms S P BOSHILO): House Chair, ironically, this morning at 9:00, we had a meeting with the Minister of Social Development because we believe that we need to work hand in hand with them and our firm proposal is that each and every police station should have a social worker to be able to deal with the social ills and the victims. Police are taught to fight criminals, not to wipe tears or to listen to ... [Inaudible.] They appear to be hard because they are dealing with hard criminals.

So, we are partnering with Social Development, and we gave them this proposal that they make available the social workers to us and like us, they are talking about the budgets and other things. But we agreed that we have touched the two directors-general to be able to talk and come up with a comprehensive plan on how we help our victims and make sure

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they are able to give the statement so that we can convict because the main thing is not to just have statement for the sake of having a statement. The main thing is to make sure that at the end the victim can give evidence and get a conviction.

So, the Minister of Social Development was very positive about these issues, and we have given ourselves a tight a timeframe. We said within the two weeks we should have been able to get the two departments synchronising, like we did with the metros. At the Cape Town metro, we took less than a month to sign an agreement to work together so that we have all the levels of government fighting the criminals together, not necessarily having a haphazard reaction. Also, in the Eastern Cape, including Gauteng and eThekweni where we are going to.

So, yes, I can say the certainty, this is our plan that we must execute. The other one which we are not looking at, which I think this committee should assist us, or this House, is that when the criminals are arrested, they have the rights, you even see them posting that they eat, they wash, and they go to school.

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What about the victims? What about the victim's family? So, it is high time we sue the criminals to pay for the victims. It is not the other way around where they must even regard our prisons as hotels. It is high time it prisons sentences become hard labour, but also sue them, sell their property, and help the affected victims. So, I can assure you, we are on it.

We also met with the Department of Education because scholars belong in schools, not in the streets to be missed or shot by stray bullets. So, we are meeting every stakeholder, and we are not going to get tired, like the hon member said, to involve everybody. They just say working with the GNU, we work with everybody and whoever, but if we must bring all of you screaming and kicking so that we reclaim our country from the criminals, we will do that. Some of us are threatened. Our phones are hacked. They broke into the Deputy Minister's house. But we are not going to relent. We are going to fight and still ... [Inaudible.] ... That one, I promise you. I will do that with honour. Thank you very much, House Chair.

Mr H J VAN DEN BERG: House Chair, Deputy Minister, the question of dockets being closed is a real concern given the fact that a citizen finds it difficult to succeed in opening a

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case these days. How disappointing is it to learn of cases being closed due to unsuccessful investigations. My question to the Deputy Minister is: How long will it be before we can make use of the unbiased and terror management systems that are found in digital technology and when will we be able to move away from the old pen, paper, and file systems? Will simple software that can be installed on smartphones not aid in more successful prosecutions?

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Ms S P BOSHILO): House Chair, you are going to say I am canvassing again. In terms of the technology that we found in the SAPS; it is just too low. And when we asked, some say it is 20%, but you can even see it is like 10%.

So, our main issue is to have money because the budget of the SAPS has been cut for more than 10 years. We want to go into the technology. That's why I am saying, nowadays, you cannot police with your eyes and your ears. You need technology to be able to do that. So, if we have dockets that are done electronically, even statements from the victims, because sometimes they are so traumatised they can't even write. But if you have like a phone, which can - the voice notes and -

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they are able to do that. And in terms of also the grabbers ... some of the criminals do crime in jails. And we are talking the Department of Correctional Services to say we want to put our grabbers and jam the systems, and the people who work there will use the landline if they really must use that so that we do some of these things. So, some others - I will not be able to tell you - maybe I must tell you outside. But in terms of technology, it is not a question of if and what.

We do need technology. And some of us are driving it because we know how important it is. I did my doctorate, and my topic is about e-government services, how we can ... [Inaudible.] ... facing this challenge in terms of the budget, the software, the skills, how best can we be able to do that? My argument is to say - which is a dream - I know that every policeman or women must be given at least a tablet so that when they go into the scene, they are able to take pictures in terms of the evidence, and then they are able to take statements, they are able to capture everything that is around there, and they just download it in court and whatever. And then the magistrate or the judge can see what the crime scene looked like, what was happening as they explain, and all other things. So, but they will say I am dreaming. But if we can do

it with e-learning where we are trying to give every learner a tablet, we can do that with our officers.

That is a dream that we want to have technology in terms of our work. I don't do paper; I do technology, and I can see they are struggling. They are still giving me papers. And I am struggling with the paper. So, rest assured that one is on top of our table, and we will go to Treasury, we will put our case forth, and I hope this House again, as you said, I am campaigning. Yes, I want you to support us in this endeavour. Thank you very much, House Chair.

Question 11:

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Ms S P Boshielo): Hon House Chair, the South African Police Service, Saps, is ensuring that the co-ordinated multidisciplinary response to the criminal activities of the so-called construction mafia is applied in the provinces where the crime tendency has manifested itself.

An investigative capacity has been established in the organised crime investigation of the serious and violent crime investigation component in the division of Detective and

Forensic Services to address the incidents of extortion and violence at construction and related crimes in all nine provinces around the country.

The Saps has also recently significantly escalated its mobilisation of resources to the Eastern Cape province in response to an engagement between the community of the OR Tambo District Municipality in Gqeberha and the Minister of Police. This mobilisation included a specialised investigation capacity in addition to specialised visible policing units, which are intended to stabilise the incidences of violent crimes associated with this threat.

In all of these above-mentioned interventions, the Saps partners with all relevant internal and external stakeholders, including state owned enterprises such as Eskom, Telkom, Transnet, Gautrain and all victims of these mafias, including the National Prosecution Authority and private stakeholders such as Business Against Crime SA and the South African Revenue Protection Association. This is a good working relationship between all role players, and constant monitoring of all strategies and action plans ensure that operational focus is maintained.

The Saps also signed a memorandum of understanding with Business Against Crime SA to explore and utilise their expertise, information processes and technologies resident in the business community to enhance the initiative to fight crime. The Saps have initiated the eyes and ears programme, whereby the police and the private security industry sit together in all provincial command centres as part of this partnership. Different monthly stakeholder meetings are held to discuss ways of dealing with the construction mafia issues.

The reality of this crime trend, however, is that the actual number of such crimes is probably higher than those reported as people are reluctant to open cases and witnesses are reluctant to testify. The National Commissioner, General Masemola has, however, emphasised that the justice cluster will work together to tackle crime from all angles.

The Saps has taken the initiative to improve reporting channels regarding this type of crime threats, where the intimidation of complaints and witnesses is rife by, for example, introducing an extortion hotline in the Eastern Cape to make it easier for this crime to be reported. Individuals

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within communities, organisations and businesses must be prepared to work with the Saps in bringing these criminals to justice. I think I'm done, hon House Chair. Thank you.

Ms J S MANANISO: House Chairperson, to the Minister, you have covered some of the issues in my question relating to the successes as you were responding to hon Medupe. However, my question is, what is the level of co-operation from the community in terms of testifying in the cases in our courts, and what can you tell those who are watching or following on YouTube in terms of what will benefit them in co-operating when we have such cases? Thank you.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Ms S P Boshielo): House Chair, in terms of co-operation of communities, like I said, they are co-operating very well. I won't be able to read you all the figures but let me touch on the most important thing. In Nelson Mandela, as of 21 July when we started our operation there, in terms of property related crimes 60 arrests were made, 97 arrests have been effected in contact crime, 205 in other serious crimes like shoplifting, theft and general fraud, 635 in police generated crimes, 421 in drugs, of course 186 arrests in drunk driving and 448 arrests in intimidation,

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pointing of firearms and domestic violence related arrests.

So, I can go on and on.

In OR Tambo District Municipality, in terms of second-hand goods operations, 79, tracing operations, 399 and 2189 Vehicle Check Points, VCPs. I am talking about this period only when we went there and put our operation in place. So, yes, it is a success, and I can say we would have never done it without the community assisting us in this matter.

We had an imbizo that I was chairing in the Eastern ...

[Interjections.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr D R Ryder): Sorry, Deputy Minister.

Hon members online please if I can ask you to make sure you are muted, please. Please continue, Deputy Minister.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Ms S P Boshielo): Thank you very much. We had an imbizo in Gqeberha and I was chairing the stakeholder meeting. There was one guy who is a tavern owner who was trying to instigate the community against the police. I gave him three minutes like the House Chair - I see the time here and I always try to respect it - When the time was up, I

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said to him, please give another person. He started pointing at me saying: "You think you are going to succeed; you are not going to succeed". He was starting a threat there and I told him that I am from Seshego, we can go outside, and I will marinate you. These are some of the things.

If they dare break into a Deputy Minister's place, they are not breaking into the Deputy Minister's place but undermining the state. We should treat this matter as such. As I said to you, hon member, we are not going to go back. You can point fingers at us, jam our phones and break into our homes, but rest assured, we are not going to go back. We are on the side of the community, and we will remain as such.

I also chaired a meeting here at Hanover in the Western Cape where gangs are rife. They said a woman will not do it, and a woman showed them what a woman is capable of doing. So, it is not a question of a woman but a question of capability, the ability and motivation to be able to do it for our country, our children and our future. Thank you very much, hon House Chair.

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Mr F J BADENHORST: Deputy Minister, do you and the Minister support Minister MacPherson, the Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure's call for a nation summit of all MECs and Ministers in the Justice and Safety cluster to tackle the construction mafia head on?

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Ms S P Boshielo): Hon House Chair, yes, we are working very well with Minister MacPherson, and I know others will say it is the Government of National Unity, GNU, but I think he is supporting the work that we are doing, and we are also supporting him. Surely you have seen him when he talks about this thing. He talks with confidence because he knows we are behind him. In whatever he does we will be able to show him a thing or two. The army is also with us, and we can be able to do that. So, we support him completely including the Department of Human Settlement for people who occupy ... Yes, we support him any time with anything we are able to do.

As I said, we have met with so many departments including Education, Social Development, Correctional Services, Defence and Military Veterans and Public Works. We will work with

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anybody including communities to be able to fight this scourge. Thank you very much, hon House Chair.

Mr B J FARMER: House Chairperson, to the Deputy Minister, in this beautiful country of ours there is this perception of getting away with crime and this is causing poor people to turn to crime for an income. My question is, how does the police envisage tackling this perception of getting away with crime? Thank you.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Ms S P Boshielo): Hon House Chair, the issue of crime can never be justified. Some of us grew literally in a four-room, very poor with parents who died when we were young. We still believed that for us to get out of poverty we had to go to school. So, there is no way in which you can justify crime.

However, I agree with you that if you have especially young people loitering the streets they will be forced to crime. If you have children that go to bed with no food on their table, yes, they will do crime. If they don't have any job opportunities even after going to school and obtaining their degrees, yes, there will be crime.

I am pleased that our government is trying very hard to say, while we are fighting crime trying to grow the economy ... I think the Minister is in China with the President there trying to bring in investors so that we are able to do that ... but also from our side as the Saps, you know that we are recruiting 10 000 new police officers a year and it is not enough, we still have to do more. If the Defence can also be able train some of them it will at least ease some form of unemployment.

So, it is not a matter of getting away with crime. Crime is crime is crime and crime must be dealt with thoroughly. As you correctly said, some are influenced by socioeconomic issues where we think the Department of Social Development, the Department of Education and the Department of Health should come onboard and assist the police so that we are able to organise on construction mafias, drug lords and all other serious crimes. Thank you very much, House Chair.

Ms N P MCINGA: House Chair, I will do hon Chirwa-Mpungose's follow up question. Minister, construction mafias have sought their way to fix the toxic criminal culture in our

communities, going as far as demanding protection fees from ordinary people seeking to survive. In majority of these cases, these instances remain unreported as the police are in alliance with the criminals who terrorise our communities.

Construction mafias are behind water shedding in Tshwane, known by the system as they are the tenderpreneurs and yet nothing is done. Give this House tangible evidence-based system that will prove that this criminal syndicate will be done away with urgently. In the case of failure to do so as with the failure of the police force to grasp this deadliness we are forced to believe the police Minister like the police you are leading stand to benefit from this syndicate. Thank you.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Ms S P Boshielo): Hon House Chair, I think I will not deny that within the police services we have rotten potatoes, and we are trying very hard to deal with them. What I didn't say to you is that when we go into an area like the Western Cape, we go to the communities and get their feelings and what they say. If we have gone to that community before, we first go to give feedback. They will then ask new questions and then we answer them.

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After we finish the session with the communities, we then have a session with all station commanders, and you will not want to be in that meeting because that's when we talk the marching orders on what one needs to do.

One of the things that we tell them is to get out of the pockets of these criminals because you will face us. You must be on that other side and not our side. That is why I am saying that the intimidation that I am talking about also comes from the pushback from inside and outside the systems.

You don't want to think that when we dismantle a R2 billion drug manufacturing - I don't want to call it a company - and you think that the people will sit down and fold their arms. They are going to do a pushback, and we should be able to be stronger and say we are going to fight with them. So, I have given, as I was answering, many instances and I can still go on with the figures to tell you what we have done in terms of contact crime, attempted murders and every other thing.

We are not there but we are going there. At least we see where we are going, and I can tell you that we will flush out all

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those who think they can still work with us and deal with criminals. That is why I am saying we are not going back; we are going forward. So, try us you will meet us on the way. Thank you very much, House chair.

Question 31:

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Ms S P Boshielo): Hon House Chairperson, the following process is used to procure processes that is related to obtaining pass to repair SA Police Service, SAP, vehicles. We use what is called the Transversal Term Contract mended by Treasury. So, we apply for the procurement and financial authority from the provincial office, capture and await the delivery of the pass.

We also have service level agreement and timeframes with the companies to say orders that are placed before 10 o'clock must be delivered on the same day, not later than 16 hours. Orders placed after 16 hours will be delivered on the next day at one o'clock.

Bulk spare orders must be delivered within seven days.

In instances where the designated supplier fails to deliver according to the service-level agreement, SLA, timeframes, the

provincial office and the SA Police Office, SAPS, garages are advised to procure a vehicle pass on a quotation basis.

Poor performance by the designated suppliers is dealt with by the Divisional Commission Supply Chain Management. The SAPS has prioritised the process of ensuring that spare parts are available at the SAPS garages as opposed to ordering when needed.

The supplier in terms of the current RT45 contract, for the supply and delivery of automotive spares, is situated in Johannesburg. However, in terms of the Northern Cape, their nearest station is in Bloemfontein where they go and do minor repairs and where it needs a major overhaul then they use Gauteng.

We are exploring a position where in each an every province they are able to order their parts there and have agreement of SLA with companies around. However, as hon members know most of them are motor vehicle companies. When they deal with government, they use the RT45 contracts that are normally mend by the National Treasury. Thank you very much, hon hon House Chairperson.

Mr O J MOKAE: Hon House Chairperson, I do have follow up question.

Hon Deputy Minister, thank you for the response to that question. Hon Deputy Minister are there any plans in place to devolve power and decentralise the function of the SAPS vehicle repairs to provincialise to a local contractor in the Northern Cape? I obviously know this will apply to other provinces and other parts of the country.

Hon Deputy Minister, you did touch on it, but is there a feeling or a view to decentralise that power. Thank you very much, hon House Chairperson.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Ms S P Boshielo): Hon House Chairperson, yes. As I have said we want to decentralise. The thing is: We do not want Police cars in a garage. They must be in the field working. We do not want to see them at Shoprite doing groceries. We do not want to see them going around doing the work that they are not supposed to. So, yes, it is. We are trying to do that as you know some of the parts like those of the BMWs is a certain company which has a monopoly over it.

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They can be able to say we cannot open in the Northern Cape because it is small. However, they can be able to do that in Bloemfontein which is nearer to the Northern Cape. So, we are doing it to all the provinces including ordering the parts. The problem of ordering the parts also you know is that they will disappear. You just have to use the technology to be able to manage the spares as they go out you know what goes out and what gets in.

I was working for the Department of Transport in Limpopo. When the garage people order tires, a full load will come in, they sign for the delivery and then the same load will go out to deliver somewhere. So, you just must be able to put the technology and the cameras and everything to be able to deal with that. So, as soon as we are ready in terms of devolving that is the plan. We do not want any car at any point in time in our garages. They must be out there and work where they should be deployed. Thank you very much, hon House Chairperson.

Ms Z N NGCOBO: Hon House Chairperson, my question to the Deputy Minister is: Has there been any advancement in reviewing the procurement strategies for obtaining parts to

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repair SAPS vehicles? This include exploring the potential for using more localised service provided or regional repairs in order to improve turnaround time and ensure that Police vehicles are operational and available for duty? Thank you.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Ms S P Boshielo): Hon House Chairperson, I think I have said that we really want to do that, but we also want to partner with the Department of Science, Technology and Innovation so that we are able to produce the cars. We are consumers in this country. We do not produce, but we import cars and all other things. If we can be able to produce our own cars, we will then be able to localise. Maybe we should use donkey and cards because at least they are localised, but unfortunately, we do not have that. However, let us work together towards making sure that we improve our manufacturing industry so that most of the things we can localise and not necessarily order them outside.

At the moment, we still use what we have because the criminals out there and crime are not waiting for the cars to come or to localise or to do what, we still have to do the work in terms of making sure that we deal with crime very decisively.

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However, I agree with you we need to do that. Thank you very much, hon House Chairperson.

Ms A M SIWISA: Hon Deputy Minister, I am listening to your responses, and you speak about the 16 hours waiting period for some parts to come from either KwaZulu-Natal or Gauteng. Furthermore, you are saying that the major repairs are done which means that 16 hours or more there is a crime committed because we are waiting for some part to be delivered from Gauteng or KwaZulu-Natal which means that in the whole process more money is spend for the major or minor repairs on transporting to other provinces.

Now, Deputy Minister, what are the reasons that there were no service providers that could be found in the Northern Cape or the Free State which are the nearest whereby the only two provinces that were identified to supply parts to the Northern Cape police stations or the Northern Cape transport are only from Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal, taking into consideration that we cannot have any time wasted while we are waiting for parts or cars being transferred from somewhere else and then the crime rate is very high especially in the Northern Cape? Thank you.

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The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Ms S P Boshielo): Hon House Chairperson, I think the hon member is saying exactly what I said that these are specific cars you know that the specific industry chose to locate themselves in Johannesburg or in Durban or in Bloemfontein.

Let us agree that in the Northern Cape there is no industry or factory that can provide for those parts. So, we said meanwhile we can utilise Bloemfontein to be able to do that because of the distance. I do not think any business would want to now invest in that but as we said we want each an every province to be able to have their own supplier. However, it is in terms of what we can offer in terms of the critical mass of the business to be able to make money. So, it does not depend on us but on the business on what they want to do.

I agree with you, and I said it that we want all our cars to be on the road working not necessarily in the garage. If it was according to me, we will have a car sitting in the garage for more than two hours, it was according to me.

Unfortunately, reality sometimes ground and humble you due to

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circumstances out there in terms of how the economy work.

Thank you very much, hon House Chairperson.

Mr P A PHALA: Hon House Chairperson and hon Minister you already answered my question because we are concerned about the turnaround time as the Police have already indicated that let us do something. I think the government as one of the main procurement entities in the country. Let us do something so that the work can be done within every province. Thank you.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Ms S P Boshielo): Noted with thanks. We take the advice, hon House Chairperson.

Question 1:

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Ms S P Boshielo): Thank you very much, hon House Chair. As far as the expenditure on administration, maintenance, renovation and construction of police stations is concerned, I would first like to say that we have a total of 1166 police stations. Of these 1166, the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure, is responsible for 873. We have signed a service agreement with them for the maintenance and renovation of 293.

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In terms of money, you can see from this that for 293, we have used R619,911 million and the National Department of Public Works and Infrastructure, NDPWI, R1,1 billion, so in total there should be about R2,107 billion available for maintenance. The problem with the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure is very frustrating when it comes to building and renovating our police stations. Because we are just depending on them and they have yet to build a school, they have yet to build a hospital. I don't think they have the capacity that they have.

When one was working somewhere in Limpopo in the Department of Education, we approached the executive council to use what we call, the project management unit, PMU, to be able to do the schools and we were also able to deal with the pit latrines, better than the public works. And we are able to see some progress. So, we are trying to put that case forth to say if we put the PMU in place, we will be able to go back to the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure and say, why don't we take the 873 and renovate, maintain and build for ourselves. So, we are tied.

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Yes, we send letters, we send monies, but nothing is done. You know that it's not only us, but also almost everybody. But we think that the solution is to go out there and check people who can be able to do that.

The PMU usually consists of your experts in maintenance and construction or quantities, engineers and all the other things. And they will make sure that the money is used efficiently and effectively, that there is no wastage, that there is no corruption and all those things. Yes, we are feeling the pressure. We really want to capture the R873, but we can only capture it if we have the capacity built up. But after the summit, Department of Public Works and Infrastructure will be able to come up with a concrete way in which we can accelerate this because we have transferred the money to them. Thank you.

Mr H J VAN DEN BERG: Thank you, Deputy Minister. With this you have actually also largely answered my follow-up question. But I will mention it in some way so that you can perhaps take it as an additional suggestion. Given that administration and maintenance, as explained, are combined in your budget, could you confirm that there are earmarked funds for the maintenance

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of police stations? If not, would it not be wise to split this vote into two departments to also focus on the renovation and refurbishment of police stations to create a professional working environment? That would boost morale and employee motivation. And if you do it this way, please let us know about the work recently undertaken and completed. Thank you.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Ms S P Boshielo): I think I have done that. But as far as the renovation and maintenance of the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure is concerned, R1,1 billion has been transferred to our side for the 293. And I agree with you that we have to find a way to bring in people who are able to assist us and we take the advice with humility. Thank you very much.

Ms A M SIWISA: Thank you, Chairperson. Deputy Minister, if you look at the state of our police stations across South Africa, especially in the Northern Cape, there are no places where you can feel comfortable. So there seems to be an obvious disregard for public safety and this is also evident in the lack of spending on building police stations. In light of this, how many of the renovated police stations are fully

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functional so that we can achieve positive results in the fight against crime?

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Ms S P Boshielo): Thank you very much. I think I am the one to accept this that our police stations are not in good condition. Actually, it's unfair to even have police sitting there and working from that condition. In some stations there is no water, and, in some stations, there is no electricity. And it's very difficult to work in such a situation. And unfortunately, as members of the public yourselves, you phone us and start to insult the officers without first understanding where they come from. In some instances, they are not even safe, there are two officers at the station, and they get in and mark them in. Also, in terms of their own lives, they are not safe.

As you know, the Acting President of the country and we and the Justice Crime Prevention and Security Cluster, JCPS, Cluster were at the Union Building on 1 September, this Sunday, to remember the 39 men and women in blue who fell on their boots. Seeing their young children and the wives and husbands they left behind, I normally would not even attend. The last time I attended was a long time ago because I cried

the whole time. But because I am here now, I was compelled to do it. But you know, you just do not have the words. Their fathers and mothers, who died in the line of duty, helped fight crime, but a criminal comes and shoots them.

Another problem is that we do not protect them. But we are talking here about the rights of criminals who get three meals in prison. And so on. We say the police are useless, they do not work, they do this and that, forgetting that they are the ones who gave their lives for us. So, it's very, very painful to do that. So as long as we are here, we can make sure that we come up with innovative strategies to say how do we take this back, and I think the summit that we are going to have will bring a better solution to this. In some cases, a police station is just a mobile unit, and the toilet is a pit latrine right on the corner. And you expect a person to chase a criminal in such a situation. So, it's very unfortunate, and that's why we agree with you that we need to look for other ways to improve the infrastructure of these police stations.

Mr P J SWART: Hon Chair, hon Deputy Minister, I really want to firstly acknowledge your passion, and out of the heart, the will of trying to do and change and turning around the ...

[Inaudible.] ... You talked a lot of renovation and maintenance, but we must acknowledge ... [Inaudible.] ... of police stations.

Minister, it appears that the response of the South African Police Service, SAPS, is to population growth, urbanisation and human settlement developments are not being proactive and as always, not demonstrated, a sense of urgency. Allowing crime to take root without response in a new neighbourhood has long lasting impacts which are often irreversible. Requests for stations, upgrades and satellite stations are ignored for years, or simply dismissed.

Minister with the population growth of 1,3% to 1,6% per annum, we should be getting 14 new police stations per year. And there is already a backlog as shown by your answer. You also referred to the arrests that you have made in Gqeberha, and in part you have been complaining about overcrowding. How many police stations do you envisage to build over the next five years?

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Ms S P Boshielo): Thank you very much, hon House Chair. I shall not speak without you

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saying I should speak. I agree with you, the population has increased. Actually, somebody was saying remember, in 2010, the policing was good, and we were able to get people going to court and all those kinds of things. But as we have shown that from 2010, the budget of the SAPS has been cut. And the Minister of Finance fortunately accepted that this has been the case, and it needs to be turned around.

So now, in terms of the ratio of one police officer is to 250, which is just impossible. That is why I am saying, even one detective dealing with 300 docket is just near impossible. So, the 10 000 recruits that we are having every year, it's just a drop. And unfortunately, you are going to say I need the budget. Yes, we need the budget to be able to do that, including the building of the police stations.

As I said, the 1800 and the others that will be built by the public sector, if we get the PMU, we will try. But you will not be able to build as much as you could. With R1 or R2 billion you can build a few. Hon members, we are also wondering what we call a police station as far as the definition of police is concerned, a police station should be

a place where victims of gender-based violence, GBV, have the opportunity to have their privacy.

So, in terms of all that, we are not even nearer that, but it is our goal to be able to do that. We are going to fight to have more budget, to be able to do our policing well. We can't be sitting here coming to you every time to talk to you about the programmes and problems that we have and the budget that we don't have.

We want to come and stand here and say, you can see we are a very free country, and you can feel it yourself. We don't even have to say it to you. I also agree with you that in terms of intergovernmental planning, I think we are lacking. But I have seen last week the Deputy President had the inter-planning sessions for all spheres of government, because if informal settlement just come prop up, there are no proper roads, there is no light. There is no way in which a police officer can come in and all those kinds of things, it is a problem.

Here in the Western Cape, near Hanover, metro police were chasing a criminal who threw the gun into the community.

Instead of giving it to the police, they ran with it to one of

the mukhukhus [shacks] there. This means that they have abetted crime because the same weapon will be used against them. We have instructed our police to do everything in their power to get the gun back. If you don't bring the gun back, you won't be allowed to come back to work. And it was found within a day. Because there really are people who want to collaborate with us. So that's the attitude with which we do our work.

We are in discussion with local government and human settlement to say, when you say you have settled people, there should be enough lightning, no bushes, the design should be able for easier movement, but for also patrolling and make sure that it's safe and for children to be able to play. And for schools and all other recreational facilities, because some of the learners are getting into crime because they don't have anything to do. Thank you.

Mr E P NOE: Thank you, House Chair. We must congratulate the Deputy Minister for pre-empting all the answers and giving questions even before they are asked. My question was going to be around the collaboration with the public works as far as maintenance to police stations. Now that you have answered and

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give it figures, I want to implore the Deputy Minister as she has done on the budgets. Even on this one, where you are encountering frustrations with public works, the select committee, under the leadership of the chairperson, we are there so that we can come and do oversight. Thank you.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Ms S P Boshielo): Thank you very much, hon member. We take what you are giving to us with humility. Thank you, House Chair.

Question 15:

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Ms S P Boshielo): House Chair, a total of 79 cases of murders of traditional leaders were investigated in the 2023-24 financial year. One case was investigated in the Eastern Cape, 76 cases in KwaZulu-Natal and two Mpumalanga. Ten cases were successfully prosecuted in KwaZulu-Natal while the cases in the Eastern Cape and Mpumalanga are still under investigation.

District commanders regularly meet with local Izindunas [Chiefs] to report any threats and imbizos [gatherings] are arranged with communities to communicate current trends and

threats and to educate communities on crime prevention measures that should be employed.

The utilization of mobile client services centre contact points at identified tribal offices and the conducting of awareness campaigns in rural communities are implemented to increase police visibility in rural areas and ensure engagement between the SA Police Service, SAPS, and these communities.

The traditional policing concept was launched in the Eastern Cape in December 2018, followed by three other identified provinces being KwaZulu-Natal in December 2020, Mpumalanga in March 2022 and Limpopo in December 2022.

Engagements between the SAPS, rural communities and traditional leaders about safety in and the policing of rural areas regularly take place at provincial and local levels within the context of the traditional policing concept.

The four identified provinces were allocated resources such as mobile clients service centres, motor vehicles and caravans,

specifically to increase their ability to reach out to rural areas that are located far from the police stations.

Some tribal offices were identified ... [Interjections.]

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Sorry Adv Phindela, could you please mute yourself. Thank you.

Continue, Deputy Minister!

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Ms S P Boshielo): The four identified provinces were allocated resources such as mobile clients service centres, motor vehicles and caravans, specifically to increase their ability to reach out to rural areas that are located far from the police stations.

Some tribal offices were identified and are utilised as contact points between the police and the communities.

Joint operations and awareness campaigns with stakeholders are taking place focusing on crimes affecting rural areas, including livestock, branding of livestock and matters

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relating to youth, children, women, including gender-based violence, GBV. Thank you very much, House Chair.

Inkosi M NONKONYANA: Hon Deputy Minister, thank you very much for such as an elaborate response to my question.

Just before I ask you a follow up, I'm very, very pleased that the government is doing something about traditional policing. However, for the reasons that you have set out in your response, it is important that we need to have traditional policing. And because the police stations are far from the rural areas, and there will be, therefore, a case for that because municipalities that ... we have municipal police, there's no reason why traditional council don't have traditional ... so that they can co-operate. But I understand then what we have said.

But rising from answer, therefore, hon Deputy Minister, we agree that it is the most effective way of dealing with criminals is visibly policing.

However, is it possible, therefore, in the South African Police Service to increase visibility in rural areas,

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especially in KwaZulu-Natal, in the meantime, since it has a large number of such cases? Thank you, Deputy Chairperson.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Ms S P Boshielo): Hon member, we are taking your suggestion of traditional policing, you know, with both hands. We'll look at the possibility like you're saying and see how best can we be able to come with something that will assist us to be able to deal with this matter of killing of traditional leaders.

In terms of visible policy, I think as we get our graduates to come in, I think we'll be able - as I said in my response - to take them to the rural areas so that they are safe now in the rural areas. And I must say, at the moment, visible policy takes the large chunk of the budget; almost 53% of our budget goes to visible policing because it's a deterrent and we want in our moat to be able to deter and prevent, rather than react. So, that's why we took most of the money into the visible policing.

So, I agree with you that we need to increase that and agree with you, that's why I said in my response some of the traditional leaders' offices that the government is building

can be used maybe as satellites, you know, or police there to assist the communities and also to be able to work with the communities from there.

So, we'll explore anything, but one thing that you must rest assured, we'll never do it alone, we'll do it in consultation with the House of Traditional Leaders and also with anybody who is involved in terms of the traditional leaders. We respect you so much, and because you're helping us in terms of dealing with the community issues and we are not downplaying a role in terms of assisting us. I'm just imagining if you were not there in the rural areas, what could have happened?

Yes, there might be a problem, one and two there, and I'm happy that you're also assist in resolving some of the problems that prop up from these traditional leaders, you're able to do that. So, we respect it, mine as a, you know, traditional ones, you know, we really know the role of Inkosis [Kings] and we'll do everything in our power to make sure that you are safe. It hurts to bury a King or Inkosi and we don't want it to be done.

So, with humility, we will be able to work with you to make sure that this comes to an end. Thank. You very much, House Chair.

Ms N P MCINGA: Minister, referencing the words of the late King Zwelonke Sigcawu of AbaXhosa Kingdom, who stressed that the safety of our traditional leaders and our communities is crucial.

It is concerning to note that the traditional policing concept launched in 2018 remains incomplete six years later, in 2024. This prolonged delay affects the lives and security of South African citizens.

How does the Ministry justify this delay when it directly impacts the safety of our communities?

Whether the Minister can agree that this constitutes a form of negligence towards the needs of rural and traditional communities? If so, what specific steps have you taken to facilitate the full implementation of the traditional policing concept so as to ensure that it is adequately funded and effectively integrated into a formal policing framework.

How will the Ministry measure the impact and success of this initiative in reducing crime and safeguarding our traditional leaders and communities, as the late King Zwelonke advocated? I thank you.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Ms S P Boshielo): Hon member, I don't think you have read that this traditional policing document, because we are busy implementing it as Inkosi has said there.

So, it's not a question of a paper, it's a question of protecting lives. It's like we have all the laws in the countries, but people are continuing to do crime, people are continuing to be killed and everything. We are giving you what we are doing in terms of protecting our traditional leaders and we are giving you figures to say this is what we want to do.

Other areas where you see them being low is because there's something that we are doing there. Unfortunately, there are some operations that I would not want to stand here and say

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we're doing one, two, three, because we'll be putting the very same traditional leaders in a very dangerous position.

But you've got Inkosi there next to you, he can tell you how we are communicating with the traditional leaders themselves, even the House of Traditional Leaders, we communicate with them in terms of what can be done.

And I said to ... when I responded to him, there's nothing that we can do without talking to them, without taking their suggestion. We respect them as traditional leaders taking care of our people, especially in the rural areas, and we are not downplaying that role that they are doing; but we will not do that without talking to them.

So, some of the issues will go back and forth in terms of the paper, but it doesn't stop us from doing what we are supposed to do, including the Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act, SPLUMA.

If you remember the SPLUMA Act, it really brought us, you know, into conflict, but we were able to say we'll still work together to make sure that, you know, we distribute the land,

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we build schools, we build clinics, we build police stations, besides the differences that we have. And because it's a paper, we'll still come back and sit together and solve the problem.

So, rest assured, hon member, we are doing all our best to make sure that visible policing and the traditional leaders are protected and we'll continue to do that. Thank you very much, House Chair.

Mr M M PETER: Hon Chair, today is not our day as the UDM. We allow the ruling party to take measures to protect its own citizens. Our day is for tomorrow. I thank you, Chair.

Dr I S SCHEURKOGEL: House Chair, like they always say, it's not how you start, it's how you end. So, allow me just to make sure that we all woken up and the House chair is not here and I want to show our commitment to the Government of National Unity, GNU, and using my qualities as an Afrikaans boy from the Free State to congratulate the Chairperson of the House in the state visit where the President is now, and I want to congratulate her in Mandarin on her birthday ... [Member proceeded to quote in Mandarin ...]

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So, my question to you, Deputy Minister, and you partly answered some of my questions and to reference to Inkosi Nonkonyana's ... [Inaudible.] ... about the traditional policing, which ... but was also launched in the Eastern Cape in ... [Inaudible.] ... but also in Oakley, Mpumalanga in 2022, Ngwala in 2022, Waterberg 2023, both in Limpopo and Tshwane 2023, to just name a few. But still concept and I think you partially answered that and what offers are you going to make to formalize and clearly divine this concept to be part and parts of the community policing framework of the guidelines of 1997. And to ... actually is more ... not more of a question, but I want you to make an undertaking to partner with the Minister of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs, CoGTA, which has committed so many times that he will prioritise the stopping of political and traditional killings, which is rampant in our provinces and which was mentioned by Inkosi.

So, it's more of committing with CoGTA so that we take this thing on because we are from the rural provinces, we see this daily. I might not be a traditional leader but in the rural provinces we do see that. Thank you.

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The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Hon member, I will definitely try and convey that message of good wishes to the Chairperson. [Laughter.]

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Ms S P Boshielo): Chair, with the permission of Inkosi we'll make him a Prince. Yes, of course.

Thank you very much for the good suggestion. I think we're also taking it. We'll engage the local government, but also the House of Traditional Leaders themselves and those who are not part of the House of Traditional Leaders because our main aim is not to leave anybody behind, not because you don't agree with us we leave you behind, we want to take everybody and be able to have one that will be able to make us effective in terms of making sure that our traditional leaders are safe.

I have spoken about the roles that they play in our community, your initiation schools, you know, they go there to teach our boys manners and girls manners, how to be good adults and all other things. That is why when you commit a crime, they ask what parent are you? Where do you come from? And all those

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fellows started saying 'we from the rural areas know what it's all about.'

So, yes, it's a very important thing and I'm making ourselves committed to be able to join hands and make sure that we do that.

Sepedi:

Re le batho ba baso, re hlompha magoši a rena. Le maGNU le bona ba hlompha bogoši go swana le rena. Bjale, ka moka ga rena re swanetse re hlomphe magoši a rena.

Ke a leboga.

The Council rose at 18:27.