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PROCEEDINGS OF HYBRID NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES

The Council met at 14:01.

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Hon delegates, I would like to remind all delegates that the rules in particular; Rules 21, 22 and 23 of Rule 103 applies today. In accordance with the Council Rule 229(1) there will be no notices of motion or motions without notice.

Hon delegates, before we proceed with the questions I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the Ministers from the social service cluster especially the Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation, hon Minister Blade Nzimande; and the Minister of Sport, Arts and Culture, the hon Gayton

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McKenzie. We welcome both of you to the NCOP. We also welcome all the permanent delegates, the members of the executive council, MECs, who might be present and all special delegates and Salga representatives who might be in the House.

Further, I would like to remind delegates that in terms of Rule 229 of the Council Rules, the time for reply by the Ministers to a question is five minutes; only four supplementary questions are allowed per question; a member who has asked the initial question would be the first to be afforded an opportunity to ask a supplementary question; the time for asking a supplementary question is two minutes; the time for reply to a supplementary question is four minutes; and the supplementary question must emanate from the initial question.

I now call upon the hon Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation to respond to Question number 176 as asked by the hon M F Mokwele. Hon Minister, could you, please, take the podium here.

**QUESTIONS - CLUSTER 2D: SOCIAL SERVICES (SCIENCE AND
INNOVATION AND SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE)**

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Question 176:

The MINISTER OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION: Thank you very much hon Deputy Chair of the NCOP and all the hon members of this august House. I am very honoured, myself. I must start by saying that I am appearing in the NCOP for the first time during the Seventh Administration. Indeed, the NCOP is an important House. I do need to emphasise that it is not number two to any other House. That is how it should be treated as per our Constitution.

In response to the questions from the hon Mokwele, our department of now ... still written here as Science and Innovation ... [Laughter.] ... That is an old department. It is now the Department of Science, Technology and Innovation officially. We have established and we are very proud of having done this, the Indigenous Knowledge-based BioInnovation Programme a consortium on science councils, universities, the Indigenous Knowledge-Holding Organisations and the business sector.

The consortium utilises South Africa's unique indigenous knowledge, its untapped biodiversity and local innovation capacity to develop African natural medicines, cosmeceuticals, nutraceuticals, health infusions and enzyme technologies. I do

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need to say, hon Deputy Chairperson and hon members, that South Africa is in the top five in terms of biodiversity in the world.

However, our scientists have only studied 5% of our plant species, 95% has not yet been studied which is the reason why we are emphasising this. Part of doing this is to work with our herbalists because they work with herbs. By working with them we hope that we will be able to identify more products and species that are able to do a number of things.

Also, I must say that the indigenous knowledge bioinnovation programme that I am talking about uses what we call an Ubuntu-based bioinnovation model that supports integral or multi and transdisciplinary research and development inclusive of innovation local technology transfer, holistic enterprise development and conscious commercialisation.

The full value chain initiative had supported over 60 small, medium and micro enterprises and co-operatives including over 150 students and knowledge holders in business skills development. Our department also manages what is called the research and innovation pillar of the hemp and cannabis industrialisation master plan. The medical cannabis consortium

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is conducting high end research on cancers, diabetes, neurodegenerative diseases, hypertension and selected infectious diseases like respiratory infections.

The consortium currently supports up to 20 students focusing on various aspects and uses of the plant. Over 10 peer reviewed journal articles and some impacting policy review at the SA Health Products Regulatory Authority have been published. Lastly, I want to say that the African legacy programme of the consortium has so far graduated. I am very proud of this.

A total of 23 small, medium and micro enterprises with over 46 products. An expression of interest has also been published by the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research and the Agricultural Research Council for a national pilot focusing on rural legacy growers working with local land races. The pilot which supports at least two pilots per province, 24 ...

[Inaudible.] ... and over 50 valorised medicinal cannabis are amongst the things that we are advancing in this regard. Thank you very much, hon Deputy Chairperson of the NCOP.

Mr M F MOKWELE: Greetings to the hon members in this august House and even those that are on the virtual platform.

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However, a special greeting to hon Minister, that indeed this House is the most important House of Parliament. I would like also to thank you for the extensive response that you have given in this regard. You nearly took all my follow up question.

Nevertheless, hon Minister the only follow up question that I want to post to you is only one and that is to say: What role will the people in the rural provinces like Limpopo, the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal play in the hemp and cannabis industrialisation master plan? At this programme, Minister, to be honest with you, in most cases they are usually biased towards the urban areas. Thank you.

The MINISTER OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION: Hon Mokwele, that is a very important question that you are asking because one of the government's programmes or across the board focus, which also we are seeking to support as the Department of Science, Technology and Innovation, is to make sure that we grow and develop our rural areas. It is not sustainable, this whole idea of people moving from rural areas to urban areas.

We have a number of programmes that at some other stage will be able to talk about that are focusing on rural development.

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We see the National Cannabis Industrialisation Master Plan which, of course, is led by the Department of Agriculture is leading in terms of growing this technology such that we are able to sustain rural economic development. By the way, I think the importance of your question also lies in the fact that it is not new this issue of the role of hemp and cannabis although in the past it was dagga. It has actually been playing a hugely critical role in rural development.

Today, we have medical practitioners, we have engineers, we have teachers of whom most were supported usually by mothers who were planting this stuff and selling it albeit under apartheid in particular illegally. However, they have been able to educate their own children. Now, we want this to be mainstreamed into this industry as part of rural development rather than as part of just urban development.

As I have said, we have what we call the African Legacy Growers which we are supporting so that those with unique indigenous knowledge for medicine, nutrition and industrial knowledge are able to be properly supported and strengthened with the view also of focusing on growing rural industry.

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We are working very closely with the Department of Agriculture to say, you are driving the master plan on cannabis and we will be able to support you. One of the most important things is actually to drive rural development. We also have the SA Health Product Regulatory Authority which falls under the Department of Health. That is also responsible, by the way, for issuing permits. Even in the issuing of permits for planting cannabis, must take into account this whole issue of rural development.

Nevertheless, I would not want to lie. Perhaps and as this House, we have a responsibility to make sure that that happens. We might also be needing, hon Deputy Chair, amendments to existing legislation so that we are able to ensure that we are able to support rural development rather than urban bias. I grew up in a city called Pietermaritzburg where there was a lot of trade of this stuff. I know a lot about it. It even has an unusual name, it is called Durban poison.

It was not because it was grown in Durban but it was mainly sold in Durban. Now, we find ... maybe we need urban markets but we must make sure that we focus on rural development

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because it has huge potential as it has been in the past.

Thank you very much, hon Deputy Chair and hon Mokwele.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Thank you very much, hon Minister. I come from Durban, so, I know what you are talking about.

Mr P J SWART: Hon Minister, in the light of this really important discussion today on the economic potential of the indigenous biodiversity and knowledge particularly following the legalisation of medicinal marijuana cannabis.

How will your department ensure that the commercial benefits are not monopolised by large corporations? What specific measures will be implemented to minimise red tape and encourage small and medium-size enterprises including the indigenous communities to actively participate and benefit from the economic spinoffs of these industries? Thank you.

The MINISTER OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION: Thank you to the member for the follow-up question. It is an important issue that you are raising but I think it is implied already in what I have given as answers. You are raising an important dimension now, not just of rural but also the role of small,

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medium and micro enterprises. Of course, this responsibility does not lie in my department alone because the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition is very important, as well as the Department of Small Business Development. The Ministries and the departments are also very important in order to ensure that small, medium and micro enterprises ...

Perhaps the advantage that we have is that historically, trade in cannabis as marijuana was done by very small, not even enterprises, but individuals sometimes who would be distributing this. I think that provides a basis for actually working to promote small and medium enterprises in this sector. Your point is absolutely important in the sense that once it gets taken over by big commercial entities then we must forget it for actually focusing on rural areas. Big commercial entities are not interested in rural development they are interested in urban mass scale. Even in export you may find that that is what they prioritise.

Nevertheless, as I am saying, on our side we are working with the Department of Small Business Development. We even have joint programmes on innovation. We must start at that level of research and at that level of small scale to actually tighten this relationship. What am I saying, we will be working

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closely with the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition, which we are and a number of projects.

We will also be working very closely, which we are already, with the Minister of Small Business Development to ensure that we actually support this. Lastly, what I would like to say is that we also, by the way, have a programme as the Department of Science, Technology and Innovation which may be important in terms of what you are raising, which is in the end a programme which is called Grassroots Innovation Programme.

Our belief is that innovation does not only come from the high end; your highly educated postdocs, professors and distinguished scientists. Yes, those do have a role to play but there is lots of innovation at grassroots level. That is why we have this programme because we want to support that so that right at that level we are able to strengthen your small player, if you like, as we call them now.

Those small players put together must actually become big players but not as conglomerates but by virtue of actually dominating this particular industry. That should be my answer to your question and also by saying it is a very important matter and a very important focus. In fact, the NCOP can make

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that its own specialisation as a House to actually say, who is benefiting from these programmes? Thank you very much.

Ms M KENNEDY: Greetings to members of this august House and greetings to the Minister.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Could we, please, see your face, hon Kennedy. Put on your camera.

Ms M KENNEDY: Eish, I can't. I am unable to do that ...
[Laughter.] ...

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Okay, switch on your camera and we will be able to see you.

Ms M KENNEDY: Okay.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Hon Kennedy, your time is running out.

Ms M KENNEDY: Let me talk, I am unable to do that. Hon Minister ...

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The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Alright, go ahead with your question.

Ms M KENNEDY: Okay. Thank you, Chair. Hon Minister, medicinal plants and manufacturers pharmaceuticals rely on biodiversity whilst indigenous knowledge is past culturally and verbally from generation to generation.

So, what initiatives have you taken to preserve this indigenous knowledge and which project activities have been initiated to educationally support and develop the expansion of biodiversity and indigenous knowledge economically? Thank you.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Hon Minister, did you get the gist of the question? I know it was not too clear but you may respond.

The MINISTER OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION: I will try my best. I think I heard the latter part better as to what initiatives are we engaged in to support indigenous knowledge systems. Look, let me say this that we are very proud as South Africa about the work that we have done on indigenous knowledge systems.

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Firstly, we have a major programme in the department on indigenous knowledge. Also, as I have said, we are also working very closely among others with traditional healers. My father was a herbalist. I thought when he passed away I am done with that but with this deployment I find myself now back working with herbalists, which I am finding very exciting because I am working with them now from another angle. In order to be able to work together, as I say, we only have explored 5% of our plant species in South Africa.

We know that many of them actually use herbs and other plants. If we work together we are able to say, let us take some of those plants for testing so that we are able to determine what their properties and qualities are so that we are to use them better. So, that is the one thing that I have said in terms of practical. In fact, our work has been so acknowledged globally that the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, UNESCO, the entity dealing with education, science, culture and related matters has actually established a chair on indigenous knowledge system largely as a result of the prodding and the work that we are doing as South Africa.

So, it has become an international thing. The other thing that I would like to say is that we have a very close working

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relationship with the Chinese. The Chinese are very good and they have taken a lead for quite some time now on exploring the uses of their own traditional medicines. So, we have a project and the programme of co-operation with the Chinese to learn from them. We don't have the same species of plants and so on but to learn from them on actually how they do this.

We also have a professorial Chair, if I am not mistaken, which is what we call the SA Research Chairs Initiative which is actually looking at this whole area of indigenous knowledge system. However, we don't want only to treat that as a separate focus because sometimes when you separate something you then lower its importance. We want indigenous knowledge systems to be something that actually cuts across even our Higher Education system for that matter. That is why we are actually promoting research and chairs in that regard.

Of course, I have already mentioned the other initiatives that we are taking on this score. One matter perhaps which I have not mentioned so far in this question is that we have an agency called the Technology Innovation Agency which supports startups, you know, commercially. We are also looking at startups that may emerge out with the commercialisation of knowledge that comes from indigenous knowledge systems, so

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that we are able to support those initiatives such that they are able to become operational and they are able to become viable economic entities in line with the knowledge we have.

I have no doubt that as South Africa we have huge repository and reservoir of indigenous knowledge that we need to harness. What we have to fight against is a tendency from some people to tend to look down upon it. We should not look down upon it and we must learn from the Chinese amongst others. Thank you very much.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Thank you very much, hon Minister. Hon colleagues, I have been informed that hon Breedt does not have a follow-up question. So, we will move on to the next question, that is Question 189 asked by the hon J M Adriaanse. Minister, your response, please.

Question 189:

The MINISTER OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION: Thank you very much, Deputy Chair of the House, for the question from hon Adriaanse, my answer to that briefly is that some of the current key government initiatives that enhance funding and support for research and development include what I've just spoken about in my previous answer, the SA Research Chairs

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Initiative, and also the Centres of Excellence that we support, which focus on particular areas, as well as the National Institutes for Research Development and Innovation.

Key performance areas of these initiatives are research, human capacity development, information brokerage, networking, and service rendering. Furthermore, our Decadal Plan, which members will be aware of is our 10-year plan from 2022 to 2032 on science, technology, and innovation in South Africa, emphasising the importance of research impact. To this end, our National Research Foundation, NRF, for purposes of clarity for those members who may not be aware, the National Research Foundation is one of our eight entities. We have eight entities. Interestingly enough, 40% of our budget goes to the National Research Foundation, the single largest spender of our budget. It has developed a research impact framework, which ensures that research impact is considered during the early stages of proposal development and research planning, it also influences the use of engaged, collaborative, and inclusive research processes to advance impact. By advancing the research impact agenda, the relationship between science and society has been transformed through the co-creation of research, mutual benefit, and national development.

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But since this question is talking about funding and support for research, two things I would like to say further, in addition to the answers that I have given. The budget of the Department of Science, Technology, and Innovation, frankly, is pathetic, given the role that science, technology, and innovation play in the development of many countries today. People marvel at China, China is where it is because it invested in science, technology, and innovation. I had a chance two years ago to lead a delegation of vice chancellors and science counsellors to Silicon Valley, for instance, in the United States of America. That is when I realised the budget of my department was pathetic.

I hope that this House will join as a champion for increased funding for science, technology, and innovation to be able to do the kinds of things that hon Adriaanse is talking about. The second and last point I would like to make is that in the question, something that is very important that is mentioned, which, by the way, I have given to my Deputy Minister and my advisor to prioritise, is the relationship between our universities.

In South Africa, we are using our universities for research with industry and communities. This tripartite, it's a

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different kind of tripartite arrangement, is very important. If we are to see the fruits, your universities, communities, and industry, especially the private sector, but not least our state-owned enterprises, many of them are doing some good work in science, technology, and innovation.

We want to work with them closely to be able to realise what we want to realise. Otherwise, thank you very much to hon Adriaanse for the question that she has asked. Thank you, Chair.

Ms J M ADRIAANSE: Deputy Chair, hon Minister, thank you for covering most of my follow-up, I appreciate that, but in light of the budget being pathetic, as you mentioned, we need more collaboration between the universities and the industries, as you also mentioned. But we need also, and I want to know that specifically, how you plan to ensure that research outputs are aligned with market needs and not simply done to have research done. Thank you.

The MINISTER OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION: Thank you very much hon Adriaanse, It is as if you know, I have said to our National Research Foundation, that you take almost half of my budget, 40%, as a single entity, you know, we must also not

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make a mistake of undermining investment into basic research because basic research is important to create a foundation for all your research. We mustn't judge research 100% only on whether it is translating to viable commercial.

Yes, we have to ask that question but also, we have to strengthen our basic research. I've said to the NRF though, yes, whilst we are playing that role, can you tell me what percentage of your research funding supports commercialisation, and innovation, in particular? They do some work on that scope, but my view is that not yet enough, although they are doing good work because we do have to create an environment that research products and outputs, as you correctly put it, become commercial and viable. If I had more money, I'm not trying to be defensive, if I had more money, I would make sure that all those hundreds of thousands of master's and PhD theses sitting there, we could go back and re-plough into something. If we do that, I have no doubt, you will find that it was submitted for purposes of a master's thesis at Wits or a PhD to create at the University of Venda, but if you go back to those things, you can find quite a lot of research outputs that could be translated into commercialisation and all that. In other words, the long and short of what I'm saying is that we are putting in a lot of

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work into ensuring ... that that's why our department, in the last term, was named science and innovation instead of science and technology because the President was saying we are not abandoning technology, but try and focus more on innovation and the commercialisation of research products, such that it is enabled to do things.

I'm also saying this because without sounding rhetorical, South Africa is a very talented country in many respects, not only in sports, Minister McKenzie, but we are also talented in science. We have lots of innovations from South Africa. The most famous, for those who may not know Kreepy Krauly is a South African product. It's in every swimming pool in the world today. It's produced here, because of our innovation. And there are many others. My acting director-general is here, maybe we need to give these members that book of ours, which has got all South Africa's innovations that are very important. So, I have no doubt that by investing more, we will be able to, as you say, produce commercially viable research that will enable us to grow and develop our economy. In fact, without research and innovation, we are nowhere in terms of growing the economy or even achieving the priorities of the Government of National Unity, GNU, which is job creation, and inclusive development. Thank you very much.

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Mr M FENI: Good afternoon, hon Chair, and hon Minister in the Department of Science, Technology and Innovation, can the hon Chairperson ... [Inaudible.] ... this one because technology ... [Inaudible ... here.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: What are you asking? Are you asking to? [Interjections.] All right, we'll go to the next follow-up question and come back to you. [Interjections.] I am willing to grant you that. You see, Minister, science and innovation have left him a bit baffled now. We will have to allow that. The next follow-up question is from the hon Nzimande.

Mr E NZIMANDE: Thanks, Deputy Chair, and good afternoon, ...

IsiZulu:

... Ngwekazi!

UNGQONGQOSHE WEZESAYENSI, EZOBUCHWEPHESHE KANYE NOKUSUNGULA:
Mphephethwa!

Mnu E NZIMANDE: Yebo Ngwekazi, ...

English:

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... definitely, I'm not having a challenge with technology. [Laughter.] Mine is simple. It is just an emphasis on this artificial intelligence and its consequential impact, because of a race between it and education, against the backdrop of the statistics provided by the government itself, in relation to its inability to assist with funding post-matric students just for the previous financial year and this current financial year, is about 208 000 students that have fallen between the tracks.

Now, that is against the backdrop that in time, much of the work of 60% of the work will be automated. Now, what I am trying to check is that we don't want to find ourselves rolling back the gains we have made, we've achieved, where the characterisation of the labour market takes us back, where there is a wide gap in terms of skills based on race. Now, we want to check because we believe you have some plans in place, whether the Minister if the plans are not there, is contemplating some policy intervention that will ensure deep reform that is essential to facilitate the development of digital knowledge and technical skills, as well as non-routine cognitive and noncognitive skills, which obviously would include four C's. [Interjections.] The next one is in relation to the consequence that is responsive to effects, including

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unintentional, obviously, like I've said, widening of social ... [Inaudible.] ... In terms of the skills between races. Thank you. [Time expired.] [Interjections.]

The MINISTER OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION: Thank you very much, hon Nzimande, Nomandla [Nzimande clan name praise] If I understood your questions well because you were touching on quite a number of issues. Maybe I may not pick up on all of them, as you have raised them, and I will do a brief reflection on some. You start with an important matter of artificial intelligence. Well, my initial response is I would come and find a way of engaging the House, the NCOP. Possibly the best way to do that is through the portfolio committee, just to come and present what work we are doing in the area of artificial intelligence. It a lot of work and it's an important area, and that is the future.

Two things I can say in that regard is that we are very much part of UNESCO's initiative on the regulation and ethics of artificial intelligence. Ethics in artificial intelligence also relates to ethics in science. Because as we know, science is good, positive, and can do a lot of things to change people's lives. But also, it can be used to destroy people's lives. I am told, for instance, that the bombing that has been

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happening of late in Lebanon is driven by artificial intelligence, trying to locate certain people that are wanted and so on. But I'm willing to come back and do that. Myself, I've been doing a lot of work. I've even visited the only University of Artificial Intelligence in the world, which is in Abu Dhabi, in the United Arab Emirates, in terms of what they are doing there. The other issue that I hear you raising is about learners coming up with maths and science skills that are needed so that they are able to be empowered.

There's a lot of work that we are doing with the Department of Basic Education, which is very important because we say we will not get scientists unless we start them there at primary school. We are able to, for instance, I have a programme on science laboratories, and computer laboratories in primary schools. Last year, I launched two in Limpopo. We want to spread this to all the provinces so that also we deal with something that is very important.

The history of our country, also as a result of apartheid, most black children are afraid of maths and science. It is too difficult; we won't go there. Some of our principals say don't go and do science or maths, go and do maths literacy. We have also had to defeat that. We also have science weeks every

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year. I had one two weeks ago, which we launched at the Central University of Technology to be able to reach out, especially to learners in relation to maths and science. Now, all I'm saying then, Mphephethwa [Nzimande clan name praise] is that in case this doesn't answer what you said, some of these issues are somewhat new to the question. I am able then to come back. I am more than willing to come back to discuss all or some of these things as a department so that the NCOP becomes the champion of science, technology and innovation. I can always point at that house and say, here is the house. Thank you very much.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Thank you very much, hon Minister. I see you took some time to advertise there, but we accept it. Thank you very much.

Ms L H ARRIES: Chairperson, science and technology innovation is a pivotal aspect of building our economy with the growing needs of what is required to be economically active. What are the current economic needs regarding science and technology? And so far, how the department met them for maximal impact and job creation. Thank you.

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The MINISTER OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION: Chair, maybe you'll help me because I was battling to hear or understand. Maybe you can summarise for me what the essence of the question is.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: I think we can ask the hon member to please explain the question because even I was having difficulty in catching what she was saying in terms of her sound.

Ms L H ARRIES: I was asking what are the current economic needs regarding science and technology so far, and how has the department met them for maximal impact and job creation?

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Thank you very much, hon Arries, I think Minister she is basically asking what are the needs of the department in terms of job creation from the point of view of science and technology?

The MINISTER OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION: Okay, let me give it a try, thanks to hon Arries. Needs in relation to job creation, I think I've touched on some of these things. Firstly, I don't want to appear to have come here to the NCOP to lament because I know exactly where I need to take these

things up, but I need champions to support me. The biggest need of our department is resources. Our total budget is less than R9 billion per annum. So that is one very big need. We are not sitting back and lamenting and moaning and so on. We, amongst other things, are trying to forge partnerships, with domestic industry, as well as with international organisations, the European Union, a multilateral organisation, the United Nations itself, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, OECD, and a number of other international initiatives, including bilateral relations that we are having with countries, for instance, China's Belt and Road Initiative is another area which we are working closely with to be able to access resources. Now, on the other side of job creation, I think that we had touched on these issues earlier. The importance of partnerships with industry.

Countries that are successful in science, technology, and innovation, they've got a very dynamic link and relationship to the private sector, because the private sector, well, and state-owned entities, by the way, do a lot of work. For instance, we are collaborating very closely with Denel. They need us, we need them, in terms of new technologies, as well as Eskom. Eskom has been doing a lot of research. Sasol used

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to be the single largest employer of PhDs in South Africa. We continue to work with them.

I'm going soon to be meeting with Arcelor Mittal as part of strengthening this relation with industry. Of course, I've asked the Deputy Minister and my advisor to lead on this front. Also, I've had an interesting request from Johnson and Johnson, who are also supporting a lot of research as another way.

The partnership with industry also has got the potential of job creation, but the uses of science and technology are very important. Now, I don't want to go into another advert, Chair, all that I can say is that we are doing a lot of work on new forms of energy, hydrogen, and fuel cells.

We are doing a lot of research on that score to assist us in developing alternative sources of energy, just by way of example. That in itself will have a huge impact on creating new types of jobs, which we've got to prepare for. The one other area where we are doing a lot of work is new forms of batteries and battery storage.

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If we are talking about transition to new forms of energy, renewable sources, we will need to be storing energy. Unlike the system of electricity and coal, where we don't use whatever is there, we use it all. That is another area that we are working in.

I hope, hon Arries, I have touched on areas that have got job potential, as well as areas that address the needs of South Africa, rather than the needs of our department. Thank you.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: We now go back to hon Feni. Hon Feni, your follow-up.

Mr M FENI: Sorry, Chairperson, I do not have a follow-up question.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: All right, thank you very much, hon Feni, if you do not have a follow-up question.

Question 177:

The MINISTER OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION: Thank you very much, hon Deputy Chairperson. Hon Sibande, our department has actually come up with a variety of initiatives or measures to assist in uncovering and growing innovations in South

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African townships that assist in creating employment for the previously disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, including youth, women and people with disabilities. The turnover of the township economy in South Africa is currently estimated at just under R1 billion per year. So, it is a very important part of our economy. We have what we call the Innovation for Inclusive Development Unit, IID, which we set up to support the implementation of our initiatives to uncover and promote initiatives in South African townships.

The IID as we call it, supports the development of innovation solutions that solve societal challenges faced especially by vulnerable communities in rural areas and townships. I have just said to the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, CSIR, - although I do not think, Deputy Minister that we have given this as a formal instruction. The problem of vandalised electricity transformers is causing a lot of problems. Should we not be looking at new types of transformers that operate differently and are not easily destroyable in order to be able to ensure constant supply of electricity, especially in poor areas like in the townships where that is.

The solutions then that we are talking about through the IID intended to provide systemic interventions through a comprehensive government wide approach that supports simple social innovations developed by people in rural and townships economies. Some of these initiatives briefly, I am not going to go into detail in all of them. The first one is what we call the "Technology Acquisition and Deployment Fund," which we implement as a department to strengthen the procurement and utilisation of locally developed technologies by government departments and municipalities in South Africa. By the way, we have successfully piloted this in the country with the acquisition and deployment of local technologies to schools in and around the townships to improve teacher parent communication, improve learning outcomes for physical science, maths and technology.

And also, we use this facility by the way, to come up with new methods of combating crime in the townships, which is one of the biggest enemies to the township economy.

The second area is the one I have already talked about, the Grassroots Innovation Programme. There is a lot of economic activity in the cities and in some of our rural areas and there is a lot of innovation in that context. Some of that is

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lost, when in fact it is innovation that can contribute to the growth of that local economy. I have already explained to you what the Grassroots Innovation Programme is all about.

We also have a new approach to local economic development that we have developed as the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation. It is innovation for local economic development, which is based on the idea of organising a local economy around a local innovation system and seeing innovation as a driver for inclusive development. This is very important because as I said, if you take just the townships, they are really bustling with economic activity. Twenty years ago, in Soweto alone, R60 million of stokvel money was brought to the banks every week. Today it is much more, R60 million a week from Soweto alone.

This shows the creativity and financial resources, but that are not really adequately used to benefit those communities. We are taking them one way into the cities. So, some of these local initiatives - We have got what we call living labs in some of our townships to actually support this. So, these are some of the initiatives we are very much focused on science, technology and innovation for local economic development, including the township economy. Thank you very much, Chair.

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Mr M P SIBANDE: Thank you, Deputy Chairperson. Minister, thank you for your eloquent and very comprehensive reply. It is encouraging to hear of the various programmes that have been implemented by your department to support the township economy. My question is therefore, is there a plan to extend the innovation for local economic development to other provinces as is being done in KwaZulu-Natal, KZN?

The MINISTER OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION: Thank you very much, Deputy Chairperson. Hon Sibande, thank you for that follow up question. I just want to make it clear that these initiatives are limited to KZN. Some of these are already taking place in some townships or rural areas. For example, I am talking about "living labs", laboratories that attract young people to experiment with the ideas they have in terms of commercial activities. These living labs exist, for example, in 13 areas in the North West, the Free State, Gauteng, the Eastern Cape and Mpumalanga, where, by the way, the department also provides funding every year to support a variety of local economic and development programmes.

Much as in some instances, we pilot in a particular area, but we always work to move very fast to say where these pilots succeed, we actually are able to spread them all over the

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country. So be comfortable hon Sibande, these labs and other initiatives are already, in fact, almost in all nine provinces of our country. Thank you very much.

Ms M MAKESINI: Thank you, Deputy Chairperson. Greetings to the Minister. What has the department done to ensure that the bursary provides free education to students who come from the disadvantaged communities in our country and enables them to acquire skills to design cell phones, televisions and other gadgets others so that they can support themselves and create jobs. Can you please tell us about all the provinces, the initiative and the opportunities that you have created through your Ministry in all the provinces. Thank you.

The MINISTER OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION: Thank you very much hon Deputy Chairperson. Hon member, as much as I thrive to answer all the questions truthfully, I think that the essence of the question you asked does not strictly speaking fall within my department when it comes to skills development initiatives, because that is primarily a matter for the Ministry of Higher Education and Training.

Furthermore, the question had not asked me to outline where such initiatives are taking place throughout the country. If the question - which I would suggest that you ask the question

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not as a follow-up to that question, but as an original question as to how does the work that you are doing in the areas of science, technology and innovation contribute to job creation? That would be a much more specific question. Then you can come up with very specific initiatives that would say, our work has directly or indirectly contributed to job creation.

I am not saying that there are no areas which we are doing because part of our work is that of course, even if it is indirect, we are able to actually contribute to job creation. Your question was also touching on scholarships. Even that, of course, was not part of the original question, but I would be willing to say that we are actually giving out a lot of scholarships. We are the department that specialises in giving post graduate scholarships in a variety of areas.

If you go to a particular municipality - I can give you the town of Carnavon, where the square kilometre field is located, as an example. There has been just the cart there for more than almost 20 years and the square kilometre field has been built there, if I am not mistaken, we have already given more than 2000 masters and PhD scholarships, but I stand to be corrected so that that area of studying the stars and the

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universe through the mere cut and the square kilometre array ultimately is manned by scientists who are drawn largely from the local community. By the way, we are giving them not only masters and PHDs, we are giving undergraduate degrees as well, - I am just making an example with that.

The two schools in Carnarvon, one is an primary school, the other a high school. We have even built fully-fledged, state-of-the-art laboratories, so that we can train local young people in science and so on. We also award a number of scholarships in various fields. But I would like to ask you that your question is so important. Can you also ask it directly, as a question that does not arise in part from this question, which was essentially just dealing with expanding this programme. I will be happy to answer that question for you, or you can get that answer in another way if you tell me that you want it, that I will give you those answers and that I can send them to you or discuss them here in the House or in the select committee. Thank you, Deputy Chair.

Dr I S SCHEURKOGEL: Thank you, Deputy Chairperson. Minister, we know that the informal business sector is one of the biggest industries in South Africa and recently the Minister of Communication and Digital Technology met with Starlink,

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which will give more South African access to the Internet, especially in rural areas. Will the Minister make an undertaking to partner with the Minister of Communication and Digital Technology to give townships access to the online market and grow our economy?

The MINISTER OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION: Hon member, absolutely. Let me tell you what my strategy is. Already in the sixth administration, the President had established an Inter-Ministerial Committee on Science, Technology and Innovation. And that is largely made-up of Ministers who led departments that we can all "science intensive." All departments use science and technology, but there are some who are more science intensive. One of those is the Department of Communications and Digital Technologies.

I report it in my Budget Vote that what I want to do this year, which is different perhaps from what we have done in the past couple of years, - we have already done this. I have studied all the Budget Vote debates of those Ministers who are in the Inter-ministerial Committee, including the Minister of Communications and Digital Technologies. My acting director-general, DG, is here and we are already outlining concrete memoranda of agreement with each of those Ministers in the

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Inter-ministerial Committee are amazing. If it is agriculture, let us agree what is it that we are going to do together with the Department of Science and Innovation in the light of climate change, threat to crops and all those things.

The Minister of Communications and Digital Technologies, important in a number of respects, but I am not going to go into detail about that. You have mentioned some, one other common area is artificial intelligence where both of us are active on that space.

The other area that both of us I am sure, will have to look at is digitisation of government and government services. We must make a memorandum of understanding to actually say can we then actually be able to co-operate in that score? So, I want to say it unequivocally. Yes, he is one of the Ministers that I am going to not just engage in but have a concrete memorandum of understanding which will present here to Parliament and say this is what we want to do during the first year, during the second year and so on.

This is based on my own philosophy that to put science, technology and innovation at the centre of government, you need to work with your colleagues and government departments

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and support them when they need help so that you and I can benefit from the work they do. You are not going to advance science if you do not have access to Wi-Fi. Wi-Fi, by the way, is a product of astronomy. Without the study of the stars and the universe, there would be no Wi-Fi today. It is a product of that. So, it is a two-way street. And without astronomy, there would be no Global Positioning System, GPS.

Some people say, why do you study the stars in the universe? Those are the two concrete products. "Turn left and your destination will be on the right." As we all know, that is a product of astronomy and without astronomy, it would not exist. To make a long story short, I am more than ready. I will be working with the Minister for Communications and Digital Technologies. Thank you.

Mr B J FARMER: Thank you, Deputy Chair. Hon Minister, the Science, Technology and Innovation Decadal Plan of 2022 and 2032 in Chapter 6 says, and I quote:

Outlines initiatives to create an enabling environment for innovation through a whole of society approach.

It lists six bullet points, and I quote:

Improve service delivery, improve the quality of life.

Increase the competitiveness of firms. Develop new industries, exploit new sources of growth. Promote environmental custodianship.

In the final paragraph of that introduction, the plan says, and I quote:

For innovation to unlock these opportunities, it is necessary to (a) recognise that the sources of innovations are broader (b) adopt a whole of society approach to innovation embedded in the culture of entrepreneurship and innovation, (c) ensure that innovation is fundamentally inclusive.

Can the Minister please provide the House with a report on whether the department is on track or whether they foresee any obstacles with this plan?

The MINISTER OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION: Hon Deputy Chairperson, firstly, let me just say this that I would like the NCOP to say - I do not know in what cycle of Parliament would that be? You will know that better Deputy Chair than myself. But basically, that we provide an annual report on progress on implementation of the Decadal Plan. We do that in

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terms of our annual reports to Parliament. And we are going to continue to do that and the NCOP is more than welcome, not just to read the document, but to call me and say, let us have a discussion or whether we are on track or not. I had not come here prepared for that specifically, and also arising out of this question because this question was largely about local economic development issues.

Nevertheless, let me just say a few things. The Decadal Plan has got what is called "grand challenges". In other words, the key issues that we seek to address as a country through science, technology and innovation. What are those? The one is alternative sources of energy and to contribute towards a just energy transition. I can come back and give you more information, but I am pleased to say that we have taken the production of hydrogen fuel cells to very high levels. In fact, there is a municipality in KZN which some of its energy needs are being driven by the fuel cells that have been produced from our hydrogen fuel cells programme. We worked with Anglo American to produce that first mining truck that uses hydrogen fuel cell. Because that is where we also generate a lot of carbon in the mines with the fuel trucks that are taking products there. So, we are doing a lot of work in terms of alternative sources of energy as part of the

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Decadal Plan. We can come with very concrete things more to talk about.

The other area is the modernisation of industry. We have what we call the "Mandela Mining Crescent", where we are working on modernising the mining industry. There is a lot of debate about the future of the mining industry. Is it still worth putting living people in these dark tunnels underground, where they are sometimes crushed by falling rocks? We believe that science offers a solution to this problem. Of course, this is a debate. Do you just do that with technology? And what happens to jobs? Are you going to be able to create alternative new jobs. We are looking at the modernisation.

We are also working with the mining industry using a lot of science to look at alternative sources of driving processes that are actually happening or taking place in the in the mining industry, like as I say, the whole area of ... The pro-mining products we produce here we turn them into products in South Africa like diamond rather than taking them ...

Beneficiation, that is what I am talking about. So, I would be more than happy to actually come and report about those things, including what we are doing on entrepreneurship and as a specific question. Thank you very much.

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Question 183:

The MINISTER OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION: Hon Deputy Chair of the NCOP, now the benefits of the Square Kilometre Array ... interestingly, I was moving a bit ahead because I have already touched on these things as examples to other questions that I have been asked. The Square Kilometre Array, SKA, is going to be the single largest science infrastructure in the world, which is going to be here in South Africa, in the Northern Cape, in Carnarvon. I was called to order when I was there to not call it Carnarvon but call it in the normal local lingo Karnavon. We are here in Karnavon. Sorry. The Square Kilometre Array is managed by an entity under us, the National Research Foundation called the South African Radio Astronomy Observatory, and it manages four interventions in the education and skills development area. Firstly, the intervention is on research capacity development programme. A programme that targets learners at all academic levels in areas specific to Meerkat and the SKA. The long and short of what I am saying, we are giving a lot of scholarships and bursaries in support of the Square Kilometre Array, hon Chair. As I have said, we want South Africans to manage all aspects of the Square Kilometre Array, especially the local youngsters from Carnarvon. This has now been led by the establishment of many representatives, postgraduates, and postdoctoral fellows

in radio astronomy and related engineering disciplines. Also, this programme supports the development of relevant teaching and supervisory capacity at South African universities. This is very important because we don't have ready-made PhD supervisors in areas of radio astronomy and the Square Kilometre Array. So, we must ensure that we also train these supervisors, lecturers, and professors to be able to supervise on the scope.

Secondly, the other programme is what we call technical capacity development programme, which provides artisanal and technical skills training targeting the youth from the local communities in the Karoo to build the skills required to support the telescope operations. This is an area of job creation relating to your question that you were asking earlier in this area.

Thirdly, we also have what we call strategic partnerships programme. In this programme, we collaborate with international partners to train students in the skills necessary for radio astronomy research and innovation.

Remember, much as astronomy has been in South Africa, there are new aspects of radio astronomy that we now need, and new skills to be able to manage them.

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Lastly, the other programme, which I am hugely excited about is the one on supporting schools' programmes. There is nothing I enjoy like seeing these youngsters in grade 8 or 9 getting excited about some astronomical questions, for example, could there be life somewhere else in the universe outside of the earth that we don't know about in the other planets or whatever else? We have also studied only 10% of the universe. We don't know about 90% of the universe or what is still there and to excite youngsters by saying grapple with those questions. Is it a good thing to have technology or is it a bad thing? So, we have this massive school programmes. As I have said, which includes supporting cyber labs in some of the schools, not only in Carnarvon but in other parts of the country. We have summer and winter schools that we sponsor. We also include secondment of good maths teachers to schools so that we have a very strong foundation for science. We have many achievements, some of whom includes 1 317 grants awarded since 2005, 330 students trained in artisanal training, and 40 trainers per participating in basic astronomy bursaries and scholarships, and so on. So, there is a lot that is benefiting that local community as well as the country from the South African Radio Astronomy Advancement Programme. Thank you.

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Ms T BREEDT: Hon Minister, welcome to our House. It is good to have you. Hon Minister, I am so thankful for what you said, specifically regarding scholars, to learners, and how you are doing that because my question is specifically regarding schooling, I hear we do a lot in terms of PHDs and further studies and that is great. But if you don't start them young, if you don't teach them young, you're not going to have students who can get to PHDs. Minister, during 2023, the number of matric learners who enrolled for mathematics and physical science in the Northern Cape both decreased by large numbers, and then when the matric results came out for last year, physical science's pass rate decreased by 2,3% where maths marginally increased. Now, I have a story and my colleagues who know me have known this story. There was a school near the SKA which had very bad maths and specifically science-related pass rates and when they did the study, it was because teachers were seconded, as you mentioned, but it was an English-speaking teacher, and it was an Afrikaans school and native Noord-Kaap leerlinge could not understand that. So, my question, hon Minister is: How are you looking, considering the Bela Bill and considering the basic education and the way we are moving in terms of ... even though the Minister said indigenous languages are important, we are seeing that children can only go to mother tongue education schools up

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until Grade 6, how will you encourage mother tongue education to ensure that these scholars around the SKA can study maths and science and become part of the SKA? Thank you.

The MINISTER OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION: Yes, hon Breedt, I wish you had asked me this question whilst I was still Minister of Higher Education and Training because what I would have said, which I still believe in, we have a huge challenge in this country in promoting all our languages, but especially those that were disadvantaged under apartheid to become languages of science, commerce, and academia. And universities have a very important role to play. But it's also a whole psychological thing. There is a favourite professor of mine, I think he is retired. He is at the Taal Monument here in Paarl. He is a professor of Afrikaans. He was in a team that I had set up when I was Minister of High Education and Training. I said Prof, what would it take to promote.

indigenous languages as languages of science and technology? He said, yes, Minister, I know you know you can put in a lot of money. Yes, it is important to produce dictionaries ...

Dictionaries that are in that language only. If you produce a Setswana dictionary, it must explain in Setswana rather than just only Setswana and English. He said the solution to that ... I don't want to divert; you must speak the language

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everywhere. That's how Afrikaans was built because Afrikaans is a very interesting example because in the 20th century, there were only three languages that developed in two languages of science and commerce from ... [Inaudible.] ... Hebrew, Afrikaans, and Yiddish, which was Joe Slovo's first language, only three. He said speak it wherever you are, when you are happy, when you are crying, when you are sad, at funerals, in parties and so on. He said, I want to be honest with you, Minister, the problem sometimes I normally see with black South Africans, they speak English amongst themselves, even if they can understand the other languages when they are sitting together. Then we you not going to promote indigenous languages. Anyway, that's an important issue. I don't want to go into Bela Bill, I am not the Minister of Basic Education. I have my own views. But the main thing that you are asking about is how do we reach out? And reach out in a manner that at an early age, these things are understood in our own languages, which relates to the project that I was talking about. What role can universities play and all that I have spoken about to promote African indigenous languages as languages of science and as languages of academia? I just want to say in ending, we are doing a lot of work with this department of Basic Education in science and science literacy. I have a huge science engagement in science literacy

programme, also working with the SABC radio stations to promote the understanding of science in the languages that people understand. I have some money where I am building computer labs in primary schools not as much money as I would like to be, but as a project of the Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation, working with the Department of Basic Education. As I have said, we have scholarships. But the long and short of what we are saying, which I agree you with, is that science must be accessible to all. That is my interpretation, and language plays an important role in that. Thank you very much.

Ms J M ADRIAANSE: Hon Minister, we have just heard about an example of a ... [Inaudible.] ... programme ... [Inaudible] ... language and you elaborated on saying about the English being the language of science and how it evolved. So, in effect, some programmes have stagnated or failed. You mentioned some steps that are being taken to address this issue. But are there any other steps that are going to be used innovatively so, to address these ... [Inaudible.] ... programmes? And how does the government plan to expand or improve educational initiatives related to the SKA in the coming years? Thank you.

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The MINISTER OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION: As I have said, scholarships have been one intervention. It is very important because we are training youngsters to understand and have the skills required by the Square Kilometre Array. That is one intervention. The second intervention, as I have said, we are interacting a lot with schools. Let me give you one practical example, for the first time we had the World Astronomical Assembly being held here in Cape Town. It is about three months ago. The whole of astronomy was here in South Africa in Cape Town. We tried to use that, we had questions and competitions around astronomy that we were doing at the time. We also took some of the most distinguished astronomy professors to go and interact with kids from Khayelitsha, for example. That is not the only Khayelitsha when they were here so that the students could be able to ask questions. So, those initiatives are very important. As I say, I have an elaborate programme on science engagement to promote science literacy and to promote understanding of science. I must say I was shocked by some problematic beliefs about vaccines at the height of COVID and I said, wow, we have a lot of work to do. So, I have identified as one of our priorities together with our Deputy Minister, the issue of science engagement as a big thing. In fact, science can be developed as much as possible. If your population doesn't understand

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what we are doing, we are not going to get much anyway. So, I have prioritised science engagement and science literacy as one of the most important things. We are going to work with the public broadcaster, as I have said, because the public broadcaster has the advantage of having all the languages in to be able to communicate in the languages that they understand. I haven't given up. Maybe working with the Minister of Higher Education and Training to resuscitate a project I had started to look at the promotion and the development of African indigenous languages to be languages of science. That also continues to be important. So, all this is a basket of issues that from the standpoint of my department, we are doing to ensure that we can reach out insofar as science is concerned. Over and above that, I have just recently met with all my entities together with the Deputy Ministers and said, all of you must have a science engagement programme in your activity. If you are the National Research Foundation, have a science engagement programme. If you are the National Advisory Council on innovation, have your science engagement programme. But now and again, we must come together with the department and have a common plan. I am planning to highly elevate that. Maybe hon Adriaanse you can invite me when he has time and say, Minister give me an account of how far you have progressed. Thank you very much.

Ms M MAKESINI: Minister, again ...

IsiXhosa:

... siyeva ukuba umsebenzi mkhulu enimele ukuwenza ...

English:

... to educate our communities. Could you please give us a breakdown ...

IsiXhosa:

... ukuba nenza njani ukuze nifikele kubantu abahlala eNquthu nakubantwana abahlala ...

English:

... into the deep rural communities to encourage them to participate in science so that in future ...

IsiXhosa:

... kungaxhamli abantu abasezilokishini ...

English:

... because I feel that, most of our communities in our rural areas do not know about Square Kilometre Array, SKA, and do not participate in projects of maths and science ...

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IsiXhosa:

... bacinga ukuba zezabantu abathile.

English:

So, what are you doing to partner with the department in local municipalities to make sure that you reach the deep rural areas to educate and encourage ...

IsiXhosa:

... aba bantu bangakholelwayo ukuba inzululwazi ikhona. Ukuba ungasenzela ...

English:

... a breakdown that in KwaZulu-Natal we have encouraged and recruited so much and the work that you have done in the Eastern Cape and in all other provinces so that we encourage for the future ...

IsiXhosa:

... ukuze sikwazi ukuqubisana nale nto yokudala imisebenzi sijongene nayo ...

English:

...as a country. Thank you.

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The MINISTER OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION: Thanks for that follow up question, maybe the best way, partly is to answer this anecdotally. Can I invite you to go to our Cofimvaba Science Centre? I am sure you know where Cofimvaba is. I don't like places to be called that they are nowhere, but Cofimvaba is one of the places that are really in the middle of nowhere, if you like. There is an amazing science centre that we have built there, which I said, has a local weather station. We are able now begin to teach the youngsters how do we read the weather. How do we know whether it is going to rain or not tomorrow? And so on. It is one of my favourites. It was built by my department. It is one of my favourite centres that I would like to ... because what we are working on now ... that we are discussing in our department is that it might as well be that maybe during the next five years money per meeting, would be to ensure that each province has a science centre, at least one for starters. You can do it smartly if you have resources like, for instance, the centre in Cofimvaba is linked to 18 schools in the area. You can bring one good maths teacher from one of the Eastern Cape schools to come and give occasional mathematic lessons through the Cofimvaba Science Centre because it is linked to 18 schools around. You can have science centres that are linked to specific areas. We can even have subcentres. That is one of

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the things that we would like to do. We are also in engagement with the Chinese to build what are called science parks. The Chinese are very good. They have built a lot of science parks in China. We are engaging with them precisely to try and respond to the kinds of issues that you are you are raising. We have other science facilities that we must look at, for instance, since you often come to Cape Town, I would like to invite you one day to Hermanus, to our Space Weather Centre. It is the only Space Weather Centre in the whole of the African continent. It reads space weather and it is recognised by the International Civil Aviation Authority as the centre that will provide the rest of the world with space weather on the African continent, because aviation now with climate change is going to be affected not only by what we call the weather that we normally talk about at our level, but space weather is going to start interacting with the normal weather that we normally measure every day - it is going to be 18° in Cape Town - to begin to cause problems if those things are not being done together. There is another place that we are working with things that are practical. I think with technology now, we can, for instance, begin to say, how do we get more kids in the rest of South Africa to interact with that space or with the centre, for instance, that we have? During the Astronomy Conference, there were astronauts who

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were in space. One of the days during the conference when there were kids who were visiting, we connected them, and they had a chat with astronauts in space, which is part of exciting our youngsters. And those are just anecdotal things that I am mentioning. Your point is very valid. We must think about how we spread science amongst our communities, not least, rural communities. Thank you very much.

Mr M F MOKWELE: Hon Minister, I was listening to you when you were articulating on the benefits of the Square Kilometre Array, especially as you indicated how it will benefit young people. Hon Minister, the kind of the skills that have been obtained by students in this programme are very much important in building the economy of this country. My question to you, hon Minister is that: Is your department able to follow up on the students to check on their progress once they have acquired those skills? Thank you.

The MINISTER OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION: Well, together with the Department of Higher Education and Training and the Department of Labour, it is still not perfect. We are doing our best now to track are artisans that we have trained as to where they are as well as your high-level skills in my area, for instance, that we have given scholarships and

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bursaries. I must also admit, we still have a lot to do as government insofar as data and data management is concerned. We are still in far from where we need to be. I am not saying that as government we have not done a lot of work. Let me give one example that irritates me every day. If you apply to the Department of Higher Education and Training to be a director in one of the programmes in the TVET colleges, when you submit your application, the Z83, you must go to a police station to ... you are applying to the Department of Education, okay, but we must go and queue at a police station ... get your certificates certified. Really? Applying to the department that is holding your own results. Why should you go and waste two hours at a police station because it should be a press of a button? You say you have a BSc, they just press your name, all your qualifications come up. If they are false, that you are claiming, it would show. That is lack of basic digitization and data management that we still have a lot to deal with, including given that employment is our priority. Tracking and following up. He is a university graduates; we do have a general sense as to how many university graduates are unemployed. How many university graduates are employed specific areas. The one area that we have started doing a lot of work in was engineering, because we are short of engineers, and we found some something shocking that we are not as short

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of engineers as we think. The problem is that our engineers, almost half of them are not in engineering areas, they are not practising engineers. Some are employed by health institutions and medical aids, because they must go and do some kinds of analysis calculation on whether certain things are funded properly. A lot of them are in Dubai. They are building the United Arab Emirates. They are not here in South Africa. And they are a lot of engineers employed by banks because banks need to assess and quantify certain things, they need engineers. So, part of the problems with engineers is to try and incentivize them to go back to the to the engineering profession. Work has been done. I am not saying that it has not been done. But it is not adequate. And hon Mokwele, the area that you are raising is a very important. Hold us to that as government. What progress are you making ... because ideally in this day in age of technology, you should be knowing every artisan, every professional, and everyone who leaves university, for instance, where do they go? Thank you very much.

Question 195:

The MINISTER OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION: Thank you very much, hon Deputy Chair. To this question by hon Aries, my answer in brief is that our department encourages

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collaboration with international partners. Through intervention I would urge the member to go and look at from our annual performance plan. We provided detailed report there on this score. We do a lot of work to leverage international resources for our national system of innovation through international partnership such as South Africa's participation in the European Union programmes called the Horizon Europe framework programme which, by the way, has led to an investment of a R1 billion into our national system of innovation in South Africa.

We are also leveraging opportunities for South African students to participate in international training programmes to gain experience and building networks with the current focus, being to promote Pan African mobility.

Last year, we launched a R1 billion Presidential PHD programme. We want to send some of our brightest doctoral and postdoctoral students to the best institutions in the world to learn from there so that they can come back with this knowledge, especially and also including in areas where we don't have that knowledge here in South Africa.

We are also building capacity for international co-operation on science, technology and innovation specifically, and I am

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very passionate about this targeting the historically disadvantaged institutions. I recently heard a vice chancellor of a historically disadvantaged institution, HDI, from Fort Hare, saying that Fort Hare is no longer an HDI. Really, has it graduated? [Laughter.] It means that the money that I am setting aside for HDIs I mustn't take one cent to Fort Hare because Fort Hare is okay. My understanding as far as I know is that Fort Hare still have huge number of students from rural areas who need a lot of academic support and other things in order to be able to take things forward. So, we are doing a lot of work to support our HDIs.

We are also supporting international policy dialogues and technical exchanges to enrich policy formulation and implementation in South Africa. Through diverse forums, the ones that I mentioned is the China's Belt and Road Initiative. We are also supporting the science, technology and innovation, STI, initiatives targeting objective's that are contained in the African Union Agenda 2063. As South Africa we are playing leadership role in the preparation of a success strategy to the AU Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy.

We are also supporting STI initiatives targeting SADC. What are the priorities in SADC? For instance, we are working to

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renew the SADC Agenda, Technology and Innovation policy capacity developing programme. We are also implementing bilateral plans of actions with fellow African governments who have got extensive bilateral relations with other African countries on this scope. We are also engaging with global science leaders to advance national priorities. This is a constant priority for our department in promoting diplomacy work. We have activities that we call science diplomacy. Science has a huge role to play in promoting diplomacy and international relations.

We are also supporting a number of science, technology and innovation initiatives that are focused on Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations. I've just asked my department that the last summit of the United Nations General Assembly called Pact for the Future - how do we deal with future threats and other challenges in the world. I said to my department, let's lead this department by saying how are we going to translate this Pact of the Future and seek to mainstream it into our own programmes as South Africa. Thank you very much, Chair.

Ms M SIWISA: Thank you Deputy Chair. Thank you, Minister.

Minister, the medical and health industry is one of the most

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fundamental in the country pertaining the needs of our people and their wellbeing. In response to this fundamental question of efficient medicine and health, what programmes of action has been directed to the sector through the use of science and technology in the department, what interdepartmental relations have been devised for the Department of Health for this purpose?

The MINISTER OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION: Thank you very much. Thanks to the member for the follow-up question. One of the important programmes in our decadal plan is what we refer to as health innovation. We have identified health innovations and very important. I am very proud to say that since COVID-19, the President said to me that in the light of the challenges we are facing with the acquisition of vaccines by African continent, what can we do as South Africa? I am very pleased to say now we have developed capacity to begin to produce some of the vaccines in South Africa - vaccines that are also needed in the continent. Not all of them, but there are certain vaccines that are important for diseases in our continent through health innovation, through our vaccines integrated manufacturing strategy.

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We are working with the World Health Organisation that's why we have managed to get where we are. We are also working with some big countries like China, Germany and France in producing these. In our own view we said that if we develop this capacity in South Africa, we must also develop it on the continent as a whole so that we don't depend on developed countries for vaccines that they take long. We might find that they are not there.

The second thing I would like to say which is important is that the President is leading an effort on Africa pandemic preparedness. COVID-19 taught us a lesson that when you have a pandemic you must always be ready. Scientists are telling us that we are still going to have other pandemics with climate change. There is one now that is here, the Mpox. We are working very hard as part of the President's initiatives on pandemic preparedness to be able to develop a strategy working with other departments.

We are working very closely with the Department of Health - very, very closely. Even during COVID-19 we were working very closely. During COVID-19, working with the Department of Health, we established what we call an observatory at the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research which was

monitoring COVID-19 numbers on an hourly basis - where were we getting new infections, where were we getting more deaths and what was the reason. We had all that data which we developed as a partnership between the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, CSIR, and the Department of Health which made us manage COVI-19 better.

Dr Ghebreyesus, the Director General of the World Health Organisation, who other people call him Jesus or something like that, said South Africa set an example in the whole world on how to mobilise science for the daily management of the pandemic. He said we did very well there. These are some of the initiatives we have.

Collaborating with the Department of Health is very important in dealing with some of these. Health innovation is a key issue for us. Thank you.

Mr M FENI: Thank you, hon Chair. In my previous engagement hon Chairperson, I am indebted to you, Chairperson. Hon Minister, I think I agree when you correctly say that there is still further support needed in terms of the HDIs because the practical example that you are making is what made me be

convincing that I fully agree with you. I just want to check...

IsiZulu:

Mphephethwa...

English:

... about further support in terms of the HDIs both at the human and financial levels. What kind of support is the department having in ensuring that those institutions become at the levels of those that have been benefiting previously? Thank you, hon Chair.

The MINISTER OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION: Thank you very much for the follow-up. It is a very, very important question. I have now said to the department, let's design and implement, and not that we are not doing any initiatives, but to pool them together under a concrete programme of supporting research and development in historically disadvantaged universities. There is a lot which we are doing, but it is not as co-ordinated as I would like it to be. I know higher education institutions have what they call the Sibusiso Bengu Development Programme which is targeting at strengthening the HDIs. There is already a lot of work that we are doing as I am

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saying, for instance, we have specific incentives for HDIs to encourage their participation in international partnerships.

One of the things that frustrates me is that wherever you go abroad or in the African countries, Minister we are so happy to meet you, we are doing a lot of work with some of your universities, the University of Cape Town, UCT, the University of Pretoria and Wits. Of course, I say thank you very much as an acknowledgement, but something in me says mm-hmm it is the same universities. You won't hear of the University of Limpopo, you won't hear about the University of Zululand and you won't hear about Fort Hare for that matter or the University of Venda. We are providing incentives in order to encourage these partnerships. For instance, UCT has a programme with a particular university in Europe on a particular programme in research. We say, why don't you expand that and make it a tripartite arrangement where you have UCT, Wits University European and then Fort Hare to be able to participate. One of the biggest problems is unsustainable to continue with this apartheid type of inequalities in our university system. We actually have to deal with that.

We do reach out to historically disadvantaged institutions with our own programmes and support. I am very glad a few

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years ago, for instance, I managed to build a relationship between the University of Venda and the University of Warwick in the UK on research and mathematics and improving maths performance. When I was in China now, I unveiled a plug on a relationship between the university called Beihang University and Univen. Beihang University is in Beijing. As a result, out of that the vice chancellor said I am so happy Minister as you are here and bring me as many PHD students to come and study space science. It is one of the 10 space science universities in the world. I came back in the bag with some potential scholarships. We have to go and identify our students and encourage them to apply to those institution. That is some of the work that we are also doing.

We are also spreading awareness in historically disadvantaged institutions about opportunities. For instance, even now when I visit abroad, let say I go to Japan, I am going to Tanzania soon I would like that I be accompted by a vice chancellor, VC, from the historically disadvantaged university so we can say what important programmes and projects you can incorporate around. My own approach is that unless we do something important, some kind of affirmative action for these universities, we are going to continue having an uneven university system.

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Mr M M PETER: Thank you, hon Chair. Good evening, hon Minister. Minister...

IsiXhosa:

... ndiyaqala ukubona uMphathiswa osihloniphayo kule Ndlu osiphendula ngesidima nesithozela. Ndiyaqala ukubona uMphathiswa osisicaka sabantu. Xa uphendula thina ...

English:

... you must understand that you are answering the 64 million people of this country. Some other Ministers do not give us respect. One thing that I want to disagree with you is when you said black students are afraid of maths and science. Minister, I disagree simply because they were scared before 1994, but after 1994...

IsiXhosa:

... babona oobawo uBlade banento ethi, naba abacebisi bethu.

English:

You are one of the mentors of our students. Let me go to my question. In light of the department's decadal plan which demonstrates the relevance of innovation as a key enabler for economic development, what progress has been made in

restructuring the department and its already existing programmes to realise the needs of the decadal plan? Secondly, how far is the department on the implementation of integrating the digital economy into various sectors?

IsiXhosa:

Siyaqhwarela kakhulu ke Mphathiswa ...

English:

... in our rural areas as speakers said.

IsiXhosa:

Sicela usincede. Enkosi.

English:

The MINISTER OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION: Thank you very much, and thanks for the complement, hon member. I don't want to go deep into the complement, but perhaps I was part of the Constitutional Assembly which among other things established these two Houses. I have that insight and we had intended this House to achieve as contained in the Constitution. I understand very well that you do deserve the respect and the attention which is not less than the National Assembly. You are a full House on your own, and you are not

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half a House. You may have less numbers, but you are not less important. Of course, we have a challenge also with the media to actually make the media understand the NCOP better. I get the sense they don't.

What I want to say in brief is that we can debate the issue of whether the black students ... maybe not only them, but maybe also some of the teachers and the principals. I can't explain why would the principal say to student that don't do pure maths, but go and do maths literacy. To me it's a sign of wanting to get better results but we are afraid. I think there is still that.

What worries me are the figures. I don't have the figure now in my head, but we are away from producing the numbers of maths and science learners through our matric - far less. If you have you to do all of our engineering programmes with medicine is worse because we don't have enough. You need not less than 60% in maths and science and the percentages is tiny for our matriculants who come out with maths and science. We need to look at this. We are working with the Department of Basic Education. My own sense is that there's still fear. Maybe is far less than our days where we were told bluntly by some of our lecturers that the black power you are shouting is

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only good behind the spade. You cannot be a mathematician you cannot be an economist. In our time it was worse. Maybe now it's better. But let's not ... [Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: But you have 30 years chance.

The MINISTER OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION: 30 years chance, but we have done a lot. If you want me to come and talk about what we have done over the last 30 years to fight that terrible legacy of Verwoerd, I am happy to come back and tell you that. The fact that we are still pointing out at that by the way 30 years is a long time, but at the same time 30 years is not a long time to reverse centuries of deliberate underdevelopment of people and communities. But we will find another time if you want me to come back. You can't say apartheid is gone because we have 30 years of democracy. It's actually wrong. In fact, it's being an apology for apartheid to argue that way. But let's not go there I am running out of time. I want to say, perhaps since now I do not have time, it would be very important that we engage around provision of maths, science and some programmes in rural areas including what should be done about the HDI maybe as a specific discussion and coming up with concrete actions on what is to be done. Thank you.

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Ms J M ADRIAANSE: Thank you, hon Chair. Minister, I have a short question to you. It's been said that research grant fundings in collaboration with international institutions have been tied up to red tapes at certain universities. What are you doing to unlock the process and promote access to these grants in partnerships with international research institutions?

The MINISTER OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION: I missed the question. The grants and what?

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: May you please repeat it, hon member.

Ms J M ADRIAANSE: Regarding research fundings that are not coming forth because of red tapes, and it's not being allocated to critical research that need to be done, its projects that it come to institutions in South Africa and at certain universities and they are not receiving it because of red tape. Thank you.

The MINISTER OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION: Thanks for that question. Briefly, I would say perhaps the problem is with both sides. It's not only red tape in the university or

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even in our department. But some of these scholarship bursaries and programmes that we get sometimes the donors themselves select who is going to do this research outside our own input. There's a lot of that scholarships. If you take, for instance, the British Chevening Scholarships which is a very good scholarship, we don't have a say as South Africa or as a department. Chevening, they do that directly themselves. Yes, there is red tape that one may need to identify but the best way to resolve that is that we need to look at our systems on both sides and the donors. Some of the research criteria that they put forward is not easy to meet. It is not because we can't be able to work with them, but because of the rules and regulations that they set up. Yes, we have to look at ourselves as the department as well as the universities.

My own approach to that is similar to yours that we must leave no stone unturned to make sure that we make use of it.

I have just read an article from one of the higher education journals that is electronic raising precisely the same issue. Actually, it was raising a huge amount of 45% of European Union, EU, scholarships for not being taken up. We need to holistically sit down and look to say, what are the

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obstacles and the problems that are causing that, including the red tape as well. Thank you very much.

Question 175:

The MINISTER OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION: Hon Fienies, I'm very glad you're asking this question because the issue of demographics of science in South Africa is a matter that is of serious concern to me.

Now, through the framework of a talent and human capital development pipeline, our department prioritizes not only participation but also performance of girls and women in science, technology, engineering and mathematics, STEM. Our department's schools-based support interventions, which, by the way, includes Olympiads, we promote Olympiads' competitions on maths at schools, talent development programme as well as other science engagement programmes, these interventions are implemented with clearly set targets and that increasing the pool of girl learners that can enter STEM career fields.

Girl learner participation in these programmes is set at 55% and is exceeded across the board in the implementation of these programmes. We are doing very well on that score here,

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although it's not enough, but we have made lots of progress. For instance, now, generally in our universities, if I'm not mistaken, women are more than 60%, although on STEM disciplines there is still this anomaly that we have got more girls ... more female students at university. But the male students still come out with bigger numbers in terms of the pass rate. I don't know how one explains that.

With respect to postgraduate funding, the department will set a target of 55% for women who must receive postgraduate support; that is part of our targets. We can talk about aggregated performance data across each level of study: Honors, Master's and PhD. For instance, in 2021 we had 62% women Postgraduate students, 2022 61% and 2020 61%.

In 2023, for which data is available, women constituted 66% of funded Honours students, 62% of Master's students and 54% of PhD students.

To advance equity in the research workforce, the department, through our National Research Foundation, NRF, implemented two key transformational programmes, namely: the Thuthuka Programme and the Black Academics Advancement Programme. These two programmes provide research grants to emerging researchers

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with a focus on young black and women researchers who are South Africans.

Over the three years, 2019 to 2021, the Thuthuka Programme and this Black Academics Advancement Programme provided 1 849 emerging researchers grants, two South African citizens and permanent residents, and 61% of these went to women.

In 2023-24 there were 1 378 active emerging researcher grants and 726, that is 53% of these, were held by women.

One of the flagship programmes of our department, as I've said, is the SA Research Chairs Initiative, SARChI. Since its inception in 2005-06, 276 research chairs were awarded to 22 universities and national research facilities in various disciplines of scientific research.

Now, if since 2005 it's 276 research chairs, research chairs are professorships, by the way, and units that do research in particular areas. It's a huge advance, huge advance.

At the moment we also are doing a lot of in engineering programmes, science and maths and so on. At the moment, we've got 199 current operational researchers chairs, of whom 51%

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are women. This is very important given the fact that women still constitute only 37,5% of university professoriate.

The SA Women in Science Awards is one of our flagship events that I host every year to award women who are doing well in science, and this is encouraging young girls so much to be able to actually follow science.

Celebrating 30 years of our democracy, I must say that percentage of female doctoral graduates now surpasses that of the males. Representation of female academic staff members have increased from 46% in 2010 to 52% in 2021 and lastly, the number of female authors contributing to university publications increased from 31% in 2005 to 42% in 2021. That is the effort we are making in terms of advancing women in science, technology and innovation. Thank you.

Ms D W FIENIES: Chair, greetings to all hon members. Thank you, hon Minister, for your comprehensive response to my question. The response indicates a clear increase in the involvement of women in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

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What is the contribution of the private sector in the increase of women in STEM? Thank you, hon Deputy Chair.

The MINISTER OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION: Chair, this is a very important question that has been asked. Perhaps one can answer it in an overarching fashion.

Our target is to spend 1,5% of Gross Domestic Product, GDP, on research and development as a country. It's a very modest target because other countries are spending anything up to 4-5%. We are, at the moment, at 0.6%. We are lower than prior to covid. During covid we were about 0,78%. We are down now. And all indications point to the fact that expenditure on research and development in science, technology and innovation by the private sector has gone down drastically. That is what is pulling us down, such that even the expenditure that we are talking about is the expenditure that is by the Department of Science and Innovation and other government and public entities that are actually investing in this.

We are indeed, though, working with the private sector, if I'm just now thinking. Some companies like Sasol, Sasol - as I said - used to be the single largest employer on PhDs. We are still working with them through our National Research

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Foundation on a programme which is seeking to advance young academics and scientists in professional development. Now, this is an example, then, of what we're trying to do or what we're doing, is to particularly start with those companies that have shown a history of involvement in advancing research and development, science, technology and innovation to work with them.

One company, by the way, which used to be a very good state-owned was Eskom. Eskom was excellent in training artisans, Eskom was also excellent in some science programmes. So, things are getting slightly better in some respects at Eskom, so, we want to then continue to work with them in these particular areas so that we are able to advance.

But the private sector, we still have a lot of work to do. That is why I have asked my Deputy Minister to say, can you please pay particular attention to industrial relations with our department, together with my advisor, to say I am giving you this task because it's one of the most important tasks that we actually need to follow up.

The other example, by the way, that comes to mind is that the National Research Foundation is also in partnership with the

First Rand Foundation for the support of the black ... the programme I spoke about earlier, the Black Academics Advancement Programme, to provide research grant to emerging academics.

There are private sector companies that have an interest, we are actually targeting those because, as we have said, we have seen that the decline is actually with the private sector more than with government.

I would urge, hon Deputy Chairperson, that we take this up as a struggle together with the NCOP. Thank you very much.

Ms S M MOKOENA: Deputy Chair ...

IsiZulu:

... ngiyanibingelela Mhlonishwa mkhaya.

English:

You've partly covered what I would have asked as a follow up question in terms of giving data of a composition of the workforce within government-funded science and technology institutions.

My question is: As we reflect on the 30 years of democracy and celebrating the involvement of women in your faculty, could you share any initiatives or any events that you are planning as a department to not only commemorate but also to showcase the strength that women have played in this sector? Thank you.

The MINISTER OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION: Hon Mokoena, thanks for this follow up question. The first big way through which we try to showcase women in the sector is the annual SA Women in Science Awards, SAWiSA, because through those awards we are able to showcase what women can do. We have just had one now, we always have it in August, the Women's Month.

I mean some of the work that those women researchers are doing is amazing. I can only cite one, that there is a team at the University of Pretoria led by a black woman, they are doing incredible work in cancer. Of course, they don't have money. You know, that is what we have because if perhaps they can have enough money we can be able to go much further. Really creative work.

Sometimes my optimistic side of things tells me South Africa may be the next country to make huge breakthroughs on cancer,

through cancer research, in terms of diagnostics and therapeutics, how to identify.

There are also women who are participating in a number of other programmes and projects that we are doing. Through my science engagement programme, I want to showcase more of that, that women are out there to actually show the work that they are doing in the sector.

Definitely, we've got some way to go but I think we are slowly breaking the stereotypes that science is a man's field, with the numbers. By the way, women also are doing well in other awards, not only in SA Women in Science Awards, but I think the awards in the ... generally in science as well as the NRF Awards, which it also gives every year.

But you are right, that is why part of my focus now is on schools because we must start there. And as I say, in terms of building computer labs and the building of science laboratories, which we are also doing working with the Department of Basic Education and focusing on girls and women in particular.

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Nevertheless, hon Mokoena, I would also like, though, that we think about this question, I know it's a tricky one. We are not here, there, in terms of advancing and showcasing women. But the question must begin to arise: What are the unintended consequences of our successful focus on women, on boys, who, by the way, it's them in our prisons and correctional centres? Such that we begin to say, advancement of women must not then be seen as being an anti-men and an anti-boys project, which it never was. We mustn't stop with what we are doing but we need to begin to debate that, and the mobilization of men, by the way, against gender-based violence, GBV, and some of those things which are very important. Thank you.

Mr F J BADENHORST: Minister, afternoon, you had absolutely no impact on getting more female students into the STEM in your last posting.

Are you going to double-down on your failed strategies or is it time for you to step aside to make place for somebody who is everything that you are not, progressive, honest, competent and preferably female? Thank you.

The MINISTER OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION: ...

[Laughter.] I was expecting that question from you, hon ...

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Mr F J BADENHORST: I could have about Nexus report ...

The MINISTER OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION: I don't want to go into that, don't use this platform to want to ask ... there is nothing that I'm unable to answer, even including about that Nexus Report, because usually the problem is much deeper that you just pose it.

The work that I have done, if you ask me, I'm not ashamed of anything that I have done, and that I was part of the transition that dislodged the apartheid regime, which, to me, personally, was one of my biggest achievements. Because this country will not be where we are and we are not going to allow a situation where those who are still looking back want to draw us to go back. We are no longer going back. [Applause.]

Even as the ANC we might have gotten 40%, yes, it's a setback but we are not going to allow our country to redress and after redress and go to situations that ...

Now, I don't understand what is the import of your question. Are you asking the President to appoint somebody else? I'm glad he's unlikely, perhaps, to listen to you. [Laughter.] Not

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because I want the job for myself, I don't have any entitlement about being a Minister whatsoever.

I think that the fundamental issue that we face as a country, we all have to look forward and not to look back. That will liberate people like yourselves. You need to be liberated ... [Interjections.] ... to actually say whatever skill you have should be contributing to advancing black women and so on.

If you say in my previous portfolio, I don't want to talk about my previous portfolio, necessarily. But if you ask me, not because I'm talking about myself, I've done relatively well. I expanded National Student Financial Aid Scheme, NSFAS, through billions of rands, reached more than a million students, we have actually attracted more students to vocational education, the apartheid regime had it in law that a black person can't be an artisan, we have done away with that and so on.

It's like this Basic Education Laws Amendment, Bela, Bill, by the way. It's just that some of us haven't had a chance to talk about it. It's an old struggle that they lost in 1996 when we adopted the Constitution. That's why FW de Klerk resigned and pulled out of the Government of National Unity

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then, because they wanted to use Afrikaans speaking schools as exclusive schools for white Afrikaners. So, this is what they are fighting about the Bela Bill, it's that battle that they lost. Coloured people are the majority Afrikaans speakers, that is why you mustn't speak as if you are talking for the majority of Afrikaans speakers ... [Interjections.]

Mr F J BADENHORST: In the Western Cape ...

The MINISTER OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION: ... as a white Afrikaner ... not only in the Western Cape, they are the majority Afrikaans speakers throughout the whole of South Africa, the coloured people.

Now, the problem is that you are trying to appropriate language to use it to hide a whole range of things that do not belong to South Africa.

I'm glad I've answered you and I'm done with you. I'm looking forward. If you remain on your old mould, that's your problem ... [Interjections.] ... I'm moving forward, we have a better South Africa that we have to build. Thank you very much, hon Deputy Chair.

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Ms M SIWISA: Minister, I hear your response when it comes to programmes that have been put with the main purpose of introducing the girl child to mathematics and science, with the sole purpose of them venturing into science and innovation. But the sad reality is that focus is on urban areas and of those urban areas' schools, schools are identified depending on the status of the school. That's the reality.

With that said, how much effort of specialty has actually been championed in rural areas working in collaboration with basic education to actually motivate the girl child in the rural areas to venture into math and science?

I'm also going to speak like hon Mandisa said, let's leave Cofimvaba for now, let's speak about rural rural. What efforts are being made for that girl child to venture into maths and science? Thank you.

The MINISTER OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION: Hon member, but Cofimvaba is rural [Laughter.] and very rural. So, it is an example of what we are doing. The concern that you have, I share, that we still have got to do more to advance the African girl child from the rural areas than what we have

done. But to say so, must not hide a lot of work that we have actually done.

There's something I notice as a phenomenon in KwaZulu-Natal, my hometown, my home province, the increasing attraction to isicathamiya, maskandi and indlamu. I was analysing, sitting down with someone, why is it like this? Because not so long ago, in our days, those things used to be looked down upon them, even us as black people, if you come from the rural area you are mampara ...

IsiZulu:

... uyimpatha, awuyazi lutho ...

English:

... and so on. Such is changing. Even your maskandi and 'scathamiya now, are popular at universities. I'm sure this is a general phenomenon in the whole of South Africa. I'm just making an example with my hometown. I'm sure if you go to the North West, if you go to Limpopo, it's the same. Why? Because of the number of rural students that we have attracted to universities. You have to look at graduation ceremonies today and see what those students are doing and what that actually

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tells you about where now, increasingly, most of these students are coming from.

So, we have done very well in drawing the challenges that we have actually not done enough. I'm not Minister of Higher Education but I can tell you that NSFAS has changed this country for good. For good. It will never be the same because of access that we actually have.

The challenge for me is simply this, how do we work together to build on the achievements that we have made by addressing what has not yet been done, where we want to go to? And we must not make the mistake of wanting to judge ourselves by what has not happened by ignoring what we have done.

We must start about what we have done and the achievements that we have actually made, and then say, given that what more have we got to do? There is still a lot that we have got to do for the girl child. But that ... there is still ... that doesn't mean that we have actually not done anything. We have actually done a lot in affirming rural women in this country, although we still have got a lot more to do.

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That would be my answer, hon Deputy Chair, and hope that also hon members you are still stuck in the past will move forward [Laughter.] so that we have a better South Africa. Thank you very much.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Hon Minister, thank you very much for your credence in the House. We really appreciate your sentiments, especially with regard to the NCOP and the role that the NCOP has to play in the democracy that we share. Thank you very much, hon Minister

Question 179:

The MINISTER OF SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE: Hon Deputy Chair, if you allow me just to say two things quickly. Firstly, I am not going to answer any questions regarding Durban poison because I am from Bloemfontein. [Laughter.] I saw there was ... I just want to tell the members that in Sesotho, there is a saying that says, ...

Sesotho:

Ngwana ya sa lleng o shwela tharing!

English:

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At six o'clock, our national team is playing to qualify for the African Nations Cup. We should be equally excited about Bafana Bafana than we are about rugby. So, there is a message in the message. What is the question? The first question? Yes, I am saying we should as quickly so that we can all go and support Bafana Bafana.

Afrikaans:

As dit die Springbokke gewees het sou jy al lankal geloop het.

English:

Yes, hon Feni, my department has a program regarding the repatriating heroes and heroines. In 2021, Cabinet approved the National Policy on the Repatriation and Restitution of Human Remains in the Heritage Objects and the Framework for the Repatriation of the Remains of Those Who Died in Exile.

The policy covers and provides a framework for the repatriation and restitution of human remains and heritage objects, the documentation falling under the ambit of the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture, the Justice and Constitutional Development and Military Veterans and the implementation of the Long-Term Restitution and Repatriation Program.

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The most recent example of mass repatriation of human remains from Zambia and Zimbabwe was the ceremony that took place at Freedom Park. We brought back the youngest ANC Secretary-General Duma Nokwe, Mme Mophosho and Basil February. It happened in that ceremony. The remains of nearly 50 fallen heroes were honoured at the ceremony, which was attended by His Excellency President Cyril Ramaphosa, former President, His Excellency Thabo Mbeki and many other notable dignitaries with the families of the fallen heroes.

Further such repatriations are set to continue. Engagements and liaisons with host countries will continue for the purpose of identification of fallen heroes. The outcomes of these engagements will determine the possible form of memorialisation, to maintain relations between host countries and South Africa. In March 2023, Cabinet adopted the implementation plan with a country-to-country model, in which human remains will be recovered and repatriated in groups in each country, to consolidate time and cost. The plan has got different phases.

In conclusion, hon Feni, I just want to say that in the Department of Sport Arts and Culture, this is going to be our headline program. We must bring closure. We must heal the hurt

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of the children that have not had the opportunity to bury their fathers and mothers. So, rest assured, we have already, in the first 100 days, brought back 49 of our heroes. So, me being there, it is going to happen. Thank you.

The DEPUTY CHAIR OF THE NCOP: Thank you, hon Minister. I hope the hon members got the subtle message that came from the hon Minister in his opening comments. Hon Feni, do you have a follow-up question?

Mr M FENI: Yes! Thank you very much, Chairperson. Good afternoon, hon Minister. As you are always availing yourself also in our select committees, I must also raise that, as it has been the situation with hon Peter when he was appreciating hon Minister Blade Nzimande. With regards to, or in terms of what you have already presented on memorisation, and also the question of appreciating, today in history, I think it is something that we must share: Thirty-five years ago, it was the release of five Robben Island prisoners, led by Ahmed Kathrada.

It is with regards to what you are raising in terms of ensuring that we celebrate and also keep the legacy alive. The question that I want to ask is in connection with that, as a

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commitment that have you made here, because you are raising this question of memorialisation. I just want to check: Which form of memorialisation is the department now embarking on in ensuring that the seventh administration does not forget about those heroes, especially those that are currently alive? I ask this because our legacy is not only for those who have passed on, even though we appreciate them, but also the question is about those who are still alive.

The MINISTER OF SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE: I think we must be honest: The seventh administration, which the government of national unity, GNU, under the leadership of His Excellency President Cyril Ramaphosa, has in the history of our democracy never brought so many of our heroes back to South Africa. It happened for the first time under the GNU in governance. At the very same commemoration, the President called me privately beforehand and said I must listen carefully because he has got an instruction for me and for the department.

The instruction was that we need to build a heroes' acre, and we need to bring a memo to Cabinet. Why I mentioning that is to because this freedom that we are enjoying today should never be taken for granted. People died for this freedom, and we will not go back to the past. We are a socially cohesive

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country. We will hold hands. The ones that want to take us back can remain there, but we are moving forward. Thank you.

Ms N S DU PLESSIS: Thank you, hon Chair and thank you, hon Minister. I will be as quickly as possible ...

Afrikaans:

Ek baiza op 'n ander manier.

English:

Hon Minister, firstly I would like to say it is interesting that you mentioned the heroes' acre. My uncle is actually in Namibia, buried there. This is why this is a very important question that I want to ask now, and it is incredibly good to hear that there is progress - not just for our collective history, but for the families of these brave individuals. What guarantee is there to ensure that their grave sites are respected and maintained; and what happened to Sarah Bartman's grave?

Yes, she was not a struggle hero, but she was a symbol of the vulnerable. Her graveside being destroyed was additional destruction to her and what she stood for, as well as other historical sites like Kliptown, Liliesleaf and captured sites

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and exit houses throughout South Africa. The same doesn't happen to the graves of these heroes. I just want to end it with these words: It was an incredible thing for my grandparents to be at his grave and see the respect that he got, because he gave up his life, as many brave people have in this country and in the history of this continent. Thank you, hon Minister.

The MINISTER OF SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE: Thank you, hon Du Plessis. I am very happy to hear about your family members being at the heroes' acre. It is really something to be proud of, but I want to say to you that I disagree when you say Sarah Bartman was not the struggle heroine. Sarah Bartman was a struggle heroine. She was iconic. She fought. She was humiliated for the freedom that we have attained, and she was resolute that freedom shall come in our lifetime - maybe not in their lifetime, but many, particularly myself, look up to the Sarah Baartmans of this world. We look up to Harry de Strandloper of this world.

However, I agree with you when you say that we are currently ... What makes it so beautiful is that Minister Dean McPherson and I are personally dealing with the issue of the Sarah Bartman's grave. With my next appearance here, we will come

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with very good news because we have to prevent it. It cannot happen and it shouldn't happen. We as leaders will make sure that no grave ...

Just to inform members quickly, this has nothing to do with the Sarah Bartman; it has all to do with tender fights. People were unhappy. The local community was rightly unhappy because they felt that not even one security guard was taken from Henkey - the area where this whole thing is happening. You can't just bring people in the area as if there are no unemployed people there. However, we are dealing with that issue now, together with Minister Dean McPherson. Thank you very much.

Ms N P MCINGA: Minister, if such programs exist, why is King Hintsa's head still in Europe? What is it doing there? If such programs exists, as you say that the policy was drafted in 2021, which efforts have been taken to also focus on celebrating our living legends and icons while they are still alive, as hon Feni was saying, especially those still impacting and affecting our lives today, rather than only honouring them after they have passed.

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Heroes, like commander-in-chief, Julius Malema, Bantu Holomisa, King Buyelekhaya Dalindyebo - the only king that fought in the struggle of this country, Mxolisi Hulana, Sonwabile Ndamase, Conny Brian Madyaka, Jonnathan Butler, Mama Mara Louw, Makhaya Ntini, Mark Boucher, ...

IsiXhosa:

... zininzi iingqawa endinokuthetha ngazo Mphathiswa ezisaphilayo kodwa...

English:

... and are not recognised. We need to celebrate not only those who fought in the past struggle, Minister, but also those who are actively contributing to the society today, across various fields of music, art, sports, fashion, social, beauty, gold - you name it!

IsiXhosa:

Mphathiswa asikwazi ukuba sithi namhlanje abantu babuyisiwe kodwa intloko kaKumkani uHintsa isahleli eScotland. Kutheni isahleli eScotland? Enkosi.

English:

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The MINISTER OF SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE: Thank you, hon member. You know, it is true that King Hintsa was a hero, and I agree with the hon member that the skull of King Hintsa should be returned. I must also be honest that I have done no work in that regard yet. However, tomorrow I will start work in that regard because it is an important part of our history: The return of the skull of King Hintsa.

We must also admit that South Africa is the land of heroes, but we cannot say 'why this one and why not that one', while we have started the process. There are already 46 remains that have come back home, and we have the ex-PAC president on the list. The president of the PAC was also brought back. So, I am saying that everybody would want their preference. I would also want people from the coloured community ... Obviously, I would also want them also to come back, but life doesn't work like this.

We should bring people back, like we concentrated on Zimbabwe and Zambia. We are now concentrating on Angola because there are land mines where our leaders are buried. The process is not as easy as I thought. It is very difficult. The reason why I managed to do it, hon Mcinga, is because members of the PAC

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and members of the ANC that did this previously, helped us along the way. They gave advice and they gave guidance.

So, it is not Mackenzie. Instead, it is really a collective of the government of national unity that did this. I do think that the hon member is saying that we are a land of many heroes. Thank you for reminding me about King Hintsa. Thank you very much.

Afrikaans:

Me T BREEDT: Agb Minister, daar lê krag in geskiedenis. Van die wat ons land gebou het en die wat vir ons vryheid help veg het, is dit baie belangrik om toe te sien dat hulle hier is. Ek glo dat met die repatriasie doen u dit met waardigheid, maar daar waar hulle tans tot rus gelê is ... U het gepraat van Die Heldeakker en ek moet vir u sê dat die toestand van Die Heldeakker ... van ons begraafplase tans is nie – agb Du Plessis het gepraat van Sarah Baartman se graf – met waardigheid ...

Hulle kan nie met waarde tot rus gelê word nie. Ons word nie werklik waar toegelaat om daardie persone te celebrate [vier] vir wat hulle vir Suid-Afrika gedoen het nie. Ek weet begraafplase is 'n munisipale funksie maar ek glo dit is

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belangrik dat u departement tog 'n hand daarvoor hou om toe te sien dat hierdie heroes [helde] van Suid-Afrika wel met waarde tot rus gelê kan word.

Het u enige planne, gaan u iets daaromtrent doen en hoe gaan u verseker dat munisipaliteite wel daardie begraafplase waar ons helde te ruste gelê is netjies hou?

Die MINISTER VAN SPORT, KUNS EN KULTUUR: Agb Du Preez, baie dankie vir wat u so pas gesê het. Ek stem volkome saam. Ons stem 100% met u dat daar daadwerklike stappe geneem moet word, eerstens teen die munisipaliteite wat nie ons begraafplase in 'n toestand hou waarop ons almal kan trots wees nie. So wanneer dit by die begraafplase kom stem ek volkome saam met u.

Maar ek wil ook vir u sê dat met die Sarah Baartman ... moet ons dit nie hanteer asof dit al die grafte is nie. Ek het verlede week verby Walter Sisulu se graf gery en dit was mooi na gekyk met vars blomme, geen ... [Onhoorbaar.] Alles daar was mooi. So ek wil net sê dat die Sarah Baartman ... is in 'n slegte toestand maar ek wil ook nie hê dat ons dink dat al die helde van gister en eergister se grafte so lyk nie. Ons gaan

daadwerklike werk aan Sarah Baartman se graf doen. Dit belowe ek plegtig aan u.

Tweedens en laastens wil ek vir u sê dat ons het baie ... Dit is nie net grafte nie maar ook met sportstadions. Ons sien dat munisipaliteite nie die goed reg maak nie. Die goed is verval en in 'n onbeskryflike toestand. Ons het nou as 'n departement besluit om aan Treasury [Tesourie] te skryf om hulle te vra of ons die geld kan terughou, want hulle kry geld om die stadions en grafte reg te maak maar hulle doen dit net nie. Hulle gebruik die geld vir ander redes wat niks ... voor bedoel is nie. So ek kan vir u belowe dat ons binnekort 'n brief ... gaan rig om te vra of ons die geld kan terughou, nie van alle munisipaliteite nie maar wel van die wat nie voldoen aan ... waaroor die fondse beskikbaar gestel is nie. Baie dankie.

Question 187:

The MINISTER OF SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE: The transformation of the naming landscape in South Africa is a critical component of the heritage landscape. The process follows the SA Geographical Name Council, SAGNC Act 118 of 1988 and the United Nations Experts on Geographical Names which guide the process of name standardisation and name changes in South Africa.

The Provincial Geographical Names Committee, PGNCs hold public consultation meetings prior to submitting name change applications to the SAGNC and the Minister does not process and should never process any name change applications unless there is documented proof of credible public consultation at the local level.

The cost carried by the department related to name changes is budgeted for as an allocation towards the transformation of South Africa's naming landscape in order to reflect the history and languages of the majority of the people of South Africa. It is also part of the symbolic reparations in line with recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

The argument that name changes should not occur in South Africa for budgetary reasons is a very well-trodden and regularly raised point. Every year for the past 30 years, the primary flaw of this idea is that it is unlikely ever that in South Africa we will ever reach a point where unemployment is at 0% and that there will be no competing priorities for public funds.

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It is important that name changes are not done without some good cause and relatively conservatively but arguing that it should not be done at all would be unreasonable given our country's tragic history.

If we were to wait before considering any name change whatsoever, until all the various other problems in South Africa have been resolved, then we shall have to wait for many decades if not centuries, before daring to consider a single name change. Thank you.

Dr I S SCHEURKOGEL: Minister, names are important and that is how we acknowledge and remember all those that have contributed to South Africa's history. But is the Minister aware of the reported case which I did to the Public Protector regarding the provincial government in the Free State, which tried to change the name of the Deneysville and Gawie de Beer game reserve without public participation? If so, what action will the Minister take to stop officials using name changes for political motivated actions rather than protecting South African heritage?

The MINISTER OF SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE: We must be honest, name changes are political. You cannot expect black people

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that lived through the worst times of apartheid to live in a street called Verwoerd. It is reminding - to wake up every morning to be reminded of the injustice and the pain that you suffered. We must be fair.

People say we don't want these name changes but when you look at all these Black Economic Empowerment, BEE companies, they have black names. Some of our people in this country are easy to change the country's names to black names, but when it comes to changing names that also suits the black majority, they have a problem. But with BEE deals, the names get changed now. We have Khumalo and Sons, but there's not one black person in that sometimes.

But we must be honest. We must also not do it as revenge. We must not want to hurt people. We have instances where there is something on my desk now, they are trying to change the name and there's absolutely no consultation. They just wanted to hurt the white minority in that town. They never spoke to anyone; they never asked them how they feel. I send that back.

What I'm saying is that we should understand we have a troubled history, and that history would need us to make sacrifices. White people need to understand that certain names

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that will have to change. White people will have to understand that it should be done not in a way of revenge, but it should be done in the spirit of how far we've come as a country. Thank you very much.

Sesotho:

Mof M MAKESINI: Ere ke dumedise mohlomphehi. Phetolo ya mabitso e tlameha ho etshala mme le nna ke a dumela hore e tlameha ho etsahala ka dipuisano tsa setjhaba. Batho ba kgahlanong le hore re fetole mabitso a ditoropo tsa rona, ha ngata ha ba batle re bue nnete ka moo re tswang teng. Re ke ke ra ba hantle Frei Stata ha re na le toropo e bitswang Harrismith, moo ntate Harrismith a ileng a rehella toropo eo ka mosadi wa hae, ebe re re ...

English:

...it's okay. If you go to Ladysmith today ...

Sesotho:

... motho o ile a rehella toropo ya Ladysmith ka mosadi wa hae kapa kgarebe ya hae ...

English:

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... then we must still say it is okay? Public participation
...

Sesotho:

... e tlameha e estahale empa ka mokgwa o nepahetseng, re se k
era e etsa ...

English:

... in a manner ...

Sesotho:

... ya ho sebedisa tjhelete ho sa hlokahale re sa sheba maemo
a bajete hobane ha re etsa phetolo ya mabitso toropong ya
Harrismith ka Ladysmith, le masepala ...

English:

... will have to incur the costs because ...

Sesotho:

... ba fetola diaterese. Bana ba tshwanang le motswalle wa ka,
pelaka mona, ba sa batleng taba ya phetolo ya mabitso jwalo ka
seo ba entseng Brandfort. Re ke ke ra thola ebe re re e se ke
ya etsahala jwalo ka Paul Roux. Re ke ke ra dumela hore moo o
tswang teng haeno Frei Stata re dule ka hare ho ditoropo tsa

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batho ba re hlekefeditse mme ba sa bontsheng maswabi. Seo se tlameha ho etsahala.

English:

Yes, public participation - we must follow everything to the latter, public consultation.

Sesotho:

Re tla e tshehetsa. Ha e etsahale, re a e batla. Ha re tlo dula le Harrismith ...

English:

... any longer.

Sesotho:

LETONA LA BONONO LE BOTJHABA: Bophelong, ho thwe ho phela ke ho mamela batho ha ba bua le wena o a ithuta. Ke ne ke sa tsebe hore Harrismith e rehelletswe ka kgarebe ya hae.

[Ditsheho.] Ke ne ke sa tsebe mme ke batla ho o leboha ka nalane eo. O bua nnete, ke dumellana le wena. Re tshwanetse re fetole mabitso empa re tshwanetse re latele melao eo re dumellaneng ka yona, re se ke ra batla ho kgaoletsa.

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Ha ba phomole bo Ladysmith re kenye mabitso a tla re thabisa kaofela hobane ke a bona mabitso ao a o kwatisa. Nna ha ke batle motho ya tlo mpolella hore ke se ka etsa phetholo ya mabitso a sa tle ka mabaka. Eo yona e ka se loke, e ka se sebetse. Re tshwanetse re etse phetolo ya mabitso mme re latele molao hobane molao o teng.

Hosane le nna ke le McKenzie ke tla tlisa kgarebe ya ka e ke tlo rehellla toropo e nngwe. [Ditsheho.] Ke etsa mohlala feela.

English:

Chair, can you protect me? [Laughter.] Thank you very much.

Mr M P SIBANDE: Minister, thank you for your progressive response to the question. Therefore, South Africa has a history of division and oppression. It is very interesting to listen to those who have benefited from the division of the past when they question the attempts to correct our history and heritage. Is it necessary to transform renaming landscape in South Africa?

The MINISTER OF SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE: Thank you very much for thanking me first. I think you know it is very, very necessary. You must understand name change didn't start with

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the fourth or third or fifth administration. When the English was running South Africa or the union of South Africa and the Afrikaner came into political power, they also changed names to suit not only their narrative, but to suit the political climate of that era.

So, we must not be made to feel like we we've invented name changes. It's not a South African or African phenomenon. It's a worldwide phenomenon. There's a lot of emotion in it. I'll make an example. Many years ago, I was wrong. I was one of the people that wanted the Springbok emblem to be removed. Afrikaners fought for the Springbok emblem to remain because it was important to them and I was on the other side.

Nelson Mandela came, and he convinced all of us that you must never change a name to hurt people. Because I wanted to change the name to hurt white people. Now if the Springbok still remain and we managed to have empathy for the pain of the people that loved the Springboks then. Today we all loved the Springboks.

They will also love Robert Sobukwe Airport or whatever real name that we have. We can't be listening to racists. That one I will never do. We can't be told by a racist that wants

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Eugene de Kock Street to remain unchanged. How can we allow that as if we are not in power? No, we can't.

So, names will be changed, but it should not be done as revenge. Some of us wanted to revenge with the Springboks, but Mandela taught us and those teachings are still with us today. Thank you.

Mr B J FARMER: Hon Minister and President of the fastest growing party in South Africa. [Laughter.] My president. [Laughter.] Minister, could you please share your view and the view of your department with regards to the government of the Western Cape not recognising the history of the indigenous people of the Western Cape with regards to name changes. Our people are not recognised. The Western Cape is not changing names to the Sarah Baartmans, the Krotoas the Harry Die Strandlopers, brown people, coloured people's heroes are not being recognised by the Western Cape and Cape Town, especially in particular. Can you share your view on that?

The MINISTER OF SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE: I speak to the hon Minister once a week and we always speak Afrikaans now when we are here today he is speaking to me in English. [Laughter.] I want to say that I agree with him. There's a slow pace of name

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changes in the Western Cape. But before I cast any aspersions, I would like to see, is there a fast pace of applications? I've not seen that. So I need to balance because you can't say you're not changing names while there's no application to change names.

The reason why I was appointed the Minister of Sports, Arts and Culture is to do the people's will. And if the people of the Western Cape, whoever it was, if it's true that they were blocking it, that's about to change because this falls under the Department of Sports, Arts and Culture, and I am the Minister now. There's no excuse and we can't be blaming the DA if it doesn't happen in the future. I should be blamed because that falls under my department.

But I must add that in South Africa, we should be very jealous of what we've achieved as a country. Some of us here and elsewhere, we sometimes underestimate what we as a country, as achieved. We have become one nation.

Let make the next one example of Die Stem. I knew white guys who were taught racism when they were wet behind their ears. But today the very same white guys that were wet behind the ears, his eyes get wet when he sings *Morena boloka setjaba sa*

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heso. I know black people that fought to death, not to speak Afrikaans, but today the very same black people that fought to death are singing was gusto *Uit die blou van onse hemel*. So, we should never, never underestimate how far we have come as a nation under God. Thank you very much

Question 180:

The MINISTER OF SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE: Sorry, my apologies, Deputy Chairperson. I see I was blinded by that pink dress. Hon Mokwele, I would like to thank you for this question. As it places a clear focus on an area of work under my ministry that requires serious attention. I would like to assure hon member Mokwele that the matter of digitizing our archives and putting systems in place to retrieve our records easily is one that I do not take lightly. Since we are clearly far behind, we would like to be as a country, especially when it comes to the mass scanning of documents. That being said. Here is the background of the current problem that you have highlighted, hon, the National Archives and Records Services of SA, NARSSA, as a branch under the department is striving to promote access to archival collections and preserve national heritage through historic records, regardless of form or medium. Archival records are collected nationwide in different formats in media. As a result, the national archives have paper records,

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sound recordings and film records with historical value. Records such as those covering the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, TRC, including audio tapes, the Rivonia Trial dictabelts, Treason Trial dictabelts, Convention for a Democratic SA, Codesa, the multiparty negotiating forum, the Constitutional Assembly, the Soweto uprising and more have been digitised with the intention of making them accessible to the public, to the use of the National Automated Archival Information Retrieval System, NAAIRS.

The Department of Sports Arts and Culture, DSAC, has a service level agreement with the State Information Technology Agency, Sita, for the hosting and maintenance of the National Automated Archival Information Retrieval Systems, as they are the ones who customized and implemented the system for the department. However, I've been advised since the retirement of the lead resource at Sita, who was maintaining the system. Sita has struggled to allocate someone else with a requisite technical skill and knowledge to maintain the system. This led to the system being unstable. The Sita could no longer maintain the system up to the required standard. DSAC continued to work with Sita. However, to ensure that even when the system was unstable, DSAC data was protected and backed up internally. As the service level agreement with Sita is still

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intact and in effect, I'm advised that Sita issued an open tender to appoint a service provider, to maintain and upgrade the system over a 12-month period. The service provider started working on the system in September 2024. The appointed service provider is responsible for stabilising and upgrading the system to the latest version, maintaining the system and ensuring that there are skills transfer to the sector team to be able to do it. So, we don't find ourselves in the same situation. Maintaining the system also going forward, we now expect and in fact, no, we demand that the system will be stabilised and improved based on the planned upgrades and maintenance measures. The department is also utilising access to memory as an alternative to capture archival descriptions, publishing these to NARSA website to enable easier access to archival records by the public. AtOM, which is the abbreviation used is a project by the Internal Council on archives that provides free software for institutions to disseminate the archival holdings on the Internet. All these efforts have been made to ensure that service delivery continues, and the department adheres to its mandate of promoting access to archival records. Thank you very much for the question.

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Mr M F MOKWELE: Deputy Chairperson, maybe first and foremost, let me start by appreciating hon Minister for recognising that as the country we are coming a long way and also for recognising that the ANC-led government has done a lot in making sure that you don't want to hold us back with the particular question that I've asked. I really appreciate you. Hon Minister, the access to archival records by the public is very important, especially for students who need the information for research. Can the Minister assure the whole South Africans that the problem is resolved. When you were presenting Minister, I was listening to you. You were indicating the measure that will indicate that this matter is not going to ... [Inaudible.] So, can the Minister indicate that the problem is resolved, and will not recur in the future? I thank you.

The MINISTER OF SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE: Thank you very much, yesterday I met with the whole senior management and middle management of the department, and I put this as the number one thing. I told them that we have to digitalise all the information we have because Artificial Intelligence, AI, will not recognise our work in the future and our music in the future. Academic records will not be recognised. So, we don't have time. We can't have one person. It has now been resolved

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with one person there, but it doesn't stop there. We are going to put out an advert so we can get the same skill. You can't have one person, it's like an endangered species. We must learn through what happened in the past. So, I can assure you this takes precedence in the office because if we don't do it, it's Armageddon. Thank you very much.

Ms M KENNEDY: Hon Chairperson, good afternoon, hon members of the House and hon Minister. Minister, any new technological system introduced needs related training for it. Seeing that this National Automated Archival Information Retrieval System was not loading the results or was not being used as anticipated. Was there any operational training in preparation of the system operators to have thorough knowledge of this? If so, how were the operators prepared? Thank you, hon Minister.

The MINISTER OF SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE: Thank you so much, hon member for that question. I agree with you. You can't have a new system without training the people. Unfortunately, this is not my department. Myself, I am aggrieved with the process. I can only have a meeting very soon where I would tell them as the person paying for the service. I expect not one person to know this system. What if the car bumps the person and then we are back to square one again? So, I agree with you, hon member

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but I see I'm speaking about your life for the future. However, what I'm saying is that we, as the department, the process is too slow. Somebody was making an example the current process will take us three lifetimes to digitise everything. We've decided that we are going out on a tender to make sure that we get more companies to do the work. I was in the business the other day called Arena Holdings, and they have made great strides in digitising. I went to the Oorlog Museum in Bloemfontein, and I could see the work that has been done there. So, I just think that to answer your question, hon member, we are going to fast-track. We can also just urge as far as Sita is concerned. We have no direct authority to tell them. However, as a customer, as a paying customer to them, I think we can tell them what we demand. I thank you very much, but surely change is going to come. Thank you.

Ms S M MOKOENA: Thank you, Deputy Chairperson ...

IsiZulu:

... sawubona Ngqongqoshe...

English:

... part of the reason why we as uMkhonto Wesizwe rejected most of our budget votes was that we felt there was lack of

planning and lack of effective budget allocation to votes. So, my question to you is: Would you provide us with a breakdown of a budget allocation for the development of this system and the maintenance of it, as well as the upgrading of it?

Furthermore, could you also give us basically an assurance of our concerns about leakage of data, the security of the data, whether or it's not open to vulnerability now that we know that one person has resigned and no one else has left there, is it not vulnerable for data loss? Is it not vulnerable for cyber-attacks? Thank you.

The MINISTER OF SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE: No, I think hon member, I did mention also that the one person resigned, but they assured us that they managed to get another person. From where I'm sitting, I'm not happy that you can have one person always. Then, you have not learned from the previous mistake. This thing does not need one person. We have started the conversation yesterday in our department. We even had a breakaway and this was part of the six points on the agenda that we need to digitise all the records and get different and relevant companies that do this around the world. We are not the first people to do it. There's expertise out there in the world. We must just entice those with the expertise to apply.

As far as your question that I should break down how much it cost. I don't even know how the machine looks. So, I'm not going to come here act like I know. I don't know how the machine looks. I don't even know the breakdown. I don't know the cost, but I can find out the cost and I can surely promise you that I can send the mail with the breakdown and the cost. It's not even made by my department, but we're paying. So, I it will be easy to get that information. I promise you by tomorrow when we celebrate the win of Bafana Bafana, you will have the cost. Thank you, hon member.

Mr N H PIENAAR: Thank you, Deputy Chairperson ...

Afrikaans:

Agb Minister, welkom in die Huis van die Nasionale Raad van Provinsies. Ek hoop jy geniet dit tot dusver.

English:

Minister, you are well known for making commitments. Can you however now commit to this House the timelines when the system will be stabilised so we, as the NCOP, can hold you accountable to them?

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The MINISTER OF SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE: Are you done, Mr Pienaar? I don't think he's done. He said I'm well known for making commitments. He forgot to say and adhering to those commitments. [Laughter.] So, you know, hon Pienaar, when I was standing with my leader, the hon Farmer and we were just chatting when I just became a Minister, and he was congratulating me and the children of Duma Nokwe came to me, and they said to me, can you please find it in your heart to bring our fathers remains. I said, within three months, your father's remains will be here and they said the same thing that you said 'you like to make commitments' and they were the first ones to say at the memorial to the President in my presence, this man has kept his word. So, I want you to say the same, like the children of Duma Nokwe after a while. I don't know the timelines, but I can make sure the timelines get to you by tomorrow because I've left them into strategise. Tomorrow ...

Afrikaans:

... agb Pienaar, sal ek vir u vind en ek sal u nommer vat voordat ek loop. Ek sal seker maak dat ek die datums kry en terugkom sodat u ook goed van my kan praat by die volgende besoek wat ek sal kom aflê. Dankie.

Question 191:

The MINISTER OF SPORTS, ARTS AND CULTURE: The name change of the Deneysville in the Free State has not been brought to the attention of the SA Geographical Names Council, SAGNC, and also, it does not fall within the mandate of national government. As the Minister of Sports, Arts and Culture, I am therefore not aware of any proposal or decision of this name change. Names of municipalities do not fall within the jurisdiction of the SA Geographical Names Council Act 118 of 1998, and therefore, do not fall within the mandate of myself as the Minister. However, I've heard about people talking and asking me about the Deneysville, I can assure you that I've not seen anything on my desk, I even went to the extent of making a call about it, and it is not yet at SAGNC.

I must add that the process of name changes, generally, should be considered in the context of being part of symbolic reparations in line with the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Committee. So, I want to assure you, hon that, Deneysville shall be treated with the same way. It should go through the same processes. We shall not bulldoze any name change in this country. Anybody who wants the name change, must follow the process and anybody that wants the name to remain, should follow the process. Thank you very much.

Afrikaans:

Me T BREEDT: Agb Adjunkvoorsitter, agb Minister, u het baie in die vorige vraag gesê en ek dink daar moet gepraat word en op 'n stadium moet daar gekyk word na wat gedeelde erfenis is en wat eensydige erfenis is.

Ek dink naamsverandering het die geleentheid om baie vining 'n eensydige erfenis te word en nie 'n gedeelde erfenis nie. Dit is wat belangrik is en veral in Deneysville. Deneysville het die natuurresewaat, wat hernoem moet word, omdat daar van die Steentydperk reunies van vorige beskawings geneem word en dit is goed. Die VF Plus ondersteun dit, maar om eensydig 'n naam te verander ...

Minister ek wil u net agtergrond gee. Op 11 September het die inwoners van Deneysville vir die eerste keer kennis geneem van die naamsverandering en daar is tydperk gegee vir besware wat toe reeds 5 September verstryk het. Op die vergadering van 29 September, wat die provinsie geroep het, het die departement nie eens na hul eie vergadering opgedaag nie. Die vergadering is nie eens op die dorp van Deneysville gehou nie, maar dit het met hul naamsverandering te doen.

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Agb Minister, ek wil graag by u weet, ek verwelkom dat u gesê het dat u 'n oproep gemaak het, maar ek wil weet, watter vesekering u kan vir die inwoners van Denysvill gee, dat daar ordentlike sorgvuldige konsultasie oor die naamsverandering sal geskied, en dat die erfenis van Deneysville en sy gemeenskappe, in die meervoud, reflekteer sal word en dat dit nie net eensydige erfenis is wat, soos u voorheen gesê het, deur gebulldoze [gestoot] gaan word nie? Dankie.

Die MINISTER VAN SPORT, KUNS EN KULTUUR: Agb lid, u sien, na aanleiding van alles wat u nou gesê het, het ek al klaar vier dinge opgetel, wat nie reggedoen is nie. Ek wil op rekord stel dat jy nie 'n vergadering oor naamsverandering in 'n ander dorp hou nie. Dit is verregaande en belaglik. Dit is soos om Nando's toe te gaan dan soek jy McDonald's. Dit gaan nie gebeur nie.

Soos u sê, as leiers moet ons dit baie mooi hanteer. Jy kan nie op 11 september mense roep vir 'n besluit wat al 5 September gemaak moes word nie. Dis verkeerd. Dit wys dat die motiewe verkeerd is.

U vra watter versekering ek kan gee. Ek sê vir u duidelik en ek is deursigtig en ek sê dit voor almal, as dit wat u my nou

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gesê het, met respek, inderdaad waar is, dan kan hulle daarvan vergeet.

As hul saak so sterk is dan hoef ons ons nie aan onderduimse metodes bloot te stel nie. So, kom ons wag maar tot dit na ons tafel toe kom, en dan hoor ons. Ons het nou u kant gehoor, dan hoor ons hulle kant. Dan sal ons 'n besluit maak volgens wat die wet vir ons sê om te maak. Dankie.

Ms D W FIENIES: Thank you, hon Chair and thank you, hon Minister, for the response. Is there anything wrong in changing names as part of symbolic reparations? Thank you, Chair.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): Hon Minister, your response.

The MINISTER OF SPORTS, ARTS AND CULTURE: I didn't get the question. Assist me with the question.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): She was talking about the reparations and linking that with name change, if I heard her correctly? Hon member, did we hear you correctly? Could you please explain?

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Ms D W FIENIES: Yes, Chair, I just want to know if is there anything wrong in changing names as part of symbolic reparations?

The MINISTER OF SPORTS, ARTS AND CULTURE: Maybe it's two questions in one. Now, there's nothing wrong with name changes. Name changes will happen, name changes shall happen. We must change names, and those ones that say, yeah, name changes are being used for revenge, we have changed the name to Beyers Naudé Street, we changed the airport, and we called it Bram Fisher. Now, you can't say that this thing is against white people, for instance, but we've changed names to our white heroes. So, I just want to get that one out the way. Secondly, there's absolutely nothing wrong with name changes, but it must be done right. There's everything wrong if it is done purely for revenge, or purely out of outside the rules. Then there is an issue of ... you know, when you're a child, and your father died in exile, and you see children with their fathers, and you don't even know where your father is, it's not right. So, we will keep on until we bring back the last person that fought for this freedom, we will bring them back.

You know, one journalist that I was very fortunate to remember, was at the press briefing of Minister Ronald Lamola,

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and this journalist asked Minister Ronald Lamola ... and he said, we are going to get the Guptas. That journalist was there, and he clapped hands. When the repatriation function, he asked me ... when I said, we are going to get the heroes in Angola. He asked me, how much is that going to cost, I said, not enough. You were quiet when we said that we're getting the Guptas, because it suits your nerd, but now when we're going to get our heroes, that suits the narrative of others, you now want to know about the price. So, prices are being used here to get ... those things, for me, I'm not going to allow them. I'm going to do what the South Africans wants us to do, we are going to repatriate and we're going to bring the heroes back. We are going to change names that needs change, and we are not going to do it as a revenge. There will be circumspect in doing it. Thank you.

Mr J H P BRITZ: Thank you, hon Deputy Chair. Hon Minister, I've been listening to you very attentively. In the words of Archbishop Desmond Tutu, and I quote.

We engage in the monumental red herring of a divisive name changing exercise. Though our heroes and heroines come from one political group. How many of the hungry and unemployed

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would put that usually divisive and expensive exercise as their priority concern?

Hon Minister, it's not my words. Now, the question, was the late Archbishop Desmond Tutu and his high moral compass wrong on the subject of name changes in South Africa?

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): Thank you, hon Britz, I didn't hear a question there, hon Minister, but if you did, you can respond. Thank you.

The MINISTER OF SPORTS, ARTS AND CULTURE: I didn't hear. I'm also a bit lost.

Mr J H P BRITZ: Hon Deputy Chair, I can repeat the question that I've asked. My question is, hon Minister, was the late Archbishop Desmond Tutu's high moral compass wrong on the subject of name changes in South Africa?

The MINISTER OF SPORTS, ARTS AND CULTURE: No, you see, hon ... you see, Bishop Desmond Tutu was not only a man of God, but he was our leader. He led us when we were oppressed, and he was in the forefront. However, I don't want us to come here ... The Constitution is sacrosanct, not the words of any person. I

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also said many things. Therefore, we mustn't use what people said to suit a particular narrative. Desmond Tutu fought and dedicated his whole life to injustices, including the injustices of living in a street called, Hendrick Verwoerd. He fought Hendrick Verwoerd. So, I think you are now taking an advantage of what the old man has said to suit you being against name changes.

We are renaming some of the names to people who are the reason why me and you are in this Parliament today, and you want to go against those people that laid their lives down for us to come and speak sense or sometimes nonsense. We must not be apologetic, we have a past in this country and there are people I detest. The things that suit yourselves and the things that suit you, you would not want to change. Do you understand the pain of a person that has been killed by Adriaan Vlok? The fathers and mothers have been killed, and they must walk in the street called Adriaan Vlok. It's a constant reminder of the pain. We can't, we must be - no, but I didn't interrupt you - Deputy Chair, he spoke, and I didn't interrupt him.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): No, you're protected, hon Minister.

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The MINISTER OF SPORTS, ARTS AND CULTURE: So, what I'm saying to you is that Desmond Tutu was a great man, but we can't come here and act like everything Desmond Tutu said we must abide by. No, he was human, and he was a man of God, but not God. So, we need to be very respectful of the Bishop, but the Bishop was a human being. Sometimes we say stuff we agree with, sometimes we say stuff like, If I'm dead ... One day I said the worst person in South Africa is President Cyril Ramaphosa. The other day I said ...

Sesotho:

... re o rata kaofela, Ramaphosa.

English:

So, now when I'm there and I'm going to choose this one I said, and with that other one I said another thing. People change their minds. We are human beings, and wise people like me, we change our minds constantly. Thank you very much.

Ms M MAKESINI: Thank you very much, Minister. The remaining of the streets and other landmarks in South Africa is necessary to exercise it, as most of the names are offensive due to the association with apartheid, and every day with every sign of a landmark that is unchanged, it reminds us of our history as

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you correctly said it. So, thina [we] we are saying, please ... [Interjections.]

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): Sorry, hon member.

Mr E NZIMANDE: Is it parliamentary that a person after he has been answered and didn't like, it to just leaves?

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): Well, it is his choice.

The MINISTER OF SPORTS, ARTS AND CULTURE: He loves Bafana Bafana. One thing with that man is that he loves Bafana Bafana.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): Sorry, over to you.

Ms M MAKESINI: So, I want to check if the answer is, the issue of name changes is necessary, but you must follow law to the latter and we must make sure the public participation is done in the areas where the name changes are happening. But you cannot do the name changing of ...

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Sesotho:

... Re feng kgotso, seterateng sa Re feng kgotso.

English:

... because in Sesotho, we call Deneysville ...

Sesotho:

... Re feng kgotso.

English:

The comrades who fought for the renaming of that town, they knew why they called that area ...

Sesotho:

... Re feng kgotso.

English:

... it is because they were suffering. So, we will wait for you to get the application and as the EFF, we will participate in public participation, and we will still fight for other areas like ...

Sesotho:

... Paul Roux le yona e tlo kenyelletswa ...

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English:

... and the application, we will make sure that you receive it in your offices. Thank you, Deputy Chair.

Sesotho:

LETONA LA BONONO LE BOTJHABA: E mme, ha re etsa dintho ka tsela e nepahetseng, re tla ba le kgotso ha dintho di tsamaya hantle.

English:

I will await the application, I'm not going to talk about stuff that's not by me yet. Thank you very much.

Question 193:

The MINISTER OF SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE: Deputy Chairperson, I have not been made aware that Sivuleleni Primary School in Soweto has no sporting facilities. However, I must hasten to add, that this school is not alone. I've been advised that the vast majority of schools in our country, and I know it personally, have very few, even no sporting facilities, and that the vast majority of our learners are not participating in extracurricular activities, particularly sport.

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The Department of Sport, Arts and Culture has not been able to tell me why, we were not informed about this particular school. But that is the thing with most schools in this country. They are in a state, there's no sporting facilities. But my department has, however recent signed, a memorandum of understanding with the Department of Basic Education, on the implementation of sports in schools.

I'm very serious about our intention as government to bring back extracurricular activities to schools. Including sports and the arts. It is essential that access to equipment, coaching and equipment are broadened for the majority of young people in our country, because only this will ensure that we are able to transform support in this country.

We are also cognisant of the fact that we need to keep partnering with local government and improve the impact of local government as an implementer of sporting infrastructure. Local municipalities benefit from the municipal infrastructure grant, ring fence, funding allocation for sports infrastructure through National Treasury and the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs.

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This will help to ensure that more facilities are built for access to various sporting codes. This further provides management and technical support to more than 52 local municipalities, which also contribute to access to more sporting codes.

The above being said, however, it is clear that we are not at the start of turning around the long running challenge and much work awaits us. The schools in South Africa, it's painful. If you see our children don't play sport. And thank you, honourable, for asking me that question. Thank you.

Ms M SIWISA: Thank you, Deputy Chair, thank you, Minister. Minister, I think each and every person that has been given an obligation to serve South Africans, needs to be proactive and not reactive. So, anything that is outstanding, the first thing that you should have found out, is how many schools do you have and how many of those schools are special needs schools. Because children with special needs, need to be accommodated in different environments and need to be out there in in the outside for them to experience, because some of them cannot sit for too long in a classroom that is very not conducive for them.

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Nonetheless, noting the assertion by the Minister on countless occasions that the department is prioritizing enabling access to various sporting codes, in previously disadvantaged schools and communities.

What has been the results of the analysis by the department and how many of these facilities will have to be created and upgraded in all provinces? What is the plan of action of meeting this? And what then is the financial feasibility study results on the money that is needed to achieve, because just we can't just say we are going to introduce sporting codes in schools when there are no proper facilities in schools? And some of these schools are also exposed to vandalism because there is no proper fencing? So, the feasibility study, what does it say? What are the results?

We don't want to find ourselves by 2029, when the term ends, and then it's only then that projects are going to start to actually make sure that disadvantage schools to have a proper sporting facilities. Thank you.

The MINISTER OF SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE: Deputy Chairperson, thank you very much honourable. You know, it's true what you're saying. That, special needy children, truly need

special need attention. You can't keep them long in the class, but I think as a country we fail adequately when it comes to the needs of special needs children. I say this with all humility that we need to do more. It can't be that even I, as a Minister, can't tell you how many specialist schools there are. Although it doesn't fall under me, but you are right, hon member. I should have made an effort. I will go and make an effort because I understand the importance of special need children.

But your second point you made, brought me to this main question. You see, hon remembers, we must be honest about the next thing. Every black person in this room that went to school, didn't have pole vaulting, at his school. Every single one, didn't have pole vaulting at your school.

You go to schools that are classified as black schools today, you still would not find pole vaulting. The kids that make it, are from the private schools. The kids that make it has to go to the private schools. I can show you, Walaza, Curro High School. It will take Walaza, and he got a silver medal at the Olympics.

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I'll tell you something very deep that if you think about it, you'll understand, what I saw after thinking about it for a long time. Walaza, then went to the Peru Youth Championship. We got a medal 400 meters and a medal for 200 meters. Is the fastest under 20 here, under 20 old in the in the world.

And they were asking him at the press conference, you are sitting at my right-hand side. What is it, that is your highlight, since you've been winning medals? He said, the ice cream, the free ice cream machine at the Olympics. He says, I was there all day, every day. He still gets excited for ice cream. It tells a deeper story.

And as the Minister, and as a sport lover, I then called the whole team together and said we need to bring sports back in schools, art and culture. I did meet with my counterpart. The Minister of Basic Education, Ms Gwarube. We said, we workshop this idea. We then got the memorandum of agreement and understanding. After our bilateral.

We then spoke to countries even in the outside, like Jamaica. To come and ask them, how did you achieve all this greatness in running. We went to Azerbaijan; we ask them, how do you become such a gymnastic country in such a short space of time?

We then ringfenced in my department R69 million. The 69 million is to make sure that kids that don't have the equipment must now get the sporting equipment. That 69 million has been ringfenced.

And I can tell you that the new thing, I see that all the private schools. It's wall climbing. It's something they put against the wall because it's an Olympic sport. Our schools and the townships don't have that. But we should not begrudge the private schools for having it. We should learn from the private schools, because we should not get angry with them. We should learn from them.

So, I can assure you honourable, we're starting at a very low pace. Things are bad, but we're gonna make things better. Just watch the government of national unity, GNU, and you'll see how things get better. Thank you.

Mr M BILLY: Thank you, Deputy Chairperson, and good afternoon to the Minister. Minister, you've partly answered most of what I was going to ask you today. But I think there is some emphasis that is needed to be made on some of the issues you've raised. The Minister would know that at least 35% of schools in South Africa do not have sporting facilities. It is

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further said that two of every five schools in the country do not have sporting facilities. And according to the National Education Infrastructure Management System, in 2021, 10 000 or just over 10 000 of 23 000 public schools in the country don't have facilities again.

And in the province that I come from, that I represent the province of KwaZulu-Natal, just over half of the public schools do not have sports sporting facilities. Now, considering the crucial role that sport plays in children's development. I want to ask that, does the Minister agree that these shocking statistics across board and lack of sport facilities in school, is a national crisis? I think it's a national crisis, Minister.

And you've indicated the plans that you've had. You've indicated the discussions that you have with the Department of Basic Education. But can you give this House some reassurance on what exactly you are doing to ensure that we, by all means try and rectify what is going on? Because we cannot continue in this manner, and I think you've touched on some of the things that you are doing. Can you give this House some specifics of exactly what you are doing along with the Department of Basic Education, to try and rectify this

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situation, and also if you can just agree that this is definitely a national crisis? Thank you.

The MINISTER OF SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE: Deputy Chairperson, I think you know the 35% that you're speaking about, equates to roughly eight million children. It is a national crisis. The fact that we've signed a MOU clearly must show you that there's a strong intention beyond words, but into a written contract or written agreement, that you want to bring change. The fact that we've ringfenced 69 million in my department, nothing speaks louder and clearer of our intention to make this a priority.

A child in sport, is a child out of court. You know, I grew up being in conflict with the law because I walked away from sport. People that were in our community ... I'll make you one example of one person, in my street where there were gangsters. He remained in sport, when I was in prison, I saw him on television, TV. He stays five houses from my mom's house. His name is William Jackson. He played for Bafana Bafana.

That is what sport does. Ashwin Willemse, a big gangster boy, got involved in rugby. He became the world's best rugby

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player. I'm trying to show you that for me, and it's not just words, I have actual examples of what sport can do, what art and culture can do, and I intend to pursue that vigorously. Thank you very much.

Mr M P SIBANDE: Hon Deputy Chairperson, thank you, also, thank you, Minister, for the response to the question. My question, is there any assistance that the department is receiving from the private sector in building sporting facilities? I thank you.

The MINISTER OF SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE: Deputy Chairperson, thank you, hon member. I can tell you. I've seen the party has been having the 100 days. Mine is on Thursday. Please, tune in. And that question, what I'm going to answer now will be ... you'll see the actual sporting facilities in broad and helped.

You know, there's this perception in this country that the private sector is not helping. It's a lie. The private sector is going beyond the call of duty. Because the private sector sometimes they give money and then the federations don't report back what happened to the money.

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I'll make you one example. These medals we got now the other day from the Peru Youth Champions. There was no money to send the athletes to Peru. If there was not such a lively and smart Minister of Sport, Arts and Culture, the plan would not have been made, but because a plan was made by the Sports Minister. The Lotto to is the private sector, they've helped, Betway is helping a lot, yesterday that we bought equipment for kids here in Mitchells Plain ... Bidvest, Mr Price, I'm telling you, names of people really, really help.

So, this perception, where people want always to blame the private sector. The private sector is doing more than enough, but they can do more as the profit go up. But I'm not gonna be the one dashing them. Thank you very much.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Thank you, hon Minister, the next follow up question is from hon Ngcobo.

The MINISTER OF SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE: I see you want to know, what time the game start? In three minutes, hon Ngcobo ... [Laughter.] [Inaudible.]

Ms Z N NGCOBO: Deputy Chair, hon Minister, the absence of sports facilities in many schools, such as Sivuleleni Primary

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School in Soweto, reflects the neglect of the marginalized. So, the question is, Minister, what steps does your department take, if any, to engage the local community and involve them when planning the development of sporting facilities? This is to ensure a true reflection of the needs of those communities and to gain stakeholders' buy in. Thank you.

The MINISTER OF SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE: Deputy Chairperson, let me give you an example of the past 24 hours. This department, together with the private sector has given musical instruments to the children of Mitchells Plain. This department this morning at eight o'clock went to Khayelitsha. And we went to go fix the only movie house they have there. We went to go fix a place, where computers ... the library. The computers of the library are more than year old, old computers. We got them new computers, because we realized the children of Khayelitsha are doing their homework at the library, but the computers are outdated.

So, this morning, this department ... so I'm not telling you what we're going to do. I'm telling you the past 24 hours, I can tell you the past 48 hours, 72 hours. But let me just hit you honourable, with the past 24 hours. The past 24 hours this

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department has given close to R2 million, to your question and we are not going to stop.

We are coming to those schools, like Sivuleleni Primary School. We are coming to them; we are going to the most rural areas. I was saying to Premier of the Eastern Cape there. I said to the Premier, Mbuyane, I said, give me ... and they got a very good Member of Executive Council, MEC there, very vibrant. I said to them give me five rural, rural schools that has never seen a swimming pool. And we will start to construct swimming pools next week, at those rural, rural, because it can't be where we've never have a black Olympian swimmer.

We have to change stuff instead of complaining, where's the black people? We must start teaching our kids to swim from a young age like white kids. They swim when they are two months old. The father puts the child in the pool. Us you are 20 years old, you still scared to put your feet in the pool sometimes. Yeah, so, I'm saying that we want to change that. That was on the lighter note. Thank you.

Question 181:

The MINISTER OF SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE: The SA Cultural Observatory, SACO, circle is a national statistical and

socioeconomic recess project established by the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture aimed at developing a comprehensive of sports and cultural information system in South Africa. Hosted at Nelson Mandela University in coast in partnership with Rhodes University at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

SACO focusses on primary sports and cultural domains identified by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, UNESCO, including but not limited to sport, arts, heritage, libraries and museums. The main functions are conducting policy focused research, including matching studies, service and case studies to review current programmes, monitor and evaluate the impact of government spending and to collect relevant statistics to create robust data bases. Additionally, SACO provides both physical and online excess to its resources facilitating networking, sharing and partnership amongst stakeholders.

The objective of SACO is to promote the growth and sustainability of the cultural and creative sectors by enhancing and understanding of the contributions to society and economy. These objectives include informing policy development and fostering collaboration amongst various

stakeholders. Thank you very much. If the hon member wants, I can still list all of them but there is quiet a lot.

Tshivenda:

Vho M F MOKWELE: Muthusa Mudzulatshidulo, ndi masiari. ...

Sepedi:

Ke a go dumediša, Tona. Tona ya Dipapadi, Bokgabo le Setšo, ke nyaka go le tsebiša gore setšhaba seo se sa tsebego mo se tšwago se ka kgone go bona tsela ya moo se yago gona.

English:

So, the nation that does not know about their past, they will never know about the future.

Sepedi:

Ke potšišo ya ka. Ke a leboga.

English:

Mr M F MOKWELE: So, Minister, thanks for your respond. But let me just come to my question, Minister. My question is just directly that does the SA Cultural Observatory play any role in training people in the culture and creative sector? And

then if yes, and on how to use the sector for their economic development?

Sepedi:

Ke potšišo ya ka. Ke a leboga.

The MINISTER OF SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE: Just what I did before I respond was for personal reason. What language did you speak, hon member?

Sepedi:

Mna M F MOKWELE: Nna ke bolela Sepedi.

TONA YA DIPAPADI, BOKGABO LE SETŠO: Ke a se tseba. Ke a kwešiša.

English:

So, I wanted you to continue because my friends say I don't know Sepedi. I know Sepedi and I heard everything you said. Your question is very important. When we come to creatives and the artist in this country is a mess. Artists in South Africa are not recognised as workers. In the cultural space people are being exploited. I can talk about it the whole day. But what I am going to ensure you is that we have met with the

creatives in the Bosberaad two months ago. We will be reporting back to before the end of October which is around the corner. You will see the changes not only in one sector. We are going to change the whole creative sector. We will come up with plans. We can't be the department of condolences that must give money to people when they die. We can't be that type of a department. We need to make sure that we contribute towards the better living and not to a casket when the creatives and cultural icons have died. So, I am giving you my assurance, hon member. We will definitely come back with good results.

Sepedi:

O a kwešiša?

IsiXhosa:

Mnu M M PETER: Molo, Mphathiswa ohloniphekileyo.

UMPHATHISWA WEZEMIDLALO, INKCUBEKO NOBUGCISA: Molo, molo, Mhlekaazi.

English:

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Mr M M PETER: My surprise to you, hon Minister, you remind me of hon Pallo Jordan when you speak all languages. So, you are more than bilingual. So, you speak all 14 languages.

The MINISTER OF SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE: No, no, not all 14.

Mr M M PETER: Thank you very much for also allowing us to speak other languages. Now I am so proud of you because you speak ...

Afrikaans:

... Afrikaans, Engels, enige taal So, jy is baie goed, Meneer.

English:

My question is very short, hon Minister. In the rural areas in sport there is no caretaker who takes care for them. Now the earth has swallowed all our hopes. But you, hon Gayton Mckenzie, you are the only one who remains for our rural areas to come and support the sport.

In this House, we can all agree on the critical importance of teaching children their cultural heritage and keeping them actively engage to preserve this heritage while protecting them from the social ills that often arise in the absence of

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such programmes. However, it is concerning to note the disparity in cultural initiative across provinces while KwaZulu-Natal and the Western Cape both have active and vibrant cultural programmes. The Eastern Cape despite its rich cultural heritage is facing significance challenges in this regard while the SA Cultural Observatory which is based in the Eastern Cape offers invaluable research an insight into the cultural and creative ... [Inaudible.] ...

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): Hon member, can you ask your question. Your time is run out.

Mr M M PETER: Firstly, how has your department leverage this research to tackle the challenges that rural communities face in the Eastern Cape in terms of accessing the benefitting from cultural ... [Inaudible.] ... community ask programmes and local diversity festival? Thank you, Deputy Chair. [Time expired]

The MINISTER OF SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE: I can tell you this, you know, rural areas have truly been the most neglected areas when it comes to sport, arts and culture. Usually, they were not telling lies. I have made a vow to myself that my term as the Minister of Sport, Arts and Culture will be a failure if

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we have not moved a needle substantively towards better sporting equipment towards bringing Olympians. When they have more time, they can invite me. One of my biggest projects as a Minister is something called project 300. That's where we want to take 300 Olympians to the 2028 early Olympics. We are going to look for those Olympians because it can't be a country of 60 million people, and we only have six medals. We can do better. We are going to do better, sir. Thank you.

An HON MEMBER: Deputy Chairperson, he is struggling with the signals. I don't know what I must do.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): I am sorry. We have not been informed by him that ...

An HON MEMBER: Is a problem. I think we can pass over this one because he did not ...

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr P Govender): We can pass over on that one.

Mr P J SWART: Minister, thank you very much for visiting us and enjoying the time with us. Minister, you have mentioned a lot about sport but as we agreed that arts and culture is just

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as important in all of our lives. Minister, while the SA Cultural Observatory main function is important as you have mentioned, can you provide specific example of how it works. That's specific observe work led currently to tangible items on the development of cultural industries that should be particularly in terms of job creation and economic growth. You said that you have made to them, but I just want to know what is happening currently in that sphere? Additionally, what measures are in place to ensure that its intellectual contributions are applied practically at grass roots levels? I thank you, Minister.

The MINISTER OF SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE: I think hon member what we are doing as the department is that, and I made an example, and I will made the same example here about the Government of National Unity. It's the government reimagined. Nobody would have thought this government will exist. It does if the government reimagined, which means that Ministries, provinces, local government and also reimagined government because what happened at the top is usually just the law of physics. We must speak the truth. I can assure you that the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture is currently at Pretoria not at the office to reimagine every department that we have because if you look at the Cultural Observatory and cultural

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plans that we have, it saves three people out of a pull of hundreds. So, we will never see success. We talk about sport.

There is that perception and I want to fix it now that we just worry about sport. It is far from the truth. Our budget speaks to more money for culture than for sport in the department. Sport is that thing social media always follow on it so that will be at a prominent place. But at my next visit here, I will come and say a reimagined department with tangible results. At the moment, this department is doing so little for rural areas. Absolutely little to nothing. Now we can't continue and try to go with dismantled framework in which it operates and bring a framework that speaks to all corners of South Africa. So, I will make you proud in the next visit when I come back. Thank you very much.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Thank you very much, hon Minister. I think on behalf of all members of the NCOP, we want to thank you for making the time to be with us. I know that you are rushing up to give support to Bafana Bafana, and if you are there, I am sure they will do well. So, we want to wish Bafana Bafana all the best and to your department and the work that you are doing, hon Minister. Thank you for being here and for being absolutely honest with us and as the NCOP,

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we support you and your programme. You are welcome. You can see the reception that you get in this House. So, you are welcome at any time. Thank you very much, hon members.

Business of the day concluded.

The Council adjourned at 18:09.

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