Tuesday, 16 April 2024]

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PARLIAMENT

OF THE

REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

ANNOUNCEMENTS, TABLINGS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

TUESDAY, 16 APRIL 2024

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

National Assembly

The Acting Speaker

1. Introduction of Bills

(1) **Mr D W Macpherson, MP**

(a) **Remote Gambling Bill** [B11–2024] (National Assembly – proposed sec 76) [Explanatory summary of Bill and prior notice of its introduction published in ***Government Gazette*** No 46847 of 2 September 2022.]

Introduction and referral to the **Portfolio Committee on Trade, Industry and Competition** of the National Assembly, as well as referral to the Joint Tagging Mechanism (JTM) for classification in terms of Joint Rule 160.

In terms of Joint Rule 154 written views on the classification of the Bill may be submitted to the JTM. The Bill may only be classified after the expiry of at least three parliamentary working days since introduction.

2. Referral to Committees of papers tabled

(1) The following papers are referred to the **Portfolio Committee on Public Service and Administration** for consideration and report:

(a) Annual Performance Plan of the National School of Government for 2024/25.

(b) Annual Performance Plan of the Centre for Public Service Innovation for 2024/25.

National Council of Provinces

The Chairperson

1. Referral to Committees of papers tabled

(1) The following paper is referred to the **Select Committee on Security and Justice** for consideration and report:

(a) Report on the suspension/removal from office on account of continued ill-health of Ms N B Dyeyi, Magistrate, Fauresmith, Free State in terms of section 13(4)*(b)* of the Magistrates Act, 1993 (Act No. 90 of 1993).

TABLINGS

National Assembly and National Council of Provinces

1. The Acting Speaker and the Chairperson

DELEGATION REPORTS ADOPTED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY GROUP ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS (PGIR) ON 19 MARCH 2024.

(a) Report of the 9th Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Global Conference for Young Parliamentarians 15 – 18 September 2023.

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21 September 2023

9TH INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION (IPU) GLOBAL CONFERENCE FOR YOUNG PARLIAMENTARIANS REPORT 15-18 SEPTEMBER 2023

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

4IR:	Fourth Industrial Revolution
AI:	Artificial Intelligence
AU:	African Union
COVID-19:	Coronavirus Disease
EU:	European Union
IPU:	Inter-Parliamentary Union
MEPs:	Members of the European Parliament
MPs:	Members of Parliament
NDP:	National Development Plan
NEET:	Number of young people not in Employment, Education, or Training
RISDP:	Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan
SADC:	Southern African Development Community
SDGs:	Sustainable Development Goals
STEM:	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
UN:	United Nations

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1. INTRODUCTION

This report seeks to provide Members of Parliament with an overview of the 9th Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians which took place from 15-17 September 2023.

2. BACKGROUND

The IPU's annual Global Conferences of Young Parliamentarians are unique platforms for young members of parliaments to get together, exchange, learn and define common and innovative strategies to advance empowerment for young parliamentarians and the youth. The 2023 Conference will focus on accelerating the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through digital transformation and innovation.

In 2015, during the 132nd IPU Assembly in Vietnam, the Hanoi Declaration was adopted on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Turning Words into Action. As countries pass the mid-way point of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda), and with less than seven years remaining to achieve the SDGs, progress has been much too slow. According to the United Nations (UN), only 12% of SDG targets are on track, while 50% are moderately or severely off track. This situation requires the international community to make a breakthrough and stronger efforts to achieve the SDGs by 2030, including digital transformation, taking advantage of technologies, innovation, and accelerated efforts to explore new approaches and solutions while protecting and promoting cultural and human values. Young Parliamentarians, as political leaders closest to the youngest generations, are digital natives and have much to offer in harnessing the voices and talents of young people to contribute solutions.

During the 9th Inter-Parliamentary Union Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians, South Africa was represented by the following delegation:

- Hon Altia Sthembile Hlongo: ANC Member of Parliament, National Assembly
- Hon Bafuze Sicelo Yabo: ANC Member of Parliament, National Assembly
- Hon Fikile Andiswa Masiko: ANC Member of Parliament, National Assembly
- Hon Isaac Sello Seitlholo: DA Member of Parliament, National Assembly
- Dr Agnetha Arendse: Researcher

Photo of Delegation: From left (Dr Agnetha Arendse: Researcher; Hon Bafuze Sicelo Yabo: ANC Member of Parliament, National Assembly; Hon Fikile Andiswa Masiko: ANC Member of Parliament, National Assembly; Hon Isaac Sello Seitlholo: DA Member of Parliament, National Assembly; Hon Altia Sthembile Hlongo: ANC Member of Parliament, National Assembly).

3. CONFERENCE OVERVIEW

The 9th IPU Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians provided an opportunity for young MPs from around the world to discuss parliamentary actions and, to promote the role of young people in accelerating the achievement of the SDGs through digital transformation, innovation, as well as cultural and human values.

The Conference focused on three main themes:

(i) Digital transformation;
(ii) Innovation and start-ups; and
(iii) Promoting respect for cultural diversity in support of sustainable development.

The theme of the Conference: ***The role of youth in accelerating the achievement of the SDGs through digital transformation and innovation***

The conference was attended by nearly 300 young parliamentarians to affirm commitment in accelerating the achievement of the SDGs, especially through digital transformation and innovation. The average age was 38.4 years and approximately 44% were women MPs, along with representatives from global and regional organizations, youth groups, start-ups, academia, and influential leaders of the IPU and Viet Nam. The Conference coincided with

the United Nations' International Day for Democracy on 15 September and marked the eighth anniversary of the Hanoi Declaration on the SDGs, adopted by the IPU in 2015 and setting out the commitment of parliamentarians to address global development priorities. It is noted that countries are at the midway point of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda).

It should be emphasized that with less than seven years remaining to achieve the SDGs, only 12% of SDG targets are being well implemented, while globally, countries are lagging behind on 50 % of the targets are still behind on 50% of the targets, with levels ranging from moderately to severely off track. These results warrant not only reflection but resolute action, especially drawing attention to gaps in achieving the goals related to education, gender equality, decent work, economic growth, climate action, peace, justice, and strong institutions, which are of vital concern to youth. At least 258 million young people are still out of school. There is thus a need for universal education that leaves no one behind.

The Number of young people not in Employment, Education, or Training (NEET) is increasing considerably, rising to 23.3%. Young women remain worse off than young men, being roughly two-thirds as likely to be employed. There is still inequity when it comes to the representation of women and young people in politics. Less than 27% of Members of Parliament (MPs) around the world are women, and only 2.8% of MPs are 30 years of age or under. There is thus a need to work faster, more creatively, and with a far greater sense of urgency, to achieve the agenda on which all agreed.

The world is characterized by the rapid growth of technology, digital transformation, and innovation. There is thus a need to harness their potential to accelerate progress towards the SDGs, especially for issues important to youth. For example, in education, digital tools can create educational and training opportunities to more young people through online means. By unleashing innovation, it can help scale up start-ups led by young people that in turn can employ more young men and women. When these are enterprises that help adapt to or mitigate climate change, investing in youth for the clean jobs of tomorrow can have multiplier positive effects.

The opportunities are clear, and they must be available to everyone, yet significant gender gaps persist. The fact that women are 26% less likely to own a mobile phone than men is unreasonable. Digital transformation and innovation must be opportunities that bolster gender equality by facilitating new avenues for empowerment.

The Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) pandemic demonstrated the strategic importance of digital tools in all Parliaments. These digital tools can contribute to more inclusive legislative, monitoring, and decision-making processes on important issues, making them more comprehensive, with greater transparency and increased public participation. Real-time engagement channels can enable immediate interaction between constituents and representatives. By facilitating participation, digital transformation can empower citizens, particularly youth, to actively engage in the political process and contribute to shaping policy decisions.

For parliamentarians, these digital tools offer greater opportunities for combining their work and private life, especially for those with caring responsibilities. The IPU self-assessment toolkit on the SDGs is welcomed as an innovative approach to helping parliaments integrate the SDGs into parliamentary work according to the specificities of each parliament and contributing to the effective implementation of the SDGs more coherently and sustainably.

It was noted that Science and technology are cornerstones for advancing peace and sustainable development and providing solutions to today's complex challenges. They enable evidence-based and informed policymaking, whether on environmental protection, development, or conflict resolution. Science and the common search for knowledge and solutions can unite in a collective cause, providing a neutral platform for cooperation and an incentive for peaceful coexistence. Young MPs can therefore play an important role in helping foster the next generation of tech-savvy and problem-solving youth to help realize sustainable development and peace.

When harnessing the power of technology and innovation in a transforming world, it is critical to maximize the positive outcomes that these bring, while mitigating unwanted risks. This includes taking an ethical and prudent approach to science and technology that ensures that they are used for the betterment of humanity and the environment, as well as privacy, security, and well-being. At the same time, the pursuit of digital transformation and innovation should not push us towards global homogeneity. Rather, it should amplify our rich tapestry of cultures, experiences, and perspectives. Cultural diversity is a strength for sustainable development, which should not only be protected but embraced, as it is an indispensable ingredient that can nurture even more creativity and innovation.

4. SOUTH AFRICAN PERSPECTIVE

South Africa has a constitutional democracy. The Constitution is the supreme law of the Republic and lays the foundations for a democratic and open society in which government is based on the will of the people and every citizen is equally protected by law. It stipulates the values and mechanisms of governance for our uniquely people-centred democracy. Parliament continues to strive towards the vision of an activist and responsive people's Parliament that improves the quality of life of South Africans and ensures enduring equality in our society. Its mission is, to represent the people, and to ensure government by the people in fulfilling our constitutional functions of passing laws and overseeing executive action.

Parliament represents the people and provincial interests to ensure government by the people, under the Constitution. Such representation takes place in the activities of passing legislation, overseeing, and scrutinising executive action, and the facilitation of public involvement, co-operative government, and international participation.

Figure 1: The interrelatedness of Parliament's functions

The strategic priorities of Parliament are strengthening oversight and accountability, enhancing public involvement, deepening engagement in international fora, and strengthening co-operative government and legislative capacity. Overseeing the implementation of the National Development Plan remains the central theme.

In terms of country performance, South Africa has ranked 110 out of 166 countries. South Africa's overall score is 64% of the total progress towards achieving all 17 SDGs. Despite the slow progress, South Africa has made some strides with the implementation of the SDGs by establishing a national coordinating mechanism to strengthen the implementation of development policies. The coordination arrangement facilitates national engagements and reporting in a coordinated and integrated manner on the developmental agendas of the UN 2030 Agenda, the African Union (AU) Agenda 2063, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) as well as our own Vision 2030, as encapsulated in the National Development Plan (NDP).

With this background South Africa was well represented at the IPU Global Conference by making compelling contributions to the conference discussions. These included amongst others:

- **Digital Transformation:** Parliament has a significant role to play in the Digital Revolution and should therefore improve oversight and evidence-based law-making. Various initiatives must be prioritized that can gain traction in the state's response to evolving technologies. Parliament must ensure that broader civil society, such as organised labour, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), the media, etc. are well informed to engage knowledgeably and meaningfully on the complex and rapidly evolving issues pertaining to this Digital Revolution. It is particularly in this domain that Parliament, in its public involvement, oversight and legislative functions can make a major contribution. Parliament is ideally placed through its public participation function to increase awareness, education, and discussion on the 4IR amongst all sectors of society.

There is thus a need to develop policies, legislation and regulations that create an enabling environment for innovation to allow the economy to grow. A regulatory framework is thus key to ensuring effective oversight within a rapid digital transformation and innovation system. Parliament must prioritise the development of a legislative framework to address the gains and challenges of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR). Parliament should ensure evidence-based oversight over the 4IR initiatives of the Executive.

- **Innovation and Start-ups:** Entrepreneurship is a dynamic and vital driver of innovation, job creation through startups, and productivity growth. Startups, known for their ground-breaking ideas and disruptive approaches, serve as vibrant hubs for introducing new concepts and technologies into the market. Startups generate high-wage employment opportunities that cater to the evolving needs of the workforce.

  The unemployment rate in South Africa stands just below 34%, with projections from the International Monetary Fund indicating it could soon exceed 35%, positioning the country's jobless rate as one of the highest globally. South Africa does not have a dedicated Start-up Act, however, there are complementary initiatives aimed at creating an enabling environment that empowers aspiring entrepreneurs and facilitates the growth of startups.

  By minimising red tape, entrepreneurs can focus their energy and resources on innovation, job creation, and economic development, propelling South Africa towards a more inclusive and prosperous future. Young parliamentarians should thus monitor and ensure the implementation of policies that build institutional capacity, foster innovation, and strike a balance between advancement and risk mitigation.

- **Promoting respect for cultural diversity in support of sustainable development:** The 4IR is fundamentally changing the world, and technological advances such as artificial intelligence, machine learning and digitization are increasingly affecting how people live, work, communicate, learn, and play. Accordingly, a new set of moral, ethical, and legal values must be codified and become the global norm.

  The 4IR thus requires organizations to be compliant and avoid any unethical practices including side-lining employees in favour of a machine. As such, Parliamentarians must ensure that governments implement the roadmap for digital cooperation, to contribute to a future where connectivity is universal, digital rights are protected, cooperation is strengthened, and innovation drives sustainable economic growth.

5. KEY OBSERVATIONS

- All countries shared best practices within their contextual environments;
- The IPU established a Forum of Young Parliamentarians. This led to many of the Parliaments to establish a Parliamentary Forum for Young Parliamentarians;
- Access remains a challenge when it comes to digital transformation;

- Digital inequality and gaps are cause for concern as such it was reiterated that no one must be left behind;
- Budget allocation for digital transformation is imperative;
- Training programmes should be developed for digital literacy to enable a competent digital workforce;
- Continued sharing of best practices within and across countries to strengthen and support especially developing countries;
- Local Government is key to providing access to and promoting Small Businesses;
- A Legislative Framework is pivotal to ensure regulation and oversight over digital transformation initiatives;
- Cultural diversity must be promoted through legislation;
- Parliament is mandated to protect citizens and guarantee active citizenry;
- Awareness and Education is key for the digital revolution;
- Intellectual Property of entrepreneurs and small businesses must be protected through legislation;
- A common parliamentary approach is thus recommended in this regard.

5.1 The EU AI Act[1]

The European Union (EU) is developing the EU Artificial Intelligence (AI) Act which is the first regulation on artificial intelligence. The use of artificial intelligence in the EU will be regulated by the AI Act, the world's first comprehensive AI law. It aims to build a common language as it relates to definitions, risks, mitigation, etc.

As part of its digital strategy, the EU wants to regulate Artificial Intelligence (AI) to ensure better conditions for the development and use of this innovative technology. AI can create many benefits, such as better healthcare; safer and cleaner transport; more efficient manufacturing; and cheaper and more sustainable energy.

In April 2021, the European Commission proposed the first EU regulatory framework for AI. It says that AI systems that can be used in different applications are analysed and classified according to the risk they pose to users. The different risk levels will mean regulation. Once approved, these will be the world's first rules on AI.

Parliament's priority is to make sure that AI systems used in the EU are safe, transparent, traceable, non-discriminatory, and environmentally friendly. AI systems should be overseen by people, rather than by automation, to prevent harmful outcomes. Parliament also want to establish a technology-neutral, uniform definition for AI that could be applied to future AI systems.

On 14 June 2023, Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) adopted Parliament's negotiating position on the AI Act. Talks are in progress with EU countries in the Council on the final form of the law. The aim is to reach an agreement by the end of 2023.

[1] European Union (2023).

6. CONFERENCE STATEMENT: PROPOSED ACTIONS[2]

To help accelerate the achievement of the SDGs through digital transformation and innovation, the following actions were proposed for Members of Parliaments.

6.1 Theme 1: Digital Transformation

a) Update parliamentary rules and working methods to allow for greater virtual participation of MPs, utilize interactive platforms that facilitate inclusive direct communication between constituents and representatives, and foster meaningful engagement of specific demographic groups, particularly youth, in the work of parliamentary committees;
b) Consider developing or strengthening forward-looking parliamentary bodies, such as Committees of the Future and other suitable mechanisms with respect to each country's specific conditions, to help parliaments anticipate and respond to long-term trends or potential shocks, and ensuring that youth are involved in such bodies;
c) Ensure all parliamentarians are equipped with the necessary knowledge and technical support to fully participate in online proceedings; enhance the use of virtual assistance to support parliamentarians; use AI tools to enhance the quality of legislative work; and develop a digital library of legal documents;
d) Adopt laws and policies that help close the digital gap and ensure accessibility to all, including through low-cost access, building of digital infrastructure and skills-building;
e) Develop suitable legal frameworks and strengthen international cooperation to protect their respective digital sovereignty to bring about a safe, healthy network environment and sustainable development;
f) Adopt adequate policies and procedures to prevent and respond to any form of technology-facilitated harassment and violence against members of parliament, including violence against women parliamentarians;
g) Advocate for the development of effective mechanisms and methods for collecting information and data to monitor the implementation of the SDGs;
h) Support the role of the United Nations in developing standards and legal frameworks on cyberspace, digital transformation, and AI based on consensus.

[2] Inter-Parliamentary Union (2023).

6.2 Theme 2: Innovation and start-ups

a) Strengthen the innovation and start-up eco-system, including by developing legal frameworks for innovation and start-ups, scaling up our budgets to support youth-led and youth-inclusive enterprises, start-ups, and innovation initiatives, including through funding, grants, and technical assistance, and making sure they are aligned with the SDGs, especially on empowering young women;
b) Promote education curricula that provide the necessary skills to prepare the next generation of innovators and entrepreneurs, with an emphasis on digital skillsets; special focus should also be given to young women, including by incentivizing more to study in the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields;
c) Urge the IPU to consider possible avenues within existing structures for engaging on innovation and digital transformation issues;
d) Promote global networking of young parliamentarians in digital transformation and innovation, within the framework of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians, in close cooperation with the IPU Centre for Innovation in Parliament;
e) Strengthen the nexus between the scientific and parliamentary communities to create more space for science to contribute to peace and sustainable development, with a priority being the involvement of youth;
f) Encourage start-ups and innovation initiatives among youth and students, especially women, strengthen gender mainstreaming in accordance with the SDGs, and develop a separate programme for digital innovation and start-ups;
g) Promote innovation and sustainable entrepreneurship in all fields, with a focus on FoodTech, to actively contribute to the process of implementing the SDGs, by solving food security issues and ending famine.

6.3 Theme 3: Promoting respect for cultural diversity in support of sustainable development

a) Help develop a common parliamentary approach to establishing a framework of principles and values in the decision-making, research and development around science and technology, such as the forthcoming IPU International Charter on the Ethics of Science and Technology, which aims at ensuring that the development and application of science and technology are carried out in a responsible, ethical, and sustainable manner;
b) Contribute robustly to efforts intended to stem online violence against women and girls, including by promoting gender equality, curbing hate speech, and regulating and managing AI in a way in which women and girls are protected and new technologies do not perpetuate gender biases;
c) Strengthen data protection framework laws and other statutory instruments, especially concerning personal data and cyberthreats, and promote transparent and open-source algorithms;
d) Promote inclusivity, intercultural dialogue, and respect for cultural diversity and local knowledge as drivers of sustainable development, prosperity, and peaceful coexistence;
e) Promote culture as a driving force of sustainable development, commit to protecting and promoting cultural diversity, affirm the role of the creative economy and cultural industries and the role of culture and cultural diversity in the process of solving the difficulties and challenges facing humanity today, especially climate change, and prevent illegal trafficking and transfer of cultural heritage property;
f) Promote respect for cultural diversity in the context of the fourth industrial revolution; strengthen cooperation for economic innovation, increased efficiency, and drivers for economic growth; at the same time, help State agencies operate more transparently and effectively on the roadmap for digitalization to narrow the development gap and ensure personal privacy in cyberspace, while keeping in mind national sovereignty.

7. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The delegation expressed gratitude to the National Assembly of Viet Nam for having considerately, successfully, and professionally hosted this Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians, championing youth participation and promoting the achievement of the SDGs, including through the IPU and international and regional inter-parliamentary mechanisms.

The 4IR is well underway and so far, at a slow pace, South Africa is dealing with the ethical challenges that it is presenting. As the world enters the digital age, a more grounded approach to technological development is required to ensure that organizations do the right things from

an ethical perspective. Leaders and governments are expected to be well informed of the technological developments of the 4IR and their impact on society at large. In addition, 4IR requires organizations to be compliant and avoid any unethical practices including side-lining employees in favour of a machine.

There is a need to step back, pause, and regain consciousness of what is happening around us. Not necessarily to discard new technology, but rather to engage it with informed minds. Minds that have a clear view of whether it is helping or hindering our humanity. The multitude of ethical guidelines being produced around the world are not going to provide the answer. Instead, there should be boundaries for engaging with technology. Key questions that must be asked – What is technology doing for us, what is it doing to us, what is gained and what is lost, why this and not that?

Failure to be proactive in this regard risks losing power to machines and altering the course of humanity without fully understanding the consequences. It also risks creating massive inequality between the "techno super-rich" and a large underclass. To avoid this outcome, leaders across all sectors who are looking to benefit from these technologies should ensure that the proper legislation/policies are in place and being adhered to by all sectors.

Those in decision-making positions are thus encouraged to always consider where they are, to see if technology is appropriate for their context, and learning needs. Policymakers are urged to ensure that no one is left behind, always ensuring that the marginalised are accommodated. It is further noted that careful consideration should be given to whether there is adequate evidence of impact and enough information on the full cost needed to make informed decisions. Finally, policymakers should ensure that their plans fit their vision for sustainable development.

There is a need to develop a legislative framework for digital transformation. The EU AI Act will therefore be pivotal in guiding Parliaments to develop customised AI Acts in line with their contexts. The South African Parliament has made many strides within the context of the 4IR. As such, the South African Parliament is well-positioned to develop a legislative framework for digital transformation.

South Africa continues to build a capable developmental state able to respond to the needs of the people. To achieve the aspirations of a capable developmental state, the country needs a transformative Parliament that acts as an agent of change which ensures acceleration of service delivery, strengthens legislative capacity, enhances oversight and accountability, strengthens public participation, enhances co-operative government, stabilises the political-administrative interface, professionalises the public service, upgrades skills and improves co-ordination.

The IPU has a Forum for Young Parliamentarians. The Forum ensures that the youth voice is heard in global political decision-making both through greater participation of young MPs at our meetings, and through formal inputs into outcomes. It also ensures there is a youth perspective in all our work and builds bridges with outside organizations. The Forum is represented at the annual Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians which is a vital platform for empowering young leaders which focuses on how to draw more young people

into the formal democratic process. It is thus recommended that South Africa consider the establishment of a Parliamentary Forum for Young Parliamentarians to boost the participation of young people in Parliament and to help ensure young MPs play a full part in the work of Parliament and participate in the IPU Forum for Young Parliamentarians.

The South African delegation thus commits to continue to harness the power of technology and innovation for the SDGs, in a responsible way that leaves no one behind, especially not future generations, while respecting the United Nations Charter and international law. Furthermore, the delegation pledges to uphold the promises of the 2015 Hanoi Declaration, and to answer the urgent call of the 2030 Agenda.

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8. REFERENCES

European Union. (2023). *EU AI Act: first regulation on artificial intelligence.* [Online]. Available at <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/headlines/society/20230601STO93804/eu-ai-act-first-regulation-on-artificial-intelligence> [Accessed 20 September 2023].

Inter-Parliamentary Union. (2023). *Ninth Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians.* [Online]. Available at <https://www.ipu.org/es/node/12391#event-sub-page-documents/> [Accessed 20 September 2023].

(b) Executive Summary of the Report on BRICS to PGIR.

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REPORT OF THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL PARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE 'RUSSIA AND AFRICA'

Moscow, Russia

19 – 20 March 2023

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A delegation from the South African Parliament participated in the Second International Parliamentary Conference - Russia-Africa under the theme 'Russia – Africa in multipolar world order' from 19 to 20 March 2023 and this engagement supported Parliament's constitutional mandates as follows:

- **Deepened international engagement**: Parliament's international engagements were deepened through the following:

    - Hon. NCOP Chairperson and Hon. NA Speaker's respective input to the roundtable discussions on the Neocolonialism of the West: How to Prevent the repetition of History and the Indivisible Security: The capabilities and contributions of Parliaments. Also, their respective input to the theme 'Russia – Africa in a multipolar world order'.

    - Hon. NA Speaker's bilateral engagement with the Chairman of the State Duma Vyacheslav Volodin.

NOTEWORTHY ISSUES

- **The PGIR, Presiding Officers, and the Secretary to Parliament note the proposal for the Conference of Russia and Africa to be an annual event**: Presiding Officers and Secretary to Parliament should note that the Chairman of the State Duma Vyacheslav Volodin proposed to hold the Conference annually. Chairman Volodin added that an annual Conference could be a good base for building relations on the principles of friendship and mutual respect, non-interference in the internal affairs of sovereign states.
- **The PGIR and Presiding Officers note the suggestions to sign (MOU) parliamentary agreement and the creation of a high-level Commission between the State Duma and the National Assembly**: During the bilateral engagement, the NA Speaker, Hon. Mapisa-Nqakula and the Chairman of the State Duma Vyacheslav Volodin agreed to a suggestion of a signing of a relevant agreement between the State Duma and the National Assembly as well as the creation of a high-level commission between the two parliaments.

1. INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the meeting: To deliberate on the theme 'Russia – Africa in a multipolar world order' and plenary discussions. More than 40 official parliamentary delegations from African countries took part in the Conference.

Delegation Members:

- National Assembly Speaker Nosiviwe, Ms. Mapisa-Nqakula, MP, and National Council of Provinces (NCOP) Chairperson, Mr. Amos Masondo, MP - Leaders of the Delegation.
- Mr. Cedric Frolic, MP.
- Ms. Dories Dlakude, MP.
- Mr. Kenneth Mmoiemang, MP.
- Mr. Mamagase Nchabeleng, MP.
- Ms. Shahidabibi Shaikh, MP.
- Mr. Nqabayomzi Kwankwa, MP.

Delegation Secretariat:

- Mr. Xolile George, Secretary to Parliament.
- Ms. Nogolide Nojozi, Adviser to NA Speaker.
- Ms. Zukiswa Kula, Personal Secretary to NA Speaker.
- Mr. Isaac Kekana, Protocol Officer to NCOP Chairperson.
- Ms. Nomawabo Baduza, Personal Secretary to NCOP Chairperson.
- Mr. Job. Sithole, IRPD Division Manager.
- Ms. Mpho Monnakgotla, IRPD Researcher.
- Mr. Ian Mundell, IRPD Protocol Officer.
- Ms. Belinda Trout (Executive Assistant to NA House Chairperson on Committees).

2. MEETING OUTCOMES

2.1 PLENARY SESSIONS

The plenary sessions took place on the 19th of March 2023 and focused on:

- **Issue 1: Parliamentary Support of Scientific and Educational Cooperation and Education**

On this issue, participants amongst others noted that sovereignty is very important both for Russia and African countries and not only political but also economic sovereignty. Economic

sovereignty cannot be achieved without progress in science and education technologies. In this light, Russia should focus on these areas in cooperation with Africa. According to Konstantin Mogilevsky, Deputy Minister of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation, almost 35,000 students from Africa are currently studying in Russian universities, and more than a third of them are from Egypt. Also, in several secondary schools in Russia, Swahili and Amharic are being taught as additional languages.

Director of the Institute of African and Russian Studies of the Moscow State University Alexey Maslov supports the point of view that science and education are the main areas of cooperation between Russia and the countries of the African continent. As education gives a completely different, free form of thinking. Therefore, it is important for both Russia and African countries to overcome the post-colonial syndrome - where they are guided by other people's standards and approaches.

- **Issue 2: Legislative Response to Economic Challenges**

On this issue, participants amongst others noted that the modern economic challenges are crises caused by Western countries guided by the United States of America's numerous economic sanctions aimed at destroying the Russian economy and in violation of all international trade rules and foreign economic relations, according to the First Deputy Chairman of the State Duma Alexander Zhukov. Jacob Mudenda, the Speaker of the National Assembly of the Republic of Zimbabwe noted that the African continent needed infrastructure development in areas such as road improvements, and rail as well as air transport. Without infrastructure, it will be impossible to trade with developed countries such as Russia. He also noted the necessity to develop the energy sector for industry and sufficient water for agriculture.

The Chairman of the State Duma Committee on Energy Pavel Zavalny said that the signing of inter-governmental agreements was an important tool of political support for enhancing energy cooperation between Russia and African countries. He also emphasised that energy was one of the most promising areas of economic cooperation between Russia and African states. Economic growth and energy demand are shifting to Asia and Africa in the conditions of global economic and geopolitical transformation. Therefore, the development and harmonisation of energy legislation can play an important role in enhancing mutually beneficial energy cooperation between Russia and African countries

- **Issue 3: Indivisible Security: The Capabilities and Contributions of Parliaments**

On this issue, participants amongst others noted that no nation can achieve security on its own, alone. There is no security in an unsafe environment, therefore security requires a global approach. The growth of international terrorism, drug trafficking, and the proliferation of nuclear and biological weapons are becoming serious threats. In this light, parliamentarians were encouraged to join efforts to protect nations and jointly speak at international platforms, like the UN and other organisations, and demand the implementation of the provisions of the UN Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons (BTWC) and their destruction.

On this issue, the NA Speaker, Hon. Mapisa-Nqakula noted the importance of countries maintaining the values of humanity and tolerance towards each other. She recalled that during the COVID pandemic, many countries preferred to care only about their safety, and as a result, African states did not receive enough vaccines and lives were lost. Also, noted that issues of climate change, poverty, and human rights violations have become a threat to peace and security. Also emphasised the importance of compliance with international treaties. Jacob Mudenda, the Speaker of the National

Assembly of the Republic of Zimbabwe, agreed with her by noting that the UN Charter and international law are being manipulated by certain countries.

- **Issue 4: Neocolonialism of the West: How to Prevent the Repetition of History**

On this issue, participants amongst others noted that complete decolonisation has not yet taken place: the decolonisation of the economy, international affairs, and culture is yet to be realised. According to the parliamentarian, consciousness is the most important thing that should be decolonized: 'We still live in captivity of the Western paradigm of consciousness, the Western matrix of thinking, and there are a lot of examples of this'.

The NCOP Chairperson, Hon. Masondo, amongst others, noted that neo-colonialism includes foreign capital used to exploit nations, therefore the promotion of economic independence and diversification of African economies is vital in this regard. Also, spoke about the high-level cooperation between the Republic of South Africa and the Russian Federation. He also briefly touched on the liberation of South Africa from colonial dependence.

2.2 PLENARY SESSION

The Plenary Session on the theme 'Russia – Africa in a multipolar world order' took place on the 20th of March 2023 as follows:

Address by the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin

President Putin, amongst others, noted that the conference is undoubtedly important in the context of the continued development of Russia's multifaceted cooperation with the countries of the African continent. It brings together legislators who are supposed to express the will of their voters in their countries and work in the interests of their people, their presence shows that the peoples of Africa are interested in stepping up efforts to develop multifaceted and mutually beneficial relations with Russia.

On trade, noted that the process of establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area, which began in 2021, opens up additional opportunities. In the future, this zone will become a continental market with a total GDP of more than three trillion dollars. Russia is in favour of actively developing ties with this new association both within the Eurasian Economic Union and bilaterally.

On food, fertilizers, fuel, and other product supplies, noted that Russia, guided by the needs of African countries, has recently agreed to extend the agreement concluded in Istanbul on the export of Ukrainian food through the Black Sea and the unblocking of Russian agricultural exports and fertiliser supplies for another 60 days. Russia intends to increase cooperation with African countries on medicines and healthcare to ensure biological and epidemiological safety. Concluded by recalling the words of Nelson Mandela 'nothing should divert us from the road to freedom, and we should not allow anyone to stand in our way'.

The **NCOP Chairperson, Hon. Masondo** noted that Russia has no colonial heritage in Africa and no African country sees Russia as an enemy. On the contrary, Russia helped South Africa in its liberation, therefore Russia is a reliable partner. Also, stressed that South Africa stood for a multipolar world. As political diversity is a guarantee of strength and realization of potential and a solution to the challenges faced by humanity.

The **NA Speaker, Hon. Mapisa-Nqakula** emphasised that many countries were facing very aggressive sanctions and other methods of control. Such decisions are not made in the interests of ordinary, average citizens. The imposition of such sanctions is one of the flagrant violations of human rights. Also, after many decades of colonialism Africa continues to be a continent suffering from exploitation and draining of resources and wealth. That is why Africa needs an honest, fair, and balanced counterpart.

3. OTHER EVENTS / BILATERAL MEETINGS

- **The Chairman of the State Duma and the NA Speaker**

The Chairman of the State Duma stressed that relations between Russia and the Republic of South Africa were developing with the help of cooperation between the Presidents of the two states. Both countries have great capabilities and should use the parliamentary dimension to do everything to enhance cooperation in various areas. He suggested preparing and signing a relevant agreement between the State Duma and the National Assembly of the Parliament of South Africa, as well as creating a high-level commission. The NA Speaker, Hon. Mapisa-Nqakula supported his suggestion. The Chairman also noted that trade and economic cooperation between the two countries show good results. In 2022 the trade turnover between the Russian Federation and the Republic of South Africa increased by 16.7%.

The NA Speaker, Hon. Mapisa-Nqakula thanked the Chairman for sending the invitation to take part in the Parliamentary Conference. Also, noted that is very important for South Africa that Russia gives priority to the African continent. As many countries consider Africa as a great possibility to get African resources. But taking into account the history of cooperation between the two countries, South Africa believes that Russia has genuine interests in Africa. NA Speaker also noted that cooperation between the two countries did not start yesterday but started decades ago. Also, assured that South Africa will continue to cooperate with Russia.

4. RECOMMENDED ISSUES FOR NOTING AND/OR ACTION BY PARLIAMENT

The South African Parliament is invited to note the following key issues

- **The PGIR, Presiding Officers, and the Secretary to Parliament note the proposal for the Conference of Russia and Africa to be an annual event**: the Chairman of the State Duma Vyacheslav Volodin proposed to hold the Conference annually. Chairman Volodin added that an annual Conference could be a good base for building relations on the principles of friendship and mutual respect, non-interference in the internal affairs of sovereign states.
- **The PGIR and Presiding Officers note the suggestions to sign (MOU) parliamentary agreement and the creation of a high-level Commission between the State Duma and the National Assembly**: During the bilateral engagement, the NA Speaker, Hon. Mapisa-Nqakula and the Chairman of the State Duma Vyacheslav Volodin agreed to a suggestion of a signing of a relevant agreement between the State Duma and the National Assembly, as well as the creation of a high-level commission between the two parliaments.

END

(c) BRICS:

(i) 15th BRICS Summit Communiqué 23 August 2023.

XV BRICS Summit
Johannesburg II Declaration

BRICS and Africa: Partnership for Mutually Accelerated Growth, Sustainable Development and Inclusive Multilateralism

Sandton, Gauteng, South Africa

Wednesday 23 August 2023

Preamble

1. We, the Leaders of the Federative Republic of Brazil, the Russian Federation, the Republic of India, the People's Republic of China and the Republic of South Africa met in Sandton, South Africa, from 22 to 24 August 2023 for the XV BRICS Summit held under the theme: "*BRICS and Africa: Partnership for Mutually Accelerated Growth, Sustainable Development and Inclusive Multilateralism*".

2. We reaffirm our commitment to the BRICS spirit of mutual respect and understanding, sovereign equality, solidarity, democracy, openness, inclusiveness, strengthened collaboration and consensus. As we build upon 15 years of BRICS Summits, we further commit ourselves to strengthening the framework of mutually beneficial BRICS cooperation under the three pillars of political and security, economic and financial, and cultural and people-to-people cooperation and to enhancing our strategic partnership for the benefit of our people through the promotion of peace, a more representative, fairer international order, a reinvigorated and reformed multilateral system, sustainable development and inclusive growth.

Partnership for Inclusive Multilateralism

3. We reiterate our commitment to inclusive multilateralism and upholding international law, including the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of

the United Nations (UN) as its indispensable cornerstone, and the central role of the UN in an international system in which sovereign states cooperate to maintain peace and security, advance sustainable development, ensure the promotion and protection of democracy, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, and promoting cooperation based on the spirit of solidarity, mutual respect, justice and equality.

4. We express concern about the use of unilateral coercive measures, which are incompatible with the principles of the Charter of the UN and produce negative effects notably in the developing world. We reiterate our commitment to enhancing and improving global governance by promoting a more agile, effective, efficient, representative, democratic and accountable international and multilateral system.

5. We call for greater representation of emerging markets and developing countries, in international organizations and multilateral fora in which they play an important role. We also call for increasing the role and share of women from EMDCs at different levels of responsibilities in the international organizations.

6. We reiterate the need for all countries to cooperate in promoting and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms under the principles of equality and mutual respect. We agree to continue to treat all human rights including the right to development in a fair and equal manner, on the same footing and with the same emphasis. We agree to strengthen cooperation on issues of common interests both within BRICS and in multilateral fora including the United Nations General Assembly and Human Rights Council, taking into account the necessity to promote, protect and fulfil human rights in a non-selective, non-politicised and constructive manner and without double standards. We call for the respect of democracy and human rights. In this regard, we underline that they should be implemented on the level of global governance as well as at national level. We reaffirm our commitment to ensuring the promotion and protection of democracy, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all with the aim to build a brighter shared future for the international community based on mutually beneficial cooperation.

7. We support a comprehensive reform of the UN, including its Security Council, with a view to making it more democratic, representative, effective and efficient, and to increase the representation of developing countries in the Council's memberships so that it can adequately respond to prevailing global challenges and support the

legitimate aspirations of emerging and developing countries from Africa, Asia and Latin America, including Brazil, India and South Africa, to play a greater role in international affairs, in particular in the United Nations, including its Security Council.

8. We reaffirm our support for the open, transparent, fair, predictable, inclusive, equitable, non-discriminatory and rules-based multilateral trading system with the World Trade Organisation (WTO) at its core, with special and differential treatment (S&DT) for developing countries, including Least Developed Countries. We stress our support to work towards positive and meaningful outcomes on the issues at the 13th Ministerial Conference (MC13). We commit to engage constructively to pursue the necessary WTO reform with a view to presenting concrete deliverables to MC13. We call for the restoration of a fully and well-functioning two-tier binding WTO dispute settlement system accessible to all members by 2024, and the selection of new Appellate Body Members without further delay.

9. We call for the need to make progress towards the achievement of a fair and market-oriented agricultural trading system, ending hunger, achieving food security and improved nutrition, promoting sustainable agriculture and food systems, and implement resilient agricultural practices. We emphasize the need to deliver on agriculture reform in accordance with the mandate in Article 20 of the Agreement on Agriculture, while recognizing the importance of respecting the mandates with regards to a Permanent Solution on Public Stockholding (PSH) for food security purposes and special safeguard mechanism (SSM) for developing countries, including LDCs, in their respective negotiating contexts. BRICS members are also concerned with trade restrictive measures which are inconsistent with WTO rules, including unilateral illegal measures such as sanctions, that affect agricultural trade.

10. We support a robust Global Financial Safety Net with a quota-based and adequately resourced International Monetary Fund (IMF) at its centre. We call for the conclusion of the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) 16th General Review of Quotas before 15 December 2023. The review should restore the primary role of quotas in the IMF. Any adjustment in quota shares should result in increases in the quota shares of emerging markets and developing economies (EMDCs), while protecting the voice and representation of the poorest members. We call for reform of the Bretton Woods institutions, including for a greater role for emerging markets and developing countries, including in leadership positions in the Bretton Woods institutions, that

reflect the role of EMDCs in the world economy.

Fostering an Environment of Peace and Development

11. We welcome the Joint Statement of the BRICS Ministers of Foreign Affairs and International Relations meeting on 1 June 2023 and note the 13th Meeting of BRICS National Security Advisors and High Representatives on National Security held on 25 July 2023.

12. We are concerned about ongoing conflicts in many parts of the world. We stress our commitment to the peaceful resolution of differences and disputes through dialogue and inclusive consultations in a coordinated and cooperative manner and support all efforts conducive to the peaceful settlement of crises.

13. We recognise the importance of the increased participation of women in peace processes including in conflict prevention and resolution, peacekeeping, peacebuilding, post-conflict reconstruction and development, and sustaining peace.

14. We stress our commitment to multilateralism and to the central role of the United Nations which are prerequisites to maintain peace and security. We call on the international community to support countries in working together towards post-pandemic economic recovery. We emphasise the importance of contributing to post-conflict countries' reconstruction and development and call upon the international community to assist countries in meeting their development goals. We stress the imperative of refraining from any coercive measures not based on international law and the UN Charter.

15. We reiterate the need for full respect of international humanitarian law in conflict situations and the provision of humanitarian aid in accordance with the basic principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence established in UNGA resolution 46/182.

16. We commend continued collective efforts of the United Nations, the African Union and sub-regional organisations, including in particular the cooperation between the United Nations Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council, to address regional challenges including maintaining peace and security, promoting peacebuilding, post-conflict reconstruction and development, and call for continued

support by the international community to these endeavours using diplomatic means such as dialogue, negotiations, consultations, mediation, and good offices, to resolve international disputes and conflicts, settle them on the basis of mutual respect, compromise, and the balance of legitimate interests. We reiterate that the principle "African solutions to African problems" should continue to serve as the basis for conflict resolution. In this regard we support African peace efforts on the continent by strengthening the relevant capacities of African States. We are concerned about the worsening violence in Sudan. We urge the immediate cessation of hostilities and call for the unimpeded access of the Sudanese population to humanitarian assistance. We remain concerned at the situation in the Sahel region, in particular in the Republic of Niger. We support the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and national unity of Libya. We reiterate our support for a "Libyan led and Libyan-owned" political process with UN-led mediation as the main channel. We emphasize the need to achieve an enduring and mutually acceptable political solution to the question of Western Sahara in accordance with relevant UNSC resolutions and in fulfilment of the mandate of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO).

17. We welcome the positive developments in the Middle East and the efforts by BRICS countries to support development, security and stability in the region. In this regard, we endorse the Joint Statement by the BRICS Deputy Foreign Ministers and Special Envoys for the Middle East and North Africa at their meeting of 26 April 2023. We welcome the reestablishment of diplomatic relations between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Republic of Iran and emphasise that deescalating tensions and managing differences through dialogue and diplomacy is key to peaceful coexistence in this strategically important region of the world. We reaffirm our support for Yemen's sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity, and commend the positive role of all the parties involved in bringing about a ceasefire and seeking a political solution to end the conflict. We call on all parties to engage in inclusive direct negotiations and to support the provision of humanitarian, relief and development assistance to the Yemeni people. We support all efforts conducive to a political and negotiated solution that respects Syrian sovereignty and territorial integrity and the promotion of a lasting settlement to the Syrian crisis. We welcome the readmission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the League of Arab States. We express our deep concern at the dire humanitarian situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories due to

escalating violence under continued Israeli occupation and the expansion of illegal settlements. We call on the international community to support direct negotiations based on international law including relevant UN Security Council and General Assembly resolutions and the Arab Peace Initiative, towards a two-state solution, leading to the establishment of a sovereign, independent and viable State of Palestine. We commend the extensive work carried out by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and call for greater international support for UNRWA activities to alleviate the humanitarian situation of the Palestinian people.

18. We express serious concern with the ongoing deterioration of the security, humanitarian, political and economic situation in Haiti. We believe that the current crisis requires a Haitian-led solution that encompasses national dialogue and consensus building among local political forces, institutions and the society. We call on the international community to support the Haitian endeavours to dismantle the gangs, enhance the security situation and put in place the foundations for long-lasting social and economic development in the country.

19. We recall our national positions concerning the conflict in and around Ukraine as expressed at the appropriate fora, including the UNSC and UNGA. We note with appreciation relevant proposals of mediation and good offices aimed at peaceful resolution of the conflict through dialogue and diplomacy, including the African Leaders Peace Mission and the proposed path for peace.

20. We call for the strengthening of disarmament and non-proliferation, including the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction (BTWC) and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (CWC), recognizing its role in safeguarding and for preserving their integrity and effectiveness to maintain global stability and international peace and security. We underline the need to comply with and strengthen the BTWC, including by adopting a legally binding Protocol to the Convention that provides for, inter alia, an efficient verification mechanism. We reassert our support for ensuring the long-term sustainability of outer space activities and prevention of an arms race in outer space (PAROS) and of its weaponization, including through negotiations to adopt a relevant legally binding multilateral

instrument. We recognise the value of the updated Draft Treaty on the Prevention of the Placement of Weapons in Outer Space, the Threat or Use of Force against Outer Space Objects (PPWT) submitted to the Conference on Disarmament in 2014. We stress that practical and non-binding commitments, such as Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures (TCBMs), may also contribute to PAROS.

21. We reiterate the need to resolve the Iranian nuclear issue through peaceful and diplomatic means in accordance with the international law, and stress the importance of preserving the JCPOA and the UNSCR 2231 to international non-proliferation as well as wider peace and stability and hope for relevant parties to restore the full and effective implementation of the JCPOA at an early date.

22. We express strong condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations whenever, wherever and by whomsoever committed. We recognize the threat emanating from terrorism, extremism conducive to terrorism and radicalization. We are committed to combating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, including the cross-border movement of terrorists, and terrorism financing networks and safe havens. We reiterate that terrorism should not be associated with any religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group. We reaffirm our unwavering commitment to contribute further to the global efforts of preventing and countering the threat of terrorism on the basis of respect for international law, in particular the Charter of the United Nations, and human rights, emphasizing that States have the primary responsibility in combating terrorism with the United Nations continuing to play central and coordinating role in this area. We also stress the need for a comprehensive and balanced approach of the whole international community to effectively curb the terrorist activities, which pose a serious threat, including in the present-day pandemic environment. We reject double standards in countering terrorism and extremism conducive to terrorism. We call for an expeditious finalization and adoption of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism within the UN framework and for launching multilateral negotiations on an international convention for the suppression of acts of chemical and biological terrorism, at the Conference of Disarmament. We welcome the activities of the BRICS Counter-Terrorism Working Group and its five Subgroups based upon the BRICS Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the BRICS Counter-Terrorism Action Plan. We look forward to further deepening counter-terrorism cooperation.

23. While emphasising the formidable potential of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) for growth and development, we recognise the existing and emerging possibilities they bring for criminal activities and threats, and express concern over the increasing level and complexity of criminal misuse of ICTs. We welcome the ongoing efforts in the Ad Hoc Committee to elaborate a comprehensive international convention on countering the use of ICTs for criminal purposes and reaffirm our commitment to cooperating in the implementation of the mandate adopted by the UN General Assembly resolution 75/282 in a timely manner.

24. We reaffirm our commitment to the promotion of an open, secure, stable, accessible and peaceful ICT-environment, underscored the importance of enhancing common understandings and intensifying cooperation in the use of ICTs and Internet. We support the leading role of the United Nations in promoting constructive dialogue on ensuring ICT-security, including within the UN Open-Ended Working Group on security of and in the use of ICTs 2021-2025, and developing a universal legal framework in this realm. We call for a comprehensive, balanced, objective approach to the development and security of ICT products and systems. We underscore the importance of establishing legal frameworks of cooperation among BRICS countries on ensuring security in the use of ICTs. We also acknowledge the need to advance practical intra-BRICS cooperation through implementation of the BRICS Roadmap of Practical Cooperation on ensuring security in the use of ICTs and the activities of the BRICS Working Group on security in the use of ICTs.

25. We reaffirm our commitment to strengthen international cooperation and our collaboration against corruption and continue to implement the relevant international agreements in this regard, in particular the United Nations Convention against Corruption. With the knowledge that the scourge of corruption knows no geographic boundaries, and respects no society or humanitarian cause, we have jointly put in place a strong foundation to combat corruption through capacity building, including, conducting training programmes and sharing of current best practices applied in each of our countries. We will continue to reinforce these efforts and increase our knowledge of the emerging avenues. We will enhance international cooperation through collaborative information-sharing networks, and mutual legal assistance to combat illicit financial flows, counter safe havens and support the investigation, prosecution and recovery of stolen assets subject to domestic laws and regulations of BRICS countries.

Partnership for Mutually Accelerated Growth

26. We note that an unbalanced recovery from the shock and hardship of the pandemic is aggravating inequality across the world. The global growth momentum has weakened, and the economic prospects have declined owing to trade fragmentation, prolonged high inflation, tighter global financial conditions, in particular the increase in interest rates in advanced economies, geopolitical tensions and increased debt vulnerabilities.

27. We encourage multilateral financial institutions and international organizations to play a constructive role in building global consensus on economic policies and preventing systemic risks of economic disruption and financial fragmentation. We call for Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) to continue implementing the recommendations which should be voluntary within MDBs governance frameworks, from the G20 Independent Review Report on MDBs Capital Adequacy Frameworks to increase their lending capacities, while safeguarding MDBs long-term financial stability, robust creditor rating, and preferred creditor status.

28. We believe that multilateral cooperation is essential to limit the risks stemming from geopolitical and geoeconomic fragmentation and intensify efforts on areas of mutual interest, including but not limited to, trade, poverty and hunger reduction, sustainable development, including access to energy, water and food, fuel, fertilizers, as well as mitigating and adapting to the impact of climate change, education, health as well as pandemic prevention, preparedness and response.

29. We note that high debt levels in some countries reduce the fiscal space needed to address ongoing development challenges aggravated by spillover effects from external shocks, particularly from sharp monetary tightening in advanced economies. Rising interest rates and tighter financing conditions worsen debt vulnerabilities in many countries. We believe it is necessary to address the international debt agenda properly to support economic recovery and sustainable development, while taking into account each nation's laws and internal procedures. One of the instruments, amongst others, to collectively address debt vulnerabilities is through the predictable, orderly, timely and coordinated implementation of the G20 Common Framework for Debt Treatment, with the participation of official bilateral creditors, private creditors and Multilateral Development Banks in line with the principle of joint action and fair

burden-sharing**.**

30. We reaffirm the importance of the G20 to continue playing the role of the premier multilateral forum in the field of international economic and financial cooperation that comprises both developed and emerging markets and developing countries where major economies jointly seek solutions to global challenges. We look forward to the successful hosting of the 18th G20 Summit in New Delhi under the Indian G20 Presidency. We note the opportunities to build sustained momentum for change by India, Brazil and South Africa presiding over the G20 from 2023 to 2025 and expressed support for continuity and collaboration in their G20 presidencies and wish them all success in their endeavours. Therefore, we are committed to a balanced approach by continuing to amplify and further integrate the voice of the global South in the G20 agenda as under the Indian Presidency in 2023 and the Brazilian and South African presidencies in 2024 and 2025.

31. We recognize the important role of BRICS countries working together to deal with risks and challenges to the world economy in achieving global recovery and sustainable development. We reaffirm our commitment to enhance macro-economic policy coordination, deepen economic cooperation, and work to realize strong, sustainable, balanced and inclusive economic recovery. We emphasize the importance of continued implementation of the Strategy for BRICS Economic Partnership 2025 in all relevant ministerial tracks and working groups. We will look to identify solutions for accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

32. Recognising that BRICS countries produce one third of the world's food, we reaffirm our commitment to strengthen agricultural cooperation and promote sustainable agriculture and rural development of BRICS countries for enhancing food security both within BRICS and worldwide. We emphasize the strategic importance of facilitating steady access to agricultural inputs, on ensuring global food security. We reiterate the importance of implementing the Action Plan 2021-2024 for Agricultural Cooperation of BRICS Countries, and welcome the Strategy on Food Security Cooperation of the BRICS Countries. We underscore the need for resilient food supply chains.

33. We recognize the dynamism of the digital economy in enabling global economic growth. We also recognize the positive role that trade and investment can play in

promoting sustainable development, national and regional industrialization, the transition towards sustainable consumption and production patterns. We recognize the challenges facing trade and investment development in the digital era and acknowledge that BRICS members are at different levels of digital development, and thus recognize the need to address respective challenges including the various digital divides. We welcome the establishment of the BRICS Digital Economy Working Group. We reaffirm that openness, efficiency, stability, reliability, are crucial in tackling economic recovery challenges and boosting international trade and investment. We encourage further cooperation among BRICS countries to enhance the interconnectivity of supply chains and payment systems to promote trade and investment flows. We agree to strengthen exchanges and cooperation in trade in services as established in the BRICS Framework for Cooperation on Trade in Services, with the BRICS Business Council and BRICS Women's Business Alliance (WBA) with the aim to promote implementation of BRICS Trade in Services Cooperation Roadmap and relevant documents including the BRICS Framework for cooperation in Trade in Professional Services.

34. We reiterate our support to the African Union Agenda 2063 and to Africa's efforts towards integration, including through the operationalisation of the African Continental Free Trade Area. We underscore that the AfCFTA is poised to create a predictable environment for investments, particularly in infrastructure development, and provides an opportunity to find synergies with partners on cooperation, trade and development on the African continent. We underline the importance of strengthening the partnership between BRICS and Africa to unlock mutually beneficial opportunities for increased trade, investment and infrastructure development. We welcome progress made towards the AfCFTA Protocol on Women and Youth in Trade and recognise its potential to be a catalyst for economic and financial inclusion of women and youth into Africa's economy. We stress the importance of issues including industrialization, infrastructure development, food security, agriculture modernisation for sustainable growth health-care, and tackling climate change for the sustainable development of Africa.

35. We further note that the African continent remains on the margins of the global trading system and has much to gain through BRICS collaboration. The African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) and BRICS cooperation presents opportunities for the continent to transition away from its historic role as a commodity

exporter towards higher productivity value addition. We welcome and support the inclusion of the African Union as a member of the G20 at the New Delhi G20 Summit.

36. We commit to strengthening intra-BRICS cooperation to intensify the BRICS Partnership on New Industrial Revolution (PartNIR) and create new opportunities for accelerating industrial development. We support intra-BRICS cooperation in human resource development on new technologies through the BRICS Centre for Industrial Competences (BCIC), BRICS PartNIR Innovation Centre, BRICS Startup Forum and collaboration with other relevant BRICS mechanisms, to carry out training programmes to address challenges of NIR for Inclusive and sustainable industrialization. We reiterate our commitment to continue discussion on the establishment of BCIC in cooperation with UNIDO to jointly support the development of Industry 4.0 skills development among the BRICS countries and to promote partnerships and increased productivity in the New Industrial Revolution. We look forward to the cooperation with UNIDO and request the PartNIR Advisory Group to coordinate with UNIDO.

37. We recognize the crucial role that Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs) play in unlocking the full potential of BRICS economies and reaffirm the importance of their participation in production networks and value chains. We will continue joint efforts aimed at eliminating constraints such as lack of easily accessible information and financing, skills shortage, network effects, as well as regulation of excessive administrative burden, and procurement related constraints ensuring easily accessible information and financing, skill up gradation and market linkage. We endorse the BRICS MSMEs Cooperation Framework which promotes BRICS cooperation on such issues as exchanging information about fairs and exhibitions, and encouraging participation of MSMEs in the selected events to enhance interactions and cooperation amongst MSMEs which may secure deals. Member states will facilitate exchange of business missions, and promote sector specific Business to Business (B2B) meetings amongst the MSMEs, to enhance enterprise-to-enterprise cooperation and business alliances between the MSMEs of BRICS, with a particular focus on women-owned and youth-owned MSMEs. Member States will provide information relating to MSMEs, business development opportunities and possibilities of partnerships for the development of MSMEs in the BRICS countries. In addition, we will promote sharing of information on trade policies, and market intelligence for MSMEs to increase their participation in international trade. We will facilitate access to resources and capabilities such as skills, knowledge networks, and technology that

could help MSMEs improve their participation in the economy and global value chains. We will exchange views on measures and approaches for integrating BRICS MSMEs into global trade and Global Value Chains, including by sharing experience on how regional integration approaches can support the development of MSMEs.

38. We reiterate the commitment to promote employment for sustainable development, including to develop skills to ensure resilient recovery, gender-responsive employment and social protection policies including workers' rights. We reaffirm our commitment to respect, promote, and realise decent work for all and achieve social justice. We will step up efforts to effectively abolish child labour based on the Durban Call to Action and accelerate progress towards universal social protection for all by 2030. We will invest in skills development systems to improve access to relevant and quality skills for workers in the informal economy and workers in new forms of employment as we seek to increase productivity for economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable and inclusive economies. We will explore the development of a BRICS platform to implement the Productivity Ecosystem for Decent Work.

39. We acknowledge the urgent need for tourism industry recovery and the importance of increasing mutual tourist flows and will work towards further strengthening the BRICS Alliance for Green Tourism to promote measures, which can shape a more resilient, sustainable and inclusive tourism sector.

40. We agree to enhance exchanges and cooperation in the field of standardization and make full use of standards to advance sustainable development.

41. We agree to continue to deepen cooperation on competition amongst BRICS countries and create a fair competition market environment for international economic and trade cooperation.

42. We agree to enhance dialogue and cooperation on intellectual property rights through, the BRICS IPR cooperation mechanism (IPRCM). As we celebrate a decade of cooperation of the Heads of Intellectual Property Offices, we welcome the alignment of their workplan to the Sustainable Development Goals.

43. We support enhancing statistical cooperation within BRICS as data, statistics and information form the basis of informed and effective decision making. On the 10th

anniversary of its first issue, we support the continued release of the BRICS Joint Statistical Publication 2023 and the BRICS Joint Statistical Publication Snapshot 2023 for engaging a wider range of users.

44. We recognise the widespread benefits of fast, inexpensive, transparent, safe, and inclusive payment systems. We look forward to the report by the BRICS Payment Task Force (BPTF) on the mapping of the various elements of the G20 Roadmap on Cross-border Payments in BRICS countries. We welcome the sharing of experience by BRICS members on payment infrastructures, including the interlinking of cross-border payment systems. We believe this will further enhance cooperation amongst the BRICS countries and encourage further dialogue on payment instruments to facilitate trade and investment flows between the BRICS members as well as other developing countries. We stress the importance of encouraging the use of local currencies in international trade and financial transactions between BRICS as well as their trading partners. We also encourage strengthening of correspondent banking networks between the BRICS countries and enabling settlements in the local currencies.

45. We task our Finance Ministers and/or Central Bank Governors, as appropriate, to consider the issue of local currencies, payment instruments and platforms and report back to us by the next Summit.

46. We recognise the key role of the NDB in promoting infrastructure and sustainable development of its member countries. We congratulate Ms Dilma Rousseff, former President of the Federative Republic of Brazil, as President of the New Development Bank (NDB) and are confident that she will contribute to strengthening of the NDB in effectively achieving its mandate. We expect the NDB to provide and maintain the most effective financing solutions for sustainable development, a steady process in membership expansion, and improvements in corporate governance and operational effectiveness towards the fulfilment of NDB's General Strategy for 2022-2026. We welcome the three new members of the NDB, namely Bangladesh, Egypt and United Arab Emirates. We encourage the NDB to play an active role in knowledge sharing process and incorporate the member-countries best practices in its operational policies, according to its governance mechanism and taking into account national priorities and development goals. We see the NDB as an important member of global MDB family, given its unique status as an institution created by EMDCs for EMDCs.

47. We welcome the establishment of the BRICS Think Tank Network for Finance during 2022 and efforts to operationalise the Network. We will work towards the identification and designation of the lead Think Tanks from member countries. We endorse the Operational Guidelines for the BRICS Think Tank Network for Finance developed under South Africa's Chairship, which provides guidance on how the Network will operate in terms of governance, delivery of outputs and funding of the BRICS Think Tank Network for Finance.

48. We recognise that infrastructure investments support human, social, environmental, and economic development. We note that the demand for infrastructure is growing, with a greater need for scale, innovation and sustainability. We highlight that BRICS countries continue to offer excellent opportunities for infrastructure investment. In this regard, we further recognise that leveraging governments' limited resources to catalyse private capital, expertise and efficiency will be paramount in closing the infrastructure investment gap in BRICS countries.

49. We continue to support the work of the Task Force on Public-Private Partnership (PPP) and Infrastructure in sharing knowledge, good practices and lessons learnt on the effective development and delivery of infrastructure for the benefit of all member countries. In this regard, the Task Force has collated guiding principles that advance the adoption of a programmatic approach in infrastructure delivery and promotes the use of PPPs and other blended finance solutions in infrastructure development and delivery. We look forward to convening the Infrastructure Investment Symposium later this year for a discussion amongst BRICS governments, investors and financiers on ways to work with the private sector to promote the use of green, transition and sustainable finance in infrastructure delivery.

50. The BRICS Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA) continues to be an important mechanism for mitigating the effects of a crisis situation, complementing existing international financial and monetary arrangements, and contributing to the strengthening of the global financial safety net. We reiterate our commitment to the continued strengthening of the CRA and look forward to the successful completion of the sixth Test-Run later in 2023. We also support progress made to amend the outstanding technical issues on the Inter-Central Bank Agreement and endorse the proposed theme of 2023 BRICS Economic Bulletin 'Challenges in a post-COVID-19 environment.

51. We welcome the continued cooperation on topics of mutual interest on sustainable and transition finance, information security, financial technology, and payments, and look forward to building on work in these areas under the relevant work streams, including the proposed study on leveraging technology to address climate data gaps in the financial sector and support the proposed initiatives aimed at enhancing cyber security and developing financial technology, including the sharing of knowledge and experience in this area.

Partnership for Sustainable Development

52. We reaffirm the call for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in its three dimensions: economic, social and environmental, in a balanced and integrated manner by mobilising the means required to implement the 2030 Agenda. We urge donor countries to honour their Official Development Assistance (ODA) commitments and to facilitate capacity building and the transfer of technology along with additional development resources to developing countries, in line with the national policy objectives of recipients. We highlight in this regard that the SDGs Summit to be held in New York in September 2023 and the Summit of the Future to be held in September 2024, constitute significant opportunities for renewing international commitment on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

53. We recognise the importance of implementing the SDGs in an integrated and holistic manner, inter alia through poverty eradication as well as combating climate change whilst promoting sustainable land use and water management, conservation of biological diversity, and the sustainable use of its components and the biodiversity and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilisation of genetic resources, including by appropriate access to genetic resources, in line with Article 1 of Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and in accordance with national circumstances, priorities and capabilities. We also underscore the significance of technology and innovation, international cooperation, public-private partnerships, including South-South cooperation.

54. We underscore the importance of collaborating on biodiversity conservation and sustainable use matters, such as research and development of conservation technologies, development of protected areas, and the combatting of illegal trade in wildlife. Furthermore, we will continue to actively participate in international

biodiversity-related conventions, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), its protocols and advancing the implementation of its Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and working towards the Global Initiative on Reducing Land Degradation and Enhancing Conservation of Terrestrial Habitats.

55. We welcome the historic adoption of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) at the 15th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP-15) in December 2022. We thus undertake to strive towards the implementation of all the global goals and targets of the KMGBF, in accordance with the principles of common but differentiated responsibilities and national circumstances, priorities and capabilities in order to achieve its mission to halt and reverse biodiversity loss and vision of living in harmony with nature. We urge developed countries to provide adequate means of implementation, including financial resources, capacity-building, technical and scientific cooperation, and access to and transfer of technology to fully implement the KMGBF. We also acknowledge the potential for cooperation on the sustainable use of biodiversity in business to support local economic development, industrialisation, job creation, and sustainable business opportunities.

56. We reemphasise the importance of implementing the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and its Paris Agreement and the principle of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities (CBDR-RC) enhancing low-cost climate technology transfer, capacity building as well as mobilizing affordable, adequate and timely delivered new additional financial resources for environmentally sustainable projects. We agree that there is a need to defend, promote and strengthen the multilateral response to Climate Change and to work together for a successful outcome of the 28th Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC COP28). We recognise that the Means of Implementation should be enhanced by developed countries, including through adequate and timely flow of affordable Climate Finance, Technical Cooperation, Capacity Building and transfer of Technology for climate actions. Furthermore, there is a need for comprehensive financial arrangements to address loss and damage due to climate change, including operationalising Fund on Loss and Damage as agreed at the UNFCCC COP27 to benefit developing countries.

57. We agree to address the challenges posed by climate change while also ensuring a just, affordable and sustainable transition to a low carbon and low-emission economy in line with the principles of CBDR-RC, in light of different national circumstances. We advocate for just equitable and sustainable transitions, based on nationally defined development priorities, and we call on developed countries to lead by example and support developing countries towards such transitions.

58. We stress the need for support of developed countries to developing countries for access to existing and emerging low-emission technologies and solutions that avoid, abate and remove GHG emissions and enhance adaptation action to address climate change. We further emphasize the need for enhancing low-cost technology transfer and for mobilizing affordable, adequate new and timely delivered additional financial resources for environmentally sustainable projects.

59. We express our strong determination to contribute to a successful COP28 in Dubai, later this year, with the focus on implementation and cooperation. As the main mechanism for assessing collective progress towards achieving the purpose of the Paris Agreement and its long-term goals and promoting climate action on all aspects of the Paris Agreement under the UNFCCC, the Global Stocktake must be effective and identifying implementation gaps on the global response to climate change, whilst prospectively laying the foundations for enhanced ambition by all, in particular by developed countries. We call upon developed countries to fill outstanding gaps in means of implementation for mitigation and adaptation actions in developing countries.

60. We welcome Brazil's candidacy to host COP30 as the year 2025 will be key to the very future of the global response to climate change.

61. We further urge developed countries to honour their commitments, including of mobilizing the USD 100bn per annum by 2020 and through 2025 to support climate action in developing countries. In addition, importance of doubling adaptation finance by 2025 from the base of 2019 is also key in order to implement adaptation actions. Moreover, we look forward to setting up an ambitious New Collective Quantified goal, prior to 2025, as per the needs and priorities of developing countries. This will require enhanced financial support from developed countries that is additional, grant-based and/or concessional, timely delivered, and adequate to take forward adaptation and

mitigation action in a balanced manner. This extends to support for the implementation of the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).

62. We acknowledge that the financial mechanisms and investments to support the implementation of environment and climate change programmes need to be enhanced, and increased momentum to reform these financial mechanisms, as well as the multilateral development banks and international financial institutions is required. In this regard, we call on the shareholders of these institutions to take decisive action to scale-up climate finance and investments in support towards achieving the SDGs related to climate change and make their institutional arrangements fit for purpose.

63. We oppose trade barriers including those under the pretext of tackling climate change imposed by certain developed countries and reiterate our commitment to enhancing coordination on these issues. We underline that measures taken to tackle climate change and biodiversity loss must be WTO-consistent and must not constitute a means of arbitrary or unjustifiable discrimination or a disguised restriction on international trade and should not create unnecessary obstacles to international trade. Any such measure must be guided by the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities (CBDR-RC), in the light of different national circumstances. We express our concern at any WTO inconsistent discriminatory measure that will distort international trade, risk new trade barriers and shift burden of addressing climate change and biodiversity loss to BRICS members and developing countries.

64. We commit to intensify our efforts towards improving our collective capacity for global pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response, and strengthening our ability to fight back any such pandemics in the future collectively. In this regard, we consider it important to continue our support to the BRICS Virtual Vaccine Research and Development Center. We look forward to the holding of the High-Level Meeting on Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness and Response to be to be held on 20th September 2023 at the United Nations General Assembly and we call for an outcome that will mobilise political will and continued leadership on this matter.

65. We recognize the fundamental role of primary health care as a key foundation for Universal Health Care and health system's resilience, as well as on prevention and response to health emergencies. We believe that the High-level meeting on Universal

Health Coverage (UHC) to be held at the UN General Assembly in September 2023 would be a critical step for mobilizing the highest political support for UHC as the cornerstone to achieving SDG 3 (good health and well-being). We reiterate our support for the international initiatives, with the leadership of WHO, on addressing tuberculosis (TB) and look forward to actively engaging in the United Nations High-Level Meeting on TB in New York in September this year and encourage an assertive political declaration.

66. Taking into account national legislation and priorities of BRICS countries, we commit to continue cooperation in traditional medicine in line with previous meetings of the BRICS Health Ministers and their outcomes, as well as the BRICS High-Level Forum on the Traditional Medicine.

67. We note that BRICS countries have significant experience and potential in the field of nuclear medicine and radio pharmaceutics. We welcome the decision to establish a BRICS Working Group on Nuclear Medicine to expand cooperation in this area.

68. We welcome South Africa hosting BRICS Science Technology and Innovation (STI) Steering Committee meetings throughout 2023 as the main coordination mechanism to manage and ensure the successful hosting of BRICS STI activities. We call on the Steering Committee to undertake a strategic review of the thematic focus areas and organisational framework of the BRICS STI Working Group to ensure better alignment as appropriate with current BRICS policy priorities. We commend South Africa for hosting the 8th BRICS Young Scientist Forum and the concurrent organization of the 6th BRICS Young Innovator Prize. We commend the success of the BRICS STI Framework Programme in continuing to connect scientists through the funding of an impressive portfolio of research projects between BRICS countries. We also appreciate the efforts of the BRICS STI Framework Programme Secretariat in facilitating a discussion to launch in 2024 a Call for Proposals for BRICS STI Flagship Projects. We recognize the progress achieved in the implementation of the BRICS Action Plan for Innovation Cooperation (2021-24). In this regard we encourage further actions to be taken on initiatives such as the BRICS Techtransfer (the BRICS Centers for Technology Transfer) and the iBRICS Network (the dedicated BRICS innovation network). We also welcome more actions to be taken, especially by the BRICS STIEP (Science, Technology and Innovation Entrepreneurship Partnership) Working Group, in the fields of

innovation and entrepreneurship, for example, through support for the BRICS Incubation Training and Network, the BRICS Technology Transfer Training Program, and the BRICS Startup Forum.

69. We congratulate our Space agencies for successfully implementing the BRICS RSSC agreement by exchanging of BRICS Satellite Constellation data samples; holding of the 1st BRICS RSSC Application Forum in November 2022; convening of the 2nd meeting of BRICS Space Cooperation Joint Committee in July 2023 and continue to successfully implement the BRICS Constellation Pilot Projects. We encourage the BRICS Space agencies to continue enhancing the level of cooperation in remote sensing satellite data sharing and applications, so as to provide data support for the economic and social development of the BRICS countries.

70. While emphasising the fundamental role of access to energy in achieving SDGs and noting the outlined risks to energy security we highlight the need for enhanced cooperation among the BRICS countries as major producers and consumers of energy products and services. We believe that energy security, access and energy transitions are important and need to be balanced. We welcome the strengthening of cooperation and increasing investment in the supply chains for energy transitions and note the need to fully participate in the clean energy global value chain. We further commit to increase the resilience of energy systems including critical energy infrastructure, advancing the use of clean energy options, promoting research and innovation in energy science and technology. We intend to address energy security challenges by incentivising energy investment flows. We share a common view, taking into consideration national priorities and circumstances, on the efficient use of all energy sources, namely: renewable energy, including biofuels, hydropower, fossil fuels, nuclear energy and hydrogen produced on the basis of zero and low emission technologies and processes, which are crucial for a just transition towards more flexible, resilient and sustainable energy systems. We recognise the role of fossil fuels in supporting energy security and energy transition. We call for collaboration amongst the BRICS countries on technological neutrality and further urge for the adoption of common, effective, clear, fair and transparent standards and rules for assessment of emissions, elaboration of compatible taxonomies of sustainable projects as well as accounting of carbon units. We welcome joint research and technical cooperation within the BRICS Energy Research Cooperation Platform, and commend the holding of the BRICS Youth Energy Summit and other related activities.

71. We remain committed to strengthening BRICS cooperation on population matters, because the dynamics of population age structure change, and pose challenges as well as opportunities, particularly with regard to women's rights, youth development, disability rights, employment and the future of work, urbanisation, migration and ageing.

72. We reiterate the importance of BRICS cooperation in the field of disaster management. We stress the importance of disaster risk reduction measures towards building resilient communities and the exchange of information on best practices, adoption of climate change adaptation initiatives, and integration of indigenous knowledge systems and improving investments in early warning systems and disaster resilient infrastructure. We further stress the need for holistic inclusivity in disaster risk reduction by mainstreaming disaster risk reduction in government and community-based planning. We encourage expanding intra-BRICS cooperation through joint activities for enhancing the capacities of national emergency systems.

73. We agree with the importance placed by South Africa as BRICS Chair on Transforming Education and Skills Development for the Future. We support the principle of facilitating mutual recognition of academic qualifications amongst BRICS countries to ensure mobility of skilled professionals, academics, and students and recognition of qualifications obtained in each other's countries subject to compliance of applicable domestic laws. We welcome concrete proposals made during the 10th Meeting of BRICS Ministers of Education focusing on critical areas in education and training such as entrepreneurship development, skills for the changing world, out-of-school youth, climate change, labour market intelligence, early childhood development and university global ranking. We appreciate the progress on education and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) cooperation, in particular, the operationalization of the BRICS TVET Cooperation Alliance which focuses on strengthening communication and dialogue and early finalisation of the Charter of the BRICS TVET Cooperation Alliance thereby promoting substantial cooperation in TVET, integrating TVET with industry.

74. We commit to strengthening skills exchanges and cooperation amongst BRICS countries. We support the digital transformation in education and TVET space, as each BRICS country is domestically committed to ensure education accessibility and equity, and promote the development of quality education. We agree to explore

opportunities on BRICS digital education cooperative mechanisms, hold dialogues on digital education policies, share digital educational resources, build smart education systems, and jointly promote digital transformation of education in BRICS countries and to develop a sustainable education by strengthening the cooperation within BRICS Network University and other institution-to-institution initiatives in this area, including the BRICS University League. We welcome the BRICS Network University International Governing Board consideration to expand membership of the BRICS Network University to include more universities from the BRICS countries. We underscore the importance of sharing best practices on expanding access to holistic early childhood care and education to provide a better start in life for children within BRICS countries. We welcome the decision to facilitate exchanges within BRICS countries on equipping learners with skills fit for the future through multiple learning pathways.

Deepening People-to-People Exchanges

75. We reaffirm the importance of BRICS people-to-people exchanges in enhancing mutual understanding, friendship and cooperation. We appreciate the progress made under South Africa's Chairship in 2023, and including in the fields of media, culture, education, sports, arts, youth, civil society and academic exchanges, and acknowledge that people-to-people exchanges play an essential role in enriching our societies and developing our economies.

76. We recognise that youth is a driving force for accelerating the achievement of sustainable development goals. Leadership by young people is fundamental to accelerating a just transition premised on the principles of intergenerational solidarity, international cooperation, friendship, and societal transformation. A culture of entrepreneurship and innovation must be nurtured for the sustainable development of our youth. We reiterate the importance of the BRICS Youth Summit as a forum for meaningful engagement on youth matters and recognise its value as a coordinating structure for youth engagement in BRICS. We welcome the finalisation of the BRICS Youth Council Framework.

77. We commend the successful holding of the BRICS Business Forum. On its 10th anniversary, we welcome the BRICS Business Council's self-reflection with a focus on milestones achieved and areas of improvement. We further welcome the intention of the BRICS Business Council to track intra-BRICS trade flows, identify areas where trade

performance has not met expectations and recommend solutions.

78. We acknowledge the critical role of women in economic development and commend the BRICS Women's Business Alliance. We recognise that inclusive entrepreneurship and access to finance for women would facilitate their participation in business ventures, innovation, and the digital economy. We welcome initiatives that will enhance agricultural productivity and access to land, technology, and markets for women farmers.

79. On its 15th anniversary, we recognise the value of BRICS Academic Forum as a platform for deliberations and discussions by leading BRICS academics on the issues confronting us today. The BRICS Think Tanks Council also celebrates 10 years of enhancing cooperation in research and capacity building among the academic communities of BRICS countries.

80. Dialogue among political parties of BRICS countries plays a constructive role in building consensus and enhancing cooperation. We note the successful hosting of BRICS Political Parties Dialogue in July 2023 and welcome other BRICS countries to host similar events in the future.

81. We reaffirm our commitments under all the instruments and Agreements signed and adopted by the Governments of the BRICS States on Cooperation in the Field of Culture and commit to operationalising the Action Plan (2022-2026) as a matter of urgency through the BRICS Working Group on Culture.

82. We commit to ensure the integration of culture into our national development policies, as a driver and an enabler for the achievement of the goals set out in the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We also reaffirm our commitment to promote culture and the creative economy as a global public good as adopted at the World Conference on Culture and Sustainable Development-MONDIACULT22.

83. We agree to support the protection, preservation, restoration and promotion of our cultural heritage, including both tangible and intangible heritage. We commit to take strong action to fight against illicit trafficking of our cultural property and encourage dialogue among culture and heritage stakeholders and commit to promote digitization of the culture and creative sectors by finding technologically innovative solutions and pushing for policies that transform ways in which cultural contents are

produced, disseminated, and accessed. We reaffirm our commitment to support participation of cultural enterprises, museums and institutions in international exhibitions and festivals, hosted by BRICS countries and extend mutual assistance in the organisation of such events.

84. We welcome the establishment of a Joint Working Group on Sports to develop a BRICS Sport Cooperation Framework, during South Africa's Chairship in 2023. We look forward to the successful holding of the BRICS Games in October 2023 in South Africa. We commit to provide the necessary support for BRICS countries to participate in international sport competitions and meetings held in their own country in compliance with relevant rules**.**

85. We emphasize that all BRICS countries have rich traditional sport culture and agree to support each other in the promotion of traditional and indigenous sports among BRICS countries and around the world. We encourage our sport organizations to carry out various exchange activities both online and offline.

86. We commend the progress made by BRICS countries in promoting urban resilience including through the BRICS Urbanisation forum and appreciate the commitment to further strengthen inclusive collaboration between government and societies at all levels, in all BRICS countries in implementing the 2030 Agenda and promoting the localisation of the SDGs.

Institutional Development

87. We reiterate the importance of further enhancing BRICS solidarity and cooperation based on our mutual interests and key priorities, to further strengthen our strategic partnership.

88. We note with satisfaction the progress made on BRICS institutional development and stress that BRICS cooperation needs to embrace changes and keep abreast with the times. We shall continue to set clear priorities in our wide-ranging cooperation, on the basis of consensus, and make our strategic partnership more efficient, practical and results oriented. We task our Sherpas to continue discussions on a regular basis on BRICS institutional development, including on consolidation of cooperation.

89. We welcome the participation, at the invitation of South Africa as BRICS Chair, of

other EMDCs as "Friends of BRICS" in BRICS meetings below Summit-level and in the BRICS-Africa Outreach and BRICS Plus Dialogue during the XV BRICS Summit in Johannesburg in 2023.

90. We appreciate the considerable interest shown by countries of the global South in membership of BRICS. True to the BRICS Spirit and commitment to inclusive multilateralism, BRICS countries reached consensus on the guiding principles, standards, criteria and procedures of the BRICS expansion process.

91. We have decided to invite the Argentine Republic, the Arab Republic of Egypt, the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates to become full members of BRICS from 1 January 2024.

92. We have also tasked our Foreign Ministers to further develop the BRICS partner country model and a list of prospective partner countries and report by the next Summit.

93. Brazil, Russia, India and China commend South Africa's BRICS Chairship in 2023 and express their gratitude to the government and people of South Africa for holding the XV BRICS Summit.

94. Brazil, India, China and South Africa extend their full support to Russia for its BRICS Chairship in 2024 and the holding of the XVI BRICS Summit in the city of Kazan, Russia.

(ii) BRICS Parliamentary Forum – Heads of State Joint Declaration Statement 27 – 28 September 2023.

JOINT DECLARATION STATEMENT

ON THE OCCASION OF THE 9TH BRICS PARLIAMENTARY FORUM JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA, 27-28 SEPTEMBER 2023

Preamble

We, the leaders and representatives of the National Congress of the Federative Republic of Brazil, the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, the Parliament of the Republic of India, the National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China, and the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa, convened for the 9th BRICS Parliamentary Forum (PF) meeting in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 27 to 28 September 2023 under the theme of "Harnessing Inclusive Multilateralism and Parliamentary Diplomacy to Deepen BRICS and Africa Partnership for Accelerated Implementation of the Africa Free-Trade Agreement."

We appreciate the friendly relations among the BRICS member countries, which are based on the spirit of mutual respect and understanding, sovereign equality, solidarity, openness, inclusiveness, strengthened collaboration, and consensus.

We recall the First BRICS Parliamentary Forum (PF) held in Moscow, Russia, on 8 June 2015, where the Parties declared their intention to strengthen and promote contacts among BRICS parliaments at the leadership level of chambers, committees, and groups of parliamentarians; perform inter-parliamentary exchanges and hold regular expert consultations; and create and develop new inter-parliamentary cooperation mechanisms.

We further recall the 2016 Jaipur Declaration, in which BRICS Women Parliamentarians expressed commitment to intensify mutual cooperation and strengthen partnership in sustainable development, economic growth, social inclusion, and environmental protection.

We also remember the call to strengthen BRICS parliamentary exchanges, highlighted in the Johannesburg Declaration of the 10th BRICS Summit held in South Africa from 25 to 27 July 2018.

We reiterate the decision of the Fourth BRICS Parliamentary Forum held in Geneva on the margins of the 139th Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Assembly to formalise the establishment

of the BRICS Parliamentary Forum through the adoption of a Memorandum of Understanding on the BRICS Parliamentary Forum.

We congratulate the Government of the Republic of South Africa for the successful hosting of the XV BRICS Summit held in Sandton, South Africa, from 22 to 24 August 2023 under the theme: BRICS and Africa: Partnership for Mutually Accelerated Growth, Sustainable Development and Inclusive Multilateralism.

We note with appreciation the resolutions agreed upon at the XV BRICS Summit under the following five broad thematic areas of BRICS and Africa partnership: (a) developing a partnership towards an equitable Just Transition, (b) transforming education and skills development for the future, (c) unlocking opportunities through the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), (d) strengthening post-pandemic socio-economic recovery and the attainment of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development, and (e) strengthening multilateralism, including working towards real reform of global governance institutions and strengthening the meaningful participation of women in peace processes.

We appreciate, in particular, the opportunities the AfCFTA holds for BRICS trade partnerships in Africa, the continent's development and integration, the strengthening of South-South cooperation, and the role our parliaments can play in these efforts. Also, we appreciate the progress made towards the AFCFTA Protocol on Women and Youth in Trade.

We welcome the invitation extended by the XV BRICS Summit to the Argentine Republic, the Arab Republic of Egypt, the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates to become full members of BRICS from 1 January 2024.

We remain convinced of the importance of inter-parliamentary dialogue to develop multifaceted cooperation within BRICS and actively promote mutual interests in the international arena.

Therefore, we resolve as follows:

1. We value the presence and active participation of stakeholders from diverse sectors who graciously shared their valuable expertise and insights with us. As the elected representatives of our respective parliaments, we are resolute in our commitment to fostering these meaningful people-to-people exchanges within the realm of the BRICS Parliamentary Forum. We strongly reaffirm the critical importance of BRICS inter-parliamentary dialogue in enhancing and fostering contacts across parliamentary chambers and committees, facilitating fruitful inter-parliamentary exchanges. In addition, we recognise the value of utilising modern information technologies to establish a dedicated section on the websites for the BRICS inter-parliamentary dimension, thereby encouraging seamless access to relevant information and promoting enhanced collaboration among our esteemed counterparts.

2. We call for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in its three dimensions – economic, social and environmental – in a balanced and integrated manner by mobilising the means required to implement the 2030 Agenda. We further

reaffirm the call for donor countries to honour their Official Development Assistance (ODA) commitments and to facilitate capacity building and the transfer of technology along with additional development resources to developing countries, in line with the national policy objectives of recipients.

3. We reiterate the commitment of BRICS countries to strengthening multilateralism based on upholding international law, including the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations (UN) as its indispensable cornerstone, and the central role of the UN in an international system in which sovereign states cooperate to maintain peace and security, advance sustainable development, ensure the promotion and protection of democracy, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, and promoting cooperation based on the spirit of solidarity, mutual respect, justice and equality.

4. Through parliamentary diplomacy, we aim to enhance our strategic partnership for the benefit of our people, promoting peace, a more representative and fairer international order, a reinvigorated and reformed multilateral system, sustainable development, and inclusive growth.

5. We agree, respecting our respective domestic constitutional mandates, to facilitate the implementation of the XV BRICS Summit resolutions within our individual parliaments and among our parliamentary stakeholders to further strengthen the impact of BRICS, notably in terms of the opportunities presented by the AfCFTA for BRICS trade partnerships, the development and integration of Africa, and the strengthening of South-South cooperation. We further intend to actively promote and prioritise these opportunities for the benefit of our people.

6. We also stress the importance of BRICS parliamentary exchanges of Women Parliamentarians.

7. We remain resolute that BRICS Parliamentary cooperation is an integral element of BRICS cooperation.

8. We adopt the "Memorandum of Understanding on the BRICS Parliamentary Forum" to define the general cooperative strategy of the legislative organs of the Federative Republic of Brazil, the Russian Federation, the Republic of India, the People’s Republic of China, and the Republic of South Africa. This will enable us to coordinate efforts aimed at developing and strengthening the inter-parliamentary relations of BRICS Member States concerning issues of common interest.

9. We further emphasize that signing the MoU on BRICS Parliamentary Forum would further contribute to the formalization and/or institutionalization of the parliamentary dimension of the BRICS cooperation manifesting the Forum as a veritable hub of parliamentary democracy in the Global South.

10. We look forward to welcoming, at the appropriate time, the parliaments of the newly invited countries of BRICS to join the BRICS Parliamentary Forum.

11. We appreciate the attendance of various delegations representing the parliamentary community in Africa, including regional parliamentary assemblies in Africa, national parliaments of the Southern African Development Community, and provincial legislatures of the Republic of South Africa.

12. We congratulate the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa for the successful hosting of the 9th BRICS Parliamentary Forum and express our gratitude for the hospitality received from the Parliament and people of South Africa.

13. We express our continued support of the South African Parliament's BRICS Parliamentary Forum Chairship for 2023.

14. We extend our support to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation for their BRICS Parliamentary Forum Chairship in 2024.

(iii) BRICS Parliamentary Forum – Memorandum of Understanding.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING ON THE

BRICS PARLIAMENTARY FORUM

Preamble

We, the respective representatives of –

The National Congress of the Federative Republic of Brazil, the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, the Parliament of the Republic of India, the National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China, and the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa, herein after referred to as "the Parties";

Considering the friendly relations that exist among the Federative Republic of Brazil, the Russian Federation, the Republic of India, the People's Republic of China, and the Republic of South Africa, particularly in terms of the BRICS partnership;

Recalling the First BRICS Parliamentary Forum held in Moscow, Russia, on 8 June 2015 where the Parties declared their intention to strengthen and promote contacts at the leadership level of chambers, committees and groups of parliamentarians; perform inter-parliamentary exchanges and hold regular expert consultations; and create and develop new inter-parliamentary cooperation mechanisms;

Further recalling the 2016 *Jaipur Declaration*, in which BRICS Women Parliamentarians expressed commitment to intensify mutual cooperation and strengthen partnership on the dimensions of sustainable development, economic growth, social inclusion and environmental protection;

Noting the call to strengthen BRICS parliamentary exchanges, as emphasised in the *Johannesburg Declaration* of the 10th BRICS Summit, held in South Africa from 25 to 27 July 2018;

Guided by the BRICS Spirit of mutual respect and understanding, sovereign equality, solidarity, democracy, openness, inclusiveness, strengthened collaboration and consensus.

Convinced of the importance of inter-parliamentary dialogue to develop multifaceted cooperation within the BRICS and to actively promote mutual interests;

Founded on a common willingness and effort to cooperate in finding solutions to similar challenges that the Parties may face;

Hereby resolve in accordance with the intention of the Parties to establish the BRICS Parliamentary Forum as follows:

Article One
Objective

The objective of the BRICS Parliamentary Forum is

i. Without creating new international legal obligations for the Parties, to define the general cooperative strategy of the legislative organs of the Federative Republic of Brazil, the Russian Federation, the Republic of India, the People's Republic of China and the Republic of South Africa.
ii. To coordinate efforts aimed at developing and strengthening the inter-parliamentary relations of BRICS Member States concerning issues of common interest.

Article Two
Commitments and Implementation

The Parties commit to make every reasonable effort to:

i. Strengthen the BRICS Parliamentary Forum;
ii. Cooperate in the establishment of exchange programs to promote mutual understanding of the Parties' culture and legal systems through inter-parliamentary exchanges on matters of mutual interest;
iii. Coordinate parliamentary diplomacy among the BRICS countries, as appropriate;
iv. host annual meetings of Presiding Officers or more members of the Parties on the basis of rotation in each of the respective countries;
v. Within their budgets, and in accordance with the principle of reciprocity, to provide resources for the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding.

Article Three

Responsibilities

Notwithstanding anything contained in this Memorandum of Understanding, Parties shall not bear any responsibilities or liabilities in the event that certain provisions cannot be implemented. The present Memorandum of Understanding does not entail any legal and financial obligations for any of the Parties.

Article Four

Amendments

The Parties may, by written **c**onsent, amend this Memorandum of Understanding.

Article Five

Resolution of Disagreements

Any disagreements between the Parties that arise during the implementation of the present Memorandum of Understanding or in connection with it, will be resolved through consultations and negotiations.

Article Six

Effectiveness

The Memorandum of Understanding will become effective on the day of the last signature of the respective Parties and will remain effective for as long as the Parties consider it appropriate.

Article Seven

Withdrawal

The legislative organ of any BRICS Member State that withdraws from BRICS, ceases to be a Party to this Memorandum of Understanding.

Signed at , on 2023, in five original copies in Portuguese, Russian, English, Chinese,and Hindi each being equally authentic. However, in case of divergence in interpretation, English text should prevail over other languages.

FOR AND ON BEHALF OF THE NATIONAL CONGRESS OF THE FEDERATIVE REPUBLIC OF BRAZIL

…… …….

FOR AND ON BEHALF OF THE FEDERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

……

FOR AND ON BEHALF OF THE PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA

……

FOR AND ON BEHALF OF THE NATIONAL PEOPLE'S CONGRESS OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

……

FOR AND ON BEHALF OF THE PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

…… ……..

(d) Report of the 66th Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Accra 30 Sep – 6 October 2023.

PARLIAMENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND PROTOCOL DIVISION
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DELEGATION REPORT OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN DELEGATION 66TH COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION (CPC) IN ACCRA GHANA , 30 SEPTEMBER TO 6 OCTOBER 2023

1. Introduction

The Parliament of the Republic of South Africa and the Provincial Legislatures participated in the proceedings of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association organized by the Parliament of Ghana, Accra from the 30 September to the 06 October 2023. The conference was organized under the theme " ***The Commonwealth Charter 10 years on: Values and Principles for Parliaments to Uphold***". 2023 marked the 10th anniversary of the Commonwealth Charter which outlines the principles and values of the Commonwealth.

The conference was hosted by the Parliament of Ghana from n Accra, Ghana was attended by over 600 Parliamentarians and Parliamentary Clerks representing Parliaments and Legislatures from across the Commonwealth.

The South African delegation was led by the Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces, Hon A Masondo and the Speaker of the National Assembly Hon N Mapisa-Nqakula as well as the Speakers of the Provincial Legislatures which included the following. Equally, the administrative component of the South African delegation was led by the Secretary to Parliament, Mr Xolile George and the various Secretaries to the following Provincial Legislatures;

- **Parliament of the Republic of South Africa**
- **Limpopo Provincial Legislature**
- **Free State Provincial Legislature**
- **Gauteng Provincial Legislature**
- **Eastern Cape Provincial Legislature**
- **North West Provincial Legislature**
- **Northern Cape Provincial Legislature**
- **Western Cape Provincial Legislature**
- **Kwazulu Natal Provincial Legislature**
- **Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature**

2. Messages of Solidarity Arising from the Official Opening Ceremony

The 66th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference was officially opened the President of the Republic of Ghana. The Vice-Patron of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), His Excellency Nana Akufo-Addo, the President of Ghana, urged Commonwealth Parliamentarians to work together to uphold democratic principles and the values of the Commonwealth as he opened the 66th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference (66th CPC) for over 600 delegates in Accra, Ghana. The CPA Vice-Patron and President of Ghana said: “The world is still experiencing the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, which compelled us to work together to survive.

As countries exit the doldrums of the pandemic, the world has been hit again with a series of geo-political crises, including the Russia-Ukraine conflict and the recent coup d’états in some parts of Africa. These crises are a threat to the foundation of democratic values and institutions, and a clarion call for leaders to work together to address this new challenge. It is a call on all Parliaments to act. He urged Commonwealth Parliamentarians to reflect deeply on the goal of the values and principles in the Commonwealth Charter and focus discussions on the goal of attaining and maintaining the democratic ethos of this noble community. He further commend the Commonwealth for its commitment to the rule of law, open and tolerant societies, equality for all and respect for fundamental human rights and freedoms.”

Delegates to the 66th CPC were also welcomed by the CPA President (2022-2023), Rt Hon. Alban Bagbin, MP, Speaker of the Parliament of Ghana who said at the opening ceremony: He welcomed all Commonwealth Parliamentarians to Accra for the 66th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference which brings together delegates on a single platform to share their experiences and good practices as well as promoting the values of the Commonwealth. This includes a commitment to the highest standards and principles of democratic governance and parliamentary practice. Democracy will remain elusive if leaders are not deliberate in efforts to ensure the independence of Parliaments. He further argued that Parliaments can be strengthened if we empower oversight Committees to effectively review government actions, budgets and policies. These can

strengthen Parliaments through civic education programs that inform citizens about their rights and the need to protect parliamentary democracy.

The CPA Secretary-General, Stephen Twigg also welcomed delegates to the 66th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference, in Accra, and thank the CPA Ghana Branch and Parliament of Ghana, and in particular the CPA President and CPA Vice-Chairperson for their generosity in hosting this year's conference. He appreciated the fact that conference offers an invaluable opportunity to come together and share best practice in addressing common issues and strengthening Commonwealth values, as the theme on the Commonwealth Charter attests. The values within the Charter, and the vital role the CPA has in sustaining and reinforcing them, are as relevant today as they were when they were originally signed in 2013. Converging on the tenth anniversary of the Commonwealth Charter, provides delegates with an opportunity to review the relevance of its values and principles, as well as assessing how the Commonwealth is progressing against these pledges. Commitments to democracy, human rights and good governance are cornerstones of the CPA's work, and these Charter principles play a part in everything parliamentarians do as an Association

3. Discussion and Analysis from Workshops

The conference deliberated on various thematic areas which included the following topics;

- Workshop A: The threat of terrorism to statehood: the role of Parliament
- Gender Quotas in Parliament - a means to an end?
- What does sustainable trade and economic development mean for small jurisdictions?
- Youth Roundtable: Role of the Commonwealth in international security and peacebuilding
- Environmental approaches in tackling energy poverty
- 20 Years of the Latimer House Principles on the Separation of Powers: Is it working?
- The Commonwealth Charter: A Charter for all Human Rights, or just some?

- E-Parliaments: An effective mechanism for intersectional diversity and equitable public engagement?

During the deliberations of workshops at conference participants on various recommendations that encouraged Parliaments to collaborate with stakeholders to improve governance architecture and ensure equitable distribution of resources; benchmark best practices for the involvement of Parliaments in combatting terrorism; perform their oversight responsibilities to ensure accountability; make appropriate legislation to combat cross-border terrorism; and address the root cause of terrorism.

Equally on gender related topics it was reiterated that Parliaments of the Commonwealth, with less than 30% women Members, should implement a percentage of gender quotas through legislative means or via political party candidate selections.

Delegates also encouraged Ccommonwealth's Parliaments in the smallest jurisdictions should collaborate to promote fair and sustainable international trade.

4. REPORT OF THE COMMONWEALTH WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS (CWP) BUSINESS MEETING

The CWP held its business meeting on the 2nd of October 2023. The meeting was opened by the Chairperson of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians, Hon. Dr Zainab Gimba, MP, Member of the House of Representatives, National Assembly of Nigeria who welcomed delegates and updated on the CWP activities delivered since the 65th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada in August 2022. The CWP Chairperson also pledged to renew the effort to increase women's representation and political participation in Parliaments across the Commonwealth.

Delegates debated the time and format of future CWP Business meetings and conferences as well as the methods for reporting of CWP activities through the Regional Secretariats, with a motion passed by delegates containing further recommendations for

the CWP Steering Committee. (more time to be allocated for CWP Business meetings, CWP reports be distributed to Members prior to Business meetings, themes are developed to guide annual activities of the CWP, and new Members receive an induction into the CWP).

The CWP Steering Committee met in Ghana representing the seven of the nine CPA Regions: Africa; Asia; Australia; British Isles and the Mediterranean; Canada; Caribbean, Americas and the Atlantic; and Pacific.

The CWP Steering Committee elected Hon. Kate Doust, MLC from the Parliament of Western Australia as the new CWP Vice-Chairperson for a one-year term and agreed on the establishment of a new Subcommittee to examine a future work programme for the network.

Members were encouraged to register for courses offered by the CPA in order to enhance their capacity.

It was also reported that a Memorandum of Understanding had been entered into between the CPA and UN Women and the UN Women was in attendance at the conference.

It further reported that the CWP Work Programme and Budget for 2024 was £90000 budget with each region allocated £10000 for one programme. This was reported to be inadequate and regions were encouraged to lobby for funds with partner organisations to supplement amount made available. It was also reported that regions had not claimed for the utilization of the funds made available for the CWP programmes.

It was also reported that there were two activities dedicated to women in the conference programme.

The first was a discussion on “Ending discriminatory laws: celebrating the gains” which was held after the CWP Business meeting with UN Women. Secondly it was reported that one of the workshops was dedicated to the gender equalities and thirdly, a report of the CWP would also be tabled in the General Assembly on 5 October 2023.

During the deliberations, the delegates expressed their unhappiness in the manner in which the report was tabled as it did not cover the work of all the branches and sub-branches of the CWP. It was further proposed that reports should not be limited to issues of gender parity, but all the work done. In addition, it was recommended that regional representatives must submit information to the CWP Executive, and report of the CWP must be packaged and shared in advance and not just be reported verbally.

It was further recommended that there needed to be a review of the manner in which the CWP does its work. Proposals were tabled for the business meeting to take three hours and to direct the Secretariat to implement such a decision should it be agreed to.

It was also recommended that there must be an induction of CWP on rules or procedure of the parliaments and for the CWP to track resolutions of the conference.

A motion was tabled for the CWP report to be submitted to the CWP regions two weeks prior to the CPC Conference. Regional secretariat must be held to account for the work of the region. The report of regions must feed into the report of the CWP. Prior to coming to the CPC information must be circulated on the report of the CWP.

It was also agreed that small branches must be given an adequate amount of time to discuss women issues.

It was also recommended that the CWP must develop a theme that will put the regions together for each year on the work that must be done.

The meeting decided that there must be a meeting of the regions with the steering committee and inform them of the process going forward.

4.1 Workshop A: The threat of terrorism to statehood: the role of Parliament (CPA Ghana Branch Host Topic)

The workshop explored the threats of terrorist extremism to democracies and statehood, shedding light on the multifaceted challenges it poses across West Africa and their

implications for security and stability. It further delved into the role that Parliaments must assume in combatting this menace to safeguard the security and integrity of states.
Panellists including the Ghana Minister for National Security and a Commandant from the Ghana Defence College underscored the role that Parliaments must play in combatting these threats: promoting good governance; ensuring accountability; sensitising the public through awareness campaigns and education; fostering national cohesion and unity; improving the quality of investigative mechanisms by funding security institutions; enacting laws to protect citizens; promoting collaborative endeavours between governments and civil society organisations (CSOs); allocating adequate resources to security organisations to counter terrorism; and driving accountability by ensuring efficient use of resources by security agencies.

At the end of the session, participants recommended that:
Parliaments should collaborate with stakeholders to improve governance architecture and ensure equitable distribution of resources; benchmark best practices for the involvement of Parliaments in combatting terrorism; perform their oversight responsibilities to ensure accountability; make appropriate legislation to combat cross-border terrorism; and address the root cause of terrorism.

4.1.1 Workshop B: Gender Quotas in Parliament - a means to an end? (Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians topic)

The workshop evaluated the effectiveness of gender quotas in Parliaments. Despite progress made in many areas, women's representation in Parliaments remains inadequate. Gender quotas have emerged as a promising strategy to address this disparity for an equitable distribution of power and influence.
Two Members from Bangladesh and Sierra Leone outlined the efforts in their Parliaments to achieve gender equality including constitutional amendments and proportional representation as well as some of the barrier facing women such as generational issues. The journey to achieving gender equality requires dedication, funding, legislative support and political will. The UN Women representative noted that women's representation is far

from equal and intimated that there are several instances where a quota system may be passed, yet not implemented due to certain barriers. At the current rate of progress, gender parity in Parliaments would not be reached in national Legislatures before 2063 globally if further action was not taken.

The recommendation was unanimously endorsed by workshop delegates that:
Parliaments of the Commonwealth, with less than 30% women Members, should implement a percentage of gender quotas through legislative means or via political party candidate selections.

4.1.2 Workshop C: What does sustainable trade and economic development mean for small jurisdictions? (CPA Small Branches topic)

The workshop explored what sustainable trade and economic development means for small jurisdictions as well as the challenges and opportunities they face in promoting sustainable economic growth through international trade. It was discussed that most small jurisdictions vary in size and population thereby presenting unique challenges faced by each in terms of global markets, infrastructure, market access and regulatory barriers.
Members from Jamaica, Malta, The Gambia and Fiji outlined their experiences of sustainable trade and development and emphasised that economic development requires a multi-faceted approach that meets the needs of small jurisdictions and finding innovative ways to use their strength and ability to be agile. The concept of sustainable trade was also seen as a critical feature in minimizing poverty in small jurisdictions, and sometimes smaller jurisdictions are barred from entering international markets due low volumes of production.
Lowering trade barriers to promote economic development, promoting gender equality, an active private sector, developing transportation links of small jurisdictions to the international market, balancing economic growth and environmental diversification as well as social equity were also discussed as some of the factors to promote and improve sustainable trade and economic development.

The delegates at the workshop unanimously endorsed that the Commonwealth's Parliaments in the smallest jurisdictions should collaborate to promote fair and sustainable international trade.

4.1.3 Workshop D: Youth Roundtable: Role of the Commonwealth in international security and peacebuilding (Youth topic)

This workshop took the form of a youth roundtable with youth participants invited from a number of Ghanaian youth organisations. The workshop focused on how the Commonwealth can address the issue of international security and peacebuilding and Members of Parliament from Australia Federal, the United Kingdom and Guyana provided insight into their experiences. With 1.2 billion of the world's population made up of youth aged between 15 and 24 years, it was acknowledged that the youth are often ignored in decision-making and policy formulation, yet they bear the brunt of the effects of climate change and insecurity. It was also recognised that the growth of information technology in the world coupled with more people turning to social media platforms, many young people need more protection online and measures should be in place to tackle cyberbullying. The representative from the Ghana National Peace Council explained that Ghana has a peacebuilding mechanism that helps resolve conflict and encouraged its adoption by other countries.

During the Q&A session, many young people expressed frustration with youth unemployment levels and the sidelining of youth in decision making, however, the panellists encouraged youth participants to go through the appropriate channels for redress.

The workshop delegates unanimously endorsed the following recommendation:

Commonwealth Parliamentarians should champion peacebuilding initiatives, actively involve youth and collaborate across the Commonwealth network, in order to bolster the Commonwealth's role in international security for a more peaceful, secure future.

4.1.4 Workshop E: Environmental approaches in tackling energy poverty

The workshop heard from presenters from Kenya, India Union and a UK Government agency, the Crown Agents on the implementation of clean energy and facilitating the adoption of biofuels. Commonwealth Parliamentarians have a key role to play as legislators, scrutineers and representatives to help drive this agenda.

It was outlined that India is developing policies based on five key enablers: energy availability, accessibility, affordability, sustainability and efficiency. India has developed schemes in tackling energy poverty, such as Saubhagya and Ujjwala, and boasts of the largest solar park in the world. However, the presenter from Kenya remarked that it is the responsibility of both government and citizens to tackle energy poverty. A major challenge remains the unwillingness of communities in rural areas to transition from fossil fuel to clean energy as charcoal continues to be a cheaper option. Some solutions that have been initiated are rural electrification, diversification of electricity sources, creation of a National Energy Policy, compulsory use of solar for water heating systems, and community sensitisation.

The following recommendation was endorsed unanimously by workshop delegates that:

Parliamentarians across the Commonwealth must seek to ensure there is secure, reliable, efficient, affordable and environmentally sustainable energy provision available to all.

4.1.5 Workshop F: 20 Years of the Latimer House Principles on the Separation of Powers: Is it working?

This workshop recognised the role of the CPA in drafting the original 'Commonwealth Latimer House Principles on the Separation of Powers' along with other Commonwealth organisations, but also outlined that all Commonwealth jurisdictions have a role in implementing them.

Panellists from Trinidad and Tobago, Malaysia and Australia outlined how their Parliaments implement the separation of powers and the challenges that it can bring. It was recognised that during the COVID-19 pandemic, some Parliaments enacted

procedures in contravention of the separation of powers. It was suggested that a Parliamentary Service Act could be introduced as had been proposed in Malaysia. The presenter from Derby University spoke about the principle of veto powers by the Executive that operates in several Commonwealth jurisdictions and whether this promotes democracy or is antithetical to it.

4.1.5 Workshop G: The Commonwealth Charter: A Charter for all Human Rights, or just some?

The workshop deliberated how Parliamentarians and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) could promote and uphold human rights values in the Commonwealth. Discussions led by Members from KwaZulu-Natal, Turks and Caicos Islands, Scotland, the Commonwealth Equality Network and the Ghana Human Rights and Justice Commission highlighted gender equality, protection of the rights of LGBT+ persons, capacity-building, disability and refugees' rights. CPA Members were encouraged to promote human rights legislation and policies in their respective jurisdictions. The need to respect cultural rights were, however, expressed by some participants.

The workshop endorsed the following recommendation:

The Commonwealth Charter should apply to all Commonwealth citizens irrespective of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age or political views and Parliaments should be actively working to promote the human rights of all.

4.1.7 Workshop H: E-Parliaments: An effective mechanism for intersectional diversity and equitable public engagement?

The workshop focused on how effective e-Parliaments would promote public engagement, enhance Parliaments' legitimacy, transparency and accountability, and how to best include marginalised groups. Parliamentarians from Trinidad and Tobago, New South Wales and Malaysia outlined the need for making Parliaments more accessible, particularly to persons with disabilities, and the need to mitigate the risk involved in integrating technology into the work of Parliament. During the COVID-19 pandemic, E-Parliaments helped to enhance public engagement in parliamentary processes through

digital methods. However, there continues to be a number of challenges for Parliaments regarding the best way to engage the public and in measuring and evaluating these activities. The workshop intimated that, although the role of technology is essential in promoting democracy, there are notable challenges such as the digital divide in society and data protection and privacy rights.

The workshop delegates unanimously endorsed the following recommendation:
Parliaments should embrace their representative function, both in the diversity of its membership and through engaging with the public, including via appropriate and innovative approaches.

5. 66th CPA General Assembly: Key Decisions

The CPA General Assembly, the Association's supreme authority, was constituted by delegates to the annual Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference.
The General Assembly also included a topical debate on food security and sustainability in the Commonwealth, with presenters from CPA Branches including Queensland, Tanzania, Canada, Isle of Man and Turks and Caicos Islands.

The key decisions and outcomes consisted of the following :

- CPA Status - Welcomed the legal and financial advice, and work undertaken so far to enable the CPA to be able to create a new non-charitable organisation later in 2023. Noted the legal and financial advice and work undertaken so far to enable the CPA to be able to create a new non-charitable organisation later in 2023. Agreed to create a new non-charitable organisation at the 66th CPA General Assembly. Welcomed and supported the renewed efforts to persuade the UK Government to agree to legislate to recognise the CPA as an international, interparliamentary organisation. Agreed to the pre-assessment stage of the benchmarks and instructs the CPA Secretariat to write out to all CPA Branches as soon as the 66th CPC has concluded. The communication from the CPA Secretariat should seek potential expressions of interest from Branches and include the assessment framework and methodology, and a series

of FAQs. A decision on the next stage will be made at the Mid-Year CPA Executive Committee in 2024.

- Annual Report - Noted the CPA Annual Report for the reporting period of January to December 2022.
- CPA Secretary-General's annual appraisal and application for a second and final term - Approved the recommendation of the CPA Executive Committee that the CPA Secretary-General is appointed for a second and final term, with this commencing on 1 August 2024, and ending on 1 August 2028.
- CPA Membership Report - Noted the suspended CPA Branches, and that Regional Representatives and CPA Branch and Regional Secretaries continue to be encouraged to engage with defaulting Branches in their respective Regions to settle outstanding Branch fees or to agree a payment plan as soon as possible. Noted the outstanding fees and agreed to the proposals for handling those Branches with arrears and for support to be provided to Branches as required. Acknowledged progress made to date in respect of reinstating previously suspended CPA Branches together with further action outlined during the meeting.
- CPA Future Membership Subscriptions - Agreed the proposal for membership fees to increase in line with the revised budget and the recommendation from the CPA Executive Committee, by 4% for both 2024 and 2025.
- Audited Report and Financial Statements: year end 31 December 2022 - Received the approved and signed CPA Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year to 31 December 2022.

- Budgets and Financial Management Reports - Received and approved the result for the period and the forecast financial result for the year and the year-end financial position at 31 December 2023 in respect of the following reports and budgets:
  (i) CPA Secretariat Financial Report: period ended 30 June 2023.
  (ii) CPA Secretariat Forecast 2023, Budget 2024 and Projection for 2025.

(iii) Working Capital Fund Financial Report: period ended 30 June 2023, Forecast 2023 and Budget 2024.

(iv) Conference Assistance Fund Financial Report: period ended 30 June 2023, Forecast 2023 and Budget 2024.

(v) 2024 CPA Headquarters Budget and provisional budget for 2025.

With regard to the Conference Assistance Fund, the meeting also noted the increased subventions for 2025 onwards.

- Internal Auditors - Agreed to reappoint internal auditors Sayer Vincent Auditors.
- Report of the Working Group on CPC Modalities - Approved and adopted the recommendations of the CPA Working Group on CPC Modalities as endorsed by the CPA Executive Committee in April 2023.
- Matters Submitted by CPA Branches to the 66th CPA General Assembly - Endorsed the motion submitted by the CPA Isle of Man Branch noting the work of the Commonwealth Association of Public Accounts Committees (CAPAC) and calling for strong and independent Public Accounts or equivalent Committees to sustain and promote the highest standards of public financial oversight, and encouraging Public Accounts Committees in the CPA to avail themselves of free membership of CAPAC in order to pursue these aims and to share best practice.
- Network Reports - Received and endorsed reports of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) Chairperson, Commonwealth Parliamentarians with Disabilities (CPwD) Chairperson and the CPA Small Branches Chairperson.
- Future CPC Conferences - Encouraged CPA Branches to put forward offers to host future Commonwealth Parliamentary Conferences in 2025 and subsequent years.
- Election of new Regional Representatives on the CPA Executive Committee - Elected, on valid nomination from CPA Regions, the prescribed number of incoming Regional Representatives on the CPA Executive Committee for each Region of the Association as submitted by CPA Regions.

(e) Report of the virtual standing Committees and Regional Woman's' Parliamentary Caucus (RWPC) Public Hearings ahead of the 54th Plenary Assembly of the SADC Parliamentary Forum 11 – 18 October 2023.

PARLIAMENT
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REPORT OF THE VIRTUAL STANDING COMMITTEES AND REGIONAL WOMENS' PARLIAMENTARY CAUCUS (RWPC) PUBLIC HEARINGS AHEAD OF THE 54TH PLENARY ASSEMBLY OF THE SADC PARLIAMENTARY FORUM

11 – 18 October 2023

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Southern African Development Community Parliamentary Forum (SADC PF) held its Standing Committee Session ahead of the 54th Plenary Assembly from 11 to 18 October 2023 under the theme “Amplifying Citizens’ Voices in Regional Integration in Southern Africa: Bridging the Engagement Gap by bringing Parliament to the People”. The Standing Committees each dealt with their respective internal business and held public hearings on various issues under their respective mandates. This is in line with the Forum’s policy decision that one of the two annual Committee Sessions should be a public hearing session in order to give citizens a platform to voice their opinions on regional issues of interest and concern on a regular basis.

Participating in this engagement supported Parliament’s mandates as follows:

- **Law-making and oversight**: Deliberations with the public on various thematic areas alerted MPs to various common challenges in SADC that can be addressed through legislative, and oversight means at the national level. In preparation for the 54th Plenary Assembly, these insights will be captured as resolutions for the Plenary Assembly’s consideration and adoption. Following the Plenary Assembly’s adoption of the Standing Committee and RWPC reports and resolutions, SADC national parliaments will be expected to facilitate their implementation.

1. INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the meeting: For each Standing Committee and the RWPC to:

- Meet on their internal business (considering and adopting the minutes for their previous meetings); and

- Hold public hearings on various thematic areas that fall under the mandate of each Committee.

Delegation Members:

- Hon. S. Mohai, MP – Standing Committee on Food, Agriculture, Natural Resources (FANR)
- Hon. N. Bilankulu, MP – Standing Committee on Gender Equality, Women Advancement and Youth Development (GEWAYD) and Regional Womens Parliamentary Caucus (RWPC)
- Hon. D. Moela, MP – Standing Committee on Human and Social Development and Special Programmes (HSDSP)
- Hon. D. Bergman, MP – Standing Committee on Democratisation, Governance and Human Rights (DGHR)
- Hon. V. Mente, MP – Standing Committee on Trade, Industry, Finance and Investment (TIFI) and RWPC

Delegation Secretariat:

- Dr N. Leibrandt-Loxton: Researcher – International Relations and Protocol Division (IRPD)
- Ms N. Skitasi-Nkayi: SADC PF Desk Officer – IRPD
- Ms A. Dlomo: IRPD Official

2. MEETING OUTCOMES

Each Standing Committee and the RWPC met based on the following agenda:

- Considering and adopting the minutes of their respective previous meetings.
- Holding virtual public hearings and receiving submissions from the public on issues relevant to each committee. The public hearings were further enriched through each committee receiving sectoral updates from the SADC Secretariat, enabling delegates to receive detailed information on the work done by the executive branch.
- Being requested to complete a questionnaire related to the development of the Forum's new strategic plan.

Following these meetings, each Standing Committee and the RWPC will prepare reports and resolutions for consideration and adoption by the 54th SADC PF Plenary Assembly, due to be held in November/December 2023.

Each committee engaged with the public and received presentations from the public on the following matters under their mandates:

2.1 RWPC

The RWPC received submissions from the public on various issues, including:

- Addressing challenges faced by rural women in accessing digital technology and the digital gender gap.
- Tackling discrimination and stigma among women, pregnant adolescent girls, young & single mothers.
- Youth unemployment, gender stereotypes and sexual harassment of women in the workplace
- Addressing the human rights challenges of women in informal cross-border trade.
- What unique challenges do rural women face and how can the digital gender gaps be bridged?
- Measures for the realisation of the rights of young people especially adolescent girls.
- A Safer World for All: Making anti-GBV Promises real in member states.

- Leaving No Woman Behind: Rural women and inequality.
- What strategies can be implemented to increase women's participation and representation in political processes, including electoral systems and quotas; and
- How can Parliament contribute to the promotion of smart education agendas?

After hearing all the submissions, the Members present discussed their thoughts and agreed that more effort is required to achieve equal gender representation in politics. They also discussed ways of revising the electoral systems that contribute to the challenge, as well as strategies to get political parties to nominate and equip more women for candidacy. It was concluded that these measures are essential to ensure the success of gender equality in political decision-making. Hon. Bilankulu suggested that issues affecting rural women need to be further explored, notably in terms of their limited land rights and access to services.

2.2 Standing Committee on GEWAYD

The Standing Committee on GEWAYD received submissions from the public on various issues, including:

- Addressing human rights economic challenges of women in informal cross border trade.
- What challenges exist in ensuring women and youth have equitable access to quality healthcare, including SRH services and what solutions can be explored?
- Child Trafficking & Children Right to Education.
- How can intersecting forms of discrimination and inequality faced by women and youth, particularly those from marginalised backgrounds be better recognised and addressed in policies and programmes?
- How can regional and continental economic policies, including the AfCFTA, be harnessed to promote women and youth's economic inclusion, entrepreneurship, access to financial resources and close the gender pay gap for marginalised women, young girls, and youth?
- A Call for Action Towards Climate Justice and Youth-SRHR: Case of the areas surrounding Lake Chirwa.
- Mechanisms for gender-responsive national budgets to address the needs and rights of women and youth.
- What mechanisms can be put in place to ensure that national budgets are gender-responsive, addressing the specific needs and rights of women and youth in Africa countries?
- Call for youth inclusive approaches in line with the African Charter on Youth.

Following the presentations, members engaged with the presenters to thank them for their insightful presentations. During these discussions, Hon. Bilankulu made various interventions to encourage the adoption of gender-responsive economic policies and legislation within SADC parliaments. She advocated for budgetary allocations that prioritize women and youth economic empowerment programs and for legislative reforms to eliminate barriers to youth political participation. Furthermore, she advocated for the inclusion of gender analysis and impact assessments in budget decision-making processes, as well as the creation of mechanisms for parliamentary scrutiny of budget proposals to ensure gender and youth considerations are prioritized. Additionally, Hon. Bilankulu encouraged the inclusion of marginalized groups in parliamentary structures, committees, and decision-making processes to ensure that policies and programs tailored to meet the needs of diverse and marginalized communities are developed. Finally, she proposed for parliamentary debates and discussions to be held specifically focused on intersectional discrimination and social justice.

2.3 Standing Committee on HSDSP

The Standing Committee on HSDSP received submissions from the public on various issues, including:

- Tackling the impact of climate-induced disasters on school dropouts within the SADC.
- Comprehensive Response to Educational Needs .
- Progress & Barriers to implementing KP Commitments at SADC level.
- Provision of SRHR Services for Vulnerable Groups During Humanitarian Crises especially in Rural Areas.
- Reducing Barriers that hinder learners from accessing quality education which increases class absenteeism rates and low performance.
- Ending Child Marriage.
- The role of Parliament in promoting smart education agendas for Life Skills Learning and Disease Prevention.
- How the domestication of the SADC Model Law on Gender-Based Violence at the national level be expedited and what concrete steps can be taken to proactively prevent gender-based violence in communities and ensure comprehensive support and justice for survivors.
- How can barriers to girls and women's education and skills development be overcome to ensure they have equal access to educational opportunities?
- How can Parliament actively engage with the African Union's 2024 theme of Education and its Roadmap for Education to incentivise Member States to implement measures aimed at eliminating the root causes hindering education at all levels?
- Unlocking a Healthier Future: Prioritizing Tobacco Control in the SADC Region and Urgent need to initiate discussions on establishing a SADC Model Law on Tobacco Control.
- Role of parliament in promoting smart education agendas, including life skills learning and health education, to prevent diseases like malaria, tuberculosis (TB), and HIV/AIDS .
- Harnessing youth-led research in Integrating Non-Communicable Diseases in the fight against HIV/TB.
- Call to Expedite the Domestication of the SADC Model Law on Gender-Based Violence at the national level and Comprehensively Address GBV Challenges in the SADC Region.
- It Shouldn’t Take an Annual Theme: Educating for Africa’s Place in the 4th Industrial Revolutio
- Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) in schools and higher education institutions.

Members expressed their gratitude for all the submissions. Members observed the need to improve curriculum development in SADC to ensure that it is aligned for the development aspirations of the region.

2.4 Standing Committee on DGHR

The Standing Committee on DGHR received submissions from the public on various issues, including:

- The role of Parliament in addressing gaps in Whistleblower Protection in Southern Africa: A Key Tool in Curbing Corruption.
- The implications of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the military domain, with emphasis on Autonomous Weapon Systems (AWS) in the African Context.
- What steps can Parliaments take to support the implementation of the SADC Regional Counter Terrorism Strategy?
- How can regional initiatives and policies better support women’s active and meaningful participation in peace and security? What specific measures are needed to ensure their protection and inclusion in conflict resolution?
- Gendered dimensions of conflict In Cabo Delgado Province of Mozambique.
- Sow the Dragon’s Teeth; Reap the Dragon: Disaffected Youth and Extremism
- Democracy = Diversity: Help Civil Society Help You.
- Peace Security and Governance in the SADC region.

- Parliament's crucial role in combating sextortion: Addressing Gender-Based Corruption in the SADC Region.
- Status of youth participation in electoral processes.
- Democracy Governance and Human Rights in the SADC Region.

Members thanked the presenters for all their submissions. Hon. Bergman appreciated the focus of terrorism and emphasised the need for SADC countries to close all avenues available to terrorist groups that allow for terrorist financing. He stressed the need for SADC countries to work together in this respect. Hon. Bergman also emphasised the need for SADC countries to utilise the SADC PF's model laws to assist in harmonised responses against terrorism in the region.

2.5 Standing Committee on TIFI

The Standing Committee on TIFI received submissions from the public on various issues, including:

- How can cross-border trading within SADC be streamlined to promote economic integration and the growth of small-scale and informal businesses?
- The Nexus between Debt & Human Rights.
- Proposal on how SADC Member States should manage rising debt and ensure fiscal sustainability.
- How should SADC States manage rising debts and ensure fiscal sustainability?
- Activating Industries and accelerating trade in Africa. Challenges and Solutions
- In the face of economic shocks, what strategies can be employed to build economic resilience and ensure the stability of regional economies?
- Domestic resource mobilisation allocation and utilisation as tools for foster regional economic resilience in the SADC Region.
- Nuggets for Regional Economic Growth and Job creation as a vehicle to youth development.
- Creating Inclusive Economic Policies in SADC Countries for Equitable Economic Growth.
- Measures that Parliament can take in attempt to alleviate poverty in regions with high poverty rates.

Members expressed their gratitude to all the presenters.

2.6 Standing Committee on FANR

The Standing Committee on FANR received submissions from the public on various issues, including:

- The role of MPs in ensuring accountability Climate Finance.
- What strategies can be employed to secure sustainable climate financing for adaptation and mitigation efforts and how can these funds be effectively utilized?
- Climate change and human security issues in the SADC Region.
- Countries to enhance their preparedness and response strategies to address the growing threat to climate change-induced droughts and flooding on food security and nutrition.
- Addressing food insecurity in the SADC Region.
- What steps should SADC Member states take to maximise the sustainable exploitation of transitional minerals, ensuring economic benefits and environmental protection?
- Young people and women in Agriculture.
- The Water-Energy-Food Nexus.

- What strategies can be employed to secure sustainable climate financing for adaptation and mitigation efforts, and how can these funds be effectively utilised?

Members thanked the presenters for their submissions.

3. CONCLUSION

Following these meetings, each Standing Committee and the RWPC will prepare reports and resolutions for consideration and adoption by the 54th SADC PF Plenary Assembly, due to be held in November/December 2023.

(f) Report of the 9th G20 Parliamentary Speakers' Summit (P20) and Parliamentary Forum, New Delhi, India 13 – 14 October 2023.

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REPORT ON THE 9TH G20 PARLIAMENTARY SPEAKERS' SUMMIT (P20) AND PARLIAMENTARY FORUM

13TH-14TH OCTOBER 2023

NEW DELHI, INDIA

CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND OF THE 9TH G20 PARLIAMENTARY SPEAKERS' SUMMIT (P20) AND PARLIAMENTARY FORUM

The 9th G20 Parliamentary Speakers Summit (P20) and Parliamentary Forum was held from the 13th-14th October 2023, in New Delhi, India. The overall theme of the 9th G20 Parliamentary Speakers' Summit was: ***One Earth, One Family, One Future.*** The Delegation from the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa was led by the Hon Speaker of the National Assembly, Hon Ms Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, MP and the Hon Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces, Hon Mr Amos Masondo, MP. Also, part of the South African Delegation was Hon Ms Tseke, a Member of Parliament in the National Assembly.

The following Parliament Officials supported the South African Delegation during the 9th G20 Parliamentary Speakers' Summit:

- Mr Masibulele Xaso (Secretary to the National Assembly);
- Mr Dumisani Sithole (Division Manager, IRPD);
- Ms Nogolide Nojozi (Advisor to the Speaker);
- Mr Isaac Kekana (Official from the Office of the Chairperson);
- Mr Ian Mundel (Official responsible for Protocol Services in the IRPD);
- Ms Zukiswa Kula (Official from the Office of the Speaker);
- Mr Jukula (Official from the Parliamentary Communication Services);
- Ms Nomawabo Baduza (Official from the Office of the Chairperson); and
- Mr Sthembiso Tembe (Researcher IRPD).

The 9th G20 Parliamentary Speakers' Summit was attended by the Speakers of the G20 National Parliaments. Also in attendance was His Excellency Mr Duarte Pocheco President of the Inter Parliamentary Union and representatives from the Pan African Parliament. In accordance with the overall theme of the 9th G20 Parliamentary Speakers' Summit, the main objective of the summit was to share information on how G20 countries can modernise their lifestyle in order to preserve the environment.

In this regard, the following discussion topics formed an integral part of the programme of the 9th G20 Parliamentary Speakers' Summit:

- Parliamentary Forum on Life (Lifestyle Environment);
- One Earth, One Family, One Future;
- Agenda 2030 for SDGS: Showcasing Achievements, Accelerating Progress;
- Sustainable Energy Transition-Gateway to Green Future;
- Mainstreaming Gender Equality-From Women's Development to Women led Development;
- Transformation in Peoples' Live through Public Digital Platforms;

In accordance with the programme of the 9th G20 Parliamentary Speakers' Summit, the Hon Speaker of the National Assembly participated in the discussion on Parliamentary Forum on Life. The Hon Speaker was also one of the Keynote Speakers on the Third Session Topic: Mainstreaming Gender Equality-From Women's Development to Women led Development.

The Hon Chairperson also participated in the discussion on Parliamentary Forum on Life. In addition to the above, the Chairperson also participated in the First Session discussion topic: One Earth, One Family, One Future and he was one of the Keynote Speakers on the Fourth Session topic: One Future-Transformation in Peoples' Lives through Public Digital Platforms.

Considering that the 9th G20 Parliamentary Speakers' Summit took place in the heat of Israel/Palestine conflict, the Hon Speaker also used her address as a Keynote Speaker to call for the peaceful resolution of the conflict and to affirm South Africa's position of Two State Solution as the lasting solution to the conflict between the two countries.

Of significant importance during the 9TH G20 Parliamentary Speakers' Summit was the adoption of the P20 Joint Statement (attached for ease of reference). In this regard, this report is not going to comprehensively report on everything that was discussed during the Summit as this is contained in the Joint Statement.

(g) Summary report on the 9th G20 Parliamentary Speakers' Summit (P20) and Parliamentary Forum.

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SUMMARY REPORT ON THE 9TH G20 PARLIAMENTARY SPEAKERS' SUMMIT (P20) AND PARLIAMENTARY FORUM

13TH-14TH OCTOBER 2023

NEW DELHI, INDIA

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(h) Report of the courtesy call on Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly, Mr. L Tsenoli, MP by the High Commissioner of the Republic of Mozambique in RSA, HE Ms. Maria Manuella dos Santos Maria 17 October 2023.

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Report of the courtesy call on Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly, Mr L Tsenoli, MP by the High Commissioner of the Republic of Mozambique in the RSA, HE Ms Maria Manuella dos Santos Maria on Tuesday, 17 October 2023

1. **Purpose of the Report**

   To report on the courtesy, call on Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly, Mr L Tsenoli, MP by the High Commissioner of the Republic of Mozambique in the RSA, HE Ms Maria Manuella dos Santos Maria on Tuesday, 17 October 2023

2. **Background**

   The Mozambican Consulate in Cape Town initiated the courtesy call.

3. **Purpose of the courtesy call**

   The High Commissioner of the Republic of Mozambique in the RSA, HE Ms Maria Manuella dos Santos Maria requested the courtesy call to introduce herself to the Presiding Officers of the Parliament of the RSA.

   The Mozambican High Commissioner presented her letter of credence to the President of the Republic on Thursday 14 March 2023. The meeting was her first meeting as Mozambican High Commissioner in the RSA with the Deputy Speaker of the NA.

   Also, the Mozambican Consulate in Cape Town was opened by High Commissioner Lucas in 1996. She was the first Mozambican Consul General in Cape Town in the new South Africa.

   Mozambican side: HE Ms Maria Manuella dos Santos Maria, the High Commissioner of the Republic of Mozambique in the RSA; Mr Manuel Nuvunga, Couselor, Mozambican High Commission in Pretoria; Colonel Flora Macitela, Military Attache at the High Commission of Mozambique; Mr Cristovao Gemo, Consul General of Mozambique in Cape Town; Mr Jose da Conceicao Jose, First Secretary at the Consulate in Cape Town and Major Onesio Gomes, Assistant to the Military Attache and

   South African Parliamentary side: Mr L Tsenoli, MP – the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly. Ms Nomfundo Sonjica, the Section Manager:

Bilaterals and Multilaterals, IRPD; Mr Zingisa Cawe, the IR Officer: Bilaterals, IRPD and Ms Marlyn Mdlalo, Officer: Office of the Deputy Speaker supported the meeting.

4. Meeting discussion

In his opening remarks, Mr L Tsenoli, MP – the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly welcome the delegation and called for frequent interactions between the South Africa and Mozambique as neighboring countries. He pointed out that the timing of the courtesy call was very interesting because it was happening at a time of rebuilding the parliament buildings after the fire that gutted the buildings. He assured the High Commissioner that in the next two years, the Parliament would be fully operational.

In her response, the High Commissioner of the Republic of Mozambique in the RSA, HE Ms Maria Manuella dos Santos Maria thanked the Deputy Speaker for meeting her and conveyed regards of the Speaker of the Mozambiacan Parliament, Ms Esperanca Biias to the Presiding Officers of the Parliament of the RSA. She informed the Deputy Speaker that she has been in the country for 8 months – presented her letter of credence to the President of the Republic on 14 March 2023. She called for continuous engagements between comrades.

She raised concerns about the car and stock theft syndicates operating in the border between South Africa and Mozambique especially in Khosi Bay. She called for the Joint Commissions of Military and Police to come back with joint efforts. He cited the problems at the Libombo Border which has 1700 trucks per day. The truck drivers blockaded the road in protest because criminals rob the trucks in the borders and called for both South Africa and Mozambique to introduce new technology to speed up long delays.

On the issue of terrorism in the Northern Parts of Mozambique, the High Commissioner thanked South Africa for its unwavering support.

On repatriation of illegal immigrants from Mozambique, she urged both sides to monitor the borders. However, raised concerns about the repatriation of illegal immigrants because after two weeks they return to South Africa. The repatriation does not solve the problem because most of them were working in the mines and farms in South Africa. She mentioned that there were 16 000 Mozambicans working in the SA mines and 8000 in the farms. Most of them do not go back to Mozambique. She expressed her government sympathy with South Africa on the issue of illegal immigrants' problem. She further appealed to the South African government to allow undocumented children to attend school and urge both sides to do something on the issue of undocumented and stateless children.

In conclusion, High Commissioner Lucas indicated that she has started a programme of visiting traditional leaders in Limpopo, Northwest, KZN and Eastern Cape including religious leaders in South Africa to discuss the issue Mozambican immigrants.

In his further remarks, the Deputy Speaker, Mr Tsenoli, MP thanked Mozambique for its important role during the liberation struggle in South Africa and urged for the continuation and strengthening of relations between the two countries. The RSA would do everything possible to improve relations because it's proud of the late President of Mozambique. He also mentioned that all towns and cities close to borders experience same challenges vis- a - vis the impact of illegal immigrants and urged that these challenges need to be addressed.

He mentioned that the Home Affairs Department has been busy with the establishment of Border Management Agency to manage the infra-structure and other related issues in our borders management. The project involves all relevant stakeholders and departments.

The Deputy Speaker made an undertaking to raise the concerns of the High Commissioner with the relevant Chairpersons namely: Home Affairs, International Relations and trade and Industry because they do oversight over

the departments. He would convene a meeting with them and ask what are they doing on these matters?

In conclusion, the Deputy Speaker briefed the Higher Commissioner on the purpose, discussions and the Declaration adopted at the 10th World Science for Social Justice adopted on 09 December 2022, Cape Town, RSA. A copy of the declaration was made available to the High Commissioner.

5. General outcome of the courtesy call

The deliberations and outcomes of the meeting were as follows:

1) Both countries will hold general elections in 2024. Legacy report is in a process of being drafted in the Parliament of the RSA.
2) The Deputy Speaker made an undertaking to raise the concerns of the Mozambican High Commissioner with the relevant Chairpersons of the relevant Committees in Parliament namely: Home Affairs (issue illegal immigrants), International Relations (Issue of strengthening bilateral relations) and Trade and industry (issue of improving economic trade and related matters) because they do oversight over departments. He would convene a meeting with the relevant Committee Chairpersons and ask them what are they doing to address these concerns?
3) Both governments should continue to engage each other on common challenges for common solutions.
4) The courtesy call was a success.

6. Recommendations and/or Action by Parliament

None

(i) Report of the meeting between the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly, Mr. L Tsenoli and Dr. Marta Matri, the Deputy Speaker of the Parliament of Hungary and delegation, 18 October 2023, Cape Town.

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REPORT OF THE MEETING BETWEEN MR L TSENOLI, MP - THE DEPUTY SPEAKER OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AND DR MARTA MATRI – THE DEPUTY SPEAKER OF THE PARLIAMENT OF HUNGARY AND DELEGATION HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 18 OCTOBER 2023

1. Purpose of the Report

To report on the Meeting between Mr L Tsenoli, MP - the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly and the visiting delegation from the Parliament of Hungary led by Dr Márta Mátrai – the Deputy Speaker of the Parliament of Hungary held on Wednesday, 18 October 2023

2. Background

The Embassy of Hungary in Pretoria initiated the meeting. First visit of Dr Márta Mátrai – the Deputy Speaker of the Hungarian Parliament to the RSA. She has been a Member of Parliament since 1998. The Speaker of Hungary, Mr Laszlo Kover paid an official visit to the Parliament of the RSA in 2016 and that visit was never reciprocated by the South African side.

3. Purpose of the courtesy call

The purpose of the meeting was to strengthen parliament to parliament cooperation.

Hungarian delegation: Dr Márta Mátrai – the Deputy Speaker of the Hungarian Parliament; H.E Mr Attila György Horvath – Ambassador of Hungary; Ms Beatrix Kese – Deputy Director of the Directorate of Foreign Affairs of the Hungarian National Assembly; Ms Agnes Hryathne , First Secretary , Embassy of Hungary; Mr Aron Lephft , Member of the National Integration Office of the Hungarian Parliament;

South African Parliamentary side: Mr L Tsenoli, MP – the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly. Ms Nomfundo Sonjica, the Section Manager: Bilaterals and Multilaterals, IRPD; Mr Zingisa Cawe, the IR Officer: Bilaterals, IRPD and Ms Marlyn Mdlalo, Officer: Office of the Deputy Speaker supported the meeting.

4. Meeting discussion

In her opening remarks, Dr Márta Mátrai – the Deputy Speaker of the Hungarian Parliament explained the purpose of her visit which was to strengthen parliament to parliament cooperation. She conveyed greetings from the Speaker of the Parliament of Hungary, Mr Laszlo Kover who had paid an official visit to the Parliament of the RSA in 2016. The 2016 visit had a lasting experience to Mr Laszlo Kover, she said.

She called for cooperation at the parliament-to-parliament level between the Hungarian and South African Parliaments. She pointed out that the Parliament of Hungary would like to establish relations with other Parliaments.

She pointed out that the Parliament of Hungary was a bicameral Parliament however, after the end of the Communist rule, it became a unicameral Parliament. In the last elections, the ruling party got two thirds majority and established a Hungary – Sub-Saharan Parliamentary Friendship Group with Kenya, Rwanda, South Africa as countries of focus. The intention would be to establish good relations with the countries of Africa. She commended the standing of the RSA in the international fora.

She reiterated a call for cooperation on Higher Education sector and indicated that Hungary has established a scholarship programme - 100 students from South Africa get free tuition fees in three Hungarian institutions of higher learning. She urged South Africa to take such an opportunity.

On humanitarian aid support to African countries, she informed the Deputy Speaker that Hungary provides medical support to victims of 2022 floods, in Chad, they have sent medical and agricultural expects to assist. She also cited religious conflict in Chad and that Hungary intends to send 200 soldiers to Chad to protect those persecuted in the conflict.

She also highlighted that Hungary established diplomatic relations with the RSA in 1991 and had made its mark in the RSA. 20% of Hungarian products reach the RSA and assist in job creation and economic development. She

said that the government of Hungary have an interest on wastewater treatment projects. They have established one successful site in Cape Town and have a company that provides medical equipment. She urged the Deputy Speaker to help in those ventures.

She further called for South Africa and Hungary to cooperate on areas of science, space research and sport.

In conclusion, she indicated that the Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr Peter Szijjarto met Minister Naledi Pandor, MP in the margins of the United Nations General Assembly. Minister Pandor, MP extended an invitation to Mr Szijjarto to pay an official visit to the RSA. They agreed for 5-7 December 2023 as a date for the visit. During that visit, a cooperation agreement between South Africa and Hungary would be signed. She hopes that agreement would be effective in boosting economic trade and other areas between the two countries.

In his response, Mr Tsenoli, MP - the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly urged that the distance between South Africa and Hungary shouldn’t stop cooperation between the two countries. He reiterated the call for cooperation on higher education and commended the Department of Higher Education in the RSA for convening a World Science Conference which at the conference adopted the Declaration- Science for Social Justice.

He also thanked the government of Hungary for availing scholarship for 100 students per annum which would assist in developing the capacity of SA students. The Deputy Speaker further pointed out that the RSA is part of the African Union which came up with the African Trade Agreement that has been signed by all countries. He urged Hungary to support this initiative.

On global debate on energy, the Deputy Speaker called for cooperation between South Africa and Hungary on energy matters. The energy debate is very critical for the RSA argued the Deputy Speaker. He stressed that Parliaments should find ways of monitoring these developments.

On the official visit of the Speaker of the Parliament of Hungary, Mr Laszlo Kover to the Parliament of the RSA in 2016. The Deputy Speaker pointed out that Mr Laslo Kover had a Head of Parliamentary Security in his delegation that the Parliament of the RSA sought to emulate as a result Parliament appointed its Head of Security just recently.

In conclusion, the Deputy Speaker stated that the Parliament would be interested or curious to learn and understand how the Hungarian Parliament uses technology in enhancing work of Parliament.

On cooperation on sport, the Deputy Speaker indicated that the government of the RSA would like to re-introduce sporting activities in basic education schools and urged Hungary to support these initiatives. He thanked Dr Márta Mátrai – the Deputy Speaker of the Hungarian Parliament and delegation for finding time to meet with him.

5. General outcome of the courtesy call

The deliberations and outcomes of the meeting were as follows:

1) Hungary planning to convene high-level international conferences and would be glad if South Africa could attend.
2) Meeting stressed the Importance of cooperation agreement between South Africa and Hungary to boost Economic trade between the two countries.
3) Parliament of Hungary has a complex system for which allows MPs to work at home which was very useful during covid 19 pandemic. Could arrange interaction with SA Parliament to engage online or in person if SA Parliament would be interested. The Deputy Speaker will put together a team from ICT to engage the Embassy of Hungary on this matter.
4) The Deputy Speaker expressed interest on adult education system in Hungary and urged Hungary to share information on their adult education system and other related matters.

5) Dr Márta Mátrai – the Deputy Speaker of the Hungarian Parliament extended an invitation to the Deputy Speaker,Mr Tsenoli, MP to lead a delegation to Hungary at a mutually convenient date. Areas that the deputy Speaker would like to learn could be shown or seen in practice.
6) The meeting was a success.

6. Recommendations and/or Action by Parliament

None

(j) Report of the SA-EU Inter-Parliamentary Meeting 18 – 19 October 2023 Strasbourg.

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DRAFT DELEGATION REPORT OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN DELEGATION TO SOUTH AFRICA EUROPEAN UNION INTER-PARLIAMENTARY MEETINGS IN STRASBOURG ON 18 -19 OCTOBER 2023

1. Background

Parliament's Strategic Plan places prime importance on increasing its capacity to represent the interests of South Africa in the international arena. It further seeks to promote and facilitate the transformation of undemocratic governance structures and participate in rules based system that seeks to democratize multilateral institutions, processes, building strategic partnerships around mutual interests and promote internationalism and solidarity through the interconnectedness of challenges amongst African countries in particular and developing nations in particular.

In line with the South African Parliament's mandate of international participation, Parliament has several strategic partnerships including one with the European Union Parliament. The South African Parliament's relationship with the European Parliament was cemented by the Joint Declaration of February 2008 signed by the two Parliaments as a commitment to regular engagement on issues of mutual interest and to share views on global issues.

On the 18-19 October 2023, a multi-party delegation of the South African Parliament met with the European Union Parliament delegation to discuss issues of mutual interest in Strousburg, France at the chambers of the European Parliament from the 18- 19 0ctober 2023. This constituted the 27th South Africa- European Union Inter-Parliamentary Meeting (IPM) between Member of the South African Parliament and Members of the European Parliament. The issues of mutual interest within the Agenda included the following topics

- Peace, Conflict and Security: Russia and Ukraine Conflict
- Trade (Economic Partnership Agreements, PA, Non-Tariff Measures/ barriers, Raw Materials/Mineral) Presentation Discussion.
- Climate Change (European Union Impact on Trade (CBAM.), energy supply)
- South Africa Perspective on Women and Empowerment, Entrepreneurship and Quality Education
- Upcoming Elections in the Republic of South Africa

Key amongst the Members who constituted the South African delegation included the following;

- **Hon S Lucas, Deputy Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces (Head of Delegation)**
- **Ambassador Xhasa: South Africa Ambassador to the European Union**
- **Hon Nyambi, House Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces**
- **Hon M Dangor; Chairperson of the SA-EU Focus Group**
- **Hon H Mkhaliphi: Member of Parliament**
- **Hon E L Powell: Member of Parliament**
- **Hon M Rayi; Chairperson the Select Committee on Trade**
- **Hon L Moshodi: Member of Parliament**
- **Adv ME Phindela: Secretary to the National Council of Provinces**
- **Dr S Mvulane: Senior Official in the Office the Deputy Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces**
- **Mr N Mabaso : Official in the Office of the House Chairperson the National Council of Provinces**
- **Mr M Ngese: Researcher International Relations and Protocol Division**
- **Ms Janine Paulsen: Official at International Relations and Protocol Division**
- **Ms R Scott: Official at Legislative Sector**
- **Mr S Mangali: Official at the South African Embassy to the European Union**

2. Briefing and Overview from the South African Ambassador, Her Excellency,

Ambassador Xasa

Her Excellency Ambassador Xhasa, who is representing South Africa to the European Union met with the South African delegation on the 17th October to brief the delegation on key issues emanating from their relationship with the European Union as it relate to the Executive Arm of the State which in some way provide the context m the nature of the activities between the European Parliament and Parliament of the Republic of South Africa`s relationship.

In her refection, Ambassador highlighted the fact that this relationship operates in an environment driven by a culture where countries orientation pursue and protect their national interests even though its intended objective is to pursue regional integration at policy level which is aimed at ensuring cooperating amongst countries at economic, social and political level. Equally, even though the European subscribe to multilateralism, it continues in its composition to be dominated by aspects of extremism and right wing political parties whose statements at foreign policy level sometimes bring about more areas of divergence instead of advancing cooperation and integration at policy level.

She articulated her observation with respect to lack of consensus on a number of issues which include migration, trade and regularities emanating from climate change taxation laws. To this end, The rejuvenation of the partnership at parliamentary level through the visit by the South African delegation bring some hope and expectation in terms of ensure that the dialogue unlock a number of disputes which the executive arm of the State has been experiencing some challenges. Key amongst the issues which cause some stagnation is the delay of the Summit of the Heads of State between the EU and the South African government. This was preceded the Ministerial Summit which also resulted to the non-adoption of the Joint Statement due to a number of disagreements on a variety of issues that includes South Africa non alignment position on Russia- Ukraine war, Palestine and Israel conflict, climate change new regulations and trade related challenges that prohibit South Africa from accessing the European Market. The Ambassador further advised the delegation to approach the meeting in a way that seeks to prioritize the following issues;

- Emphasize that the delegation must emphasize the importance of this relationship and the commitment to ensure that there is commitment and fairness to ensure that the intended objectives are realized.
- Clarify the approach of arriving at consensus on various issues through a rules based system of multilateralism.
- Reflect critically on the Joint statement
- Articulate South Africa`s non align position on conflict
- Prioritize issues on trade

- Interrogate the issue of attaching conditionalites with respect to the approach on how the just transition should unfold.
- Raise issues of oversight as it relate to illicit financial flows and honesty on issues of international business and investments
- Interrogate the cause of delay of the reviewing of the economic partnership agreements in the SADC region.

3. Messages of Solidarity on the Meeting with the European Union

The Core-Chairperson of the European Parliament delegation in her remarks acknowledged the major global shift and political changes which amongst other include the recent the COVID 19 pandemic which adversely affected the possibility of the two delegations to meet due to lockdown restrictions that were introduced in order to curb the spread of the virus across the borders. This has also exacerbated the economic challenges of many countries and ultimately the possibility to achieve the sustainable development goals.

She appreciated the initiative by the South African delegation to honor the meeting which is central to the building of the confidence of this relationship and its intended objectives of the partnership that includes the following;

- Championing the programmes on uplifting parliamentary diplomacy
- Promote peace and understanding and pursue common objectives of economic integration and address the challenges of underdevelopment, poverty, inequality and unemployment.

The Deputy Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces, Hon Sylvia Lucas in her opening remarks reflected that these Inter-parliamentary Meetings play a very central role to the current evolving work of our parliamentary diplomacy as it intends to discuss critical issues of mutual interest within our countries and regions in particular. They further provide our parliaments with opportunity to complement the work of our

national governments but most importantly to complement South Africa`s foreign policy priority of promoting the North to South cooperation or dialogue.

This meeting continues on the firm foundation laid during the last meeting we held six months ago in South Africa wherein all our counterparts discussed and committed on a number of issues that informed the form and content of our Joint Statement. Key amongst the issues included the following;

- **South Africa-European Union Parliaments' Strategic Relations** *a*nd our commitment to attend the European Union meetings aimed at sustaining our strategic partnership whilst noting the 2019 elections and the unfortunate COVID 19 pandemic which adversely affected our modus operandi with respect to the routine of our regular meetings.
- **Lack of diversification of South Africa's trade with the European Union** with respect to concerns on the trade deficit and the nature of South Africa's trade with the European Union towards more minerals and natural resources rather than manufactured exports from South Africa and the European Union. Of critical importance was to ensure a concerted effort to diversify trade between South Africa and the European Union.
- **Trade's contribution to industrialisation and employment** by ensuring that SA-EU relationship realised its intended objective to bring about developmental trade paradigm, thereby enhancing industrialisation and job creation.
- **Review of the Economic Partnership Agreement**: and the need to address limitations that resulted to the delays in the renewal of the agreement. We further reiterated that South African Delegation emphasised that it supports the principles of the EPA agreement to facilitate trade, protect infant industries and support development.
- **Sustainable Development**: We noted the EU interest in South Africa's natural resources particularly in the area of steel and coal. However, we further assert that our natural resources should be primarily used to advance its industrialisation drive through local beneficiation

4. Key Messages of Solidarity from the European Union and South African Ambassador

The Ambassador of the European Union to South Africa appreciated the values that inform the struggle for South African freedom which finds expression in her constitution that promotes the rule of law. She further acknowledged South Africa`s role in the maintenance of multilateralism and promotion of global peace as a former member of the United Nations Security Council.

It was further indicated that this partnership is crucial in ensuring that the two delegations trace a new path of parliamentary democracy in the midst of contemporary global conflicts. This will ensure progress on the achievement of sustainable development goals and maintain multilateral reforms.

Ambassador Xhasa acknowledged the tectonic shifts in the multilateral world and the response by different actors to such shifts. She called for our multilateral institutions to find workable solutions to respond to our global complexities within the context of greater geopolitical contestations that include the following;

- Russia-Ukraine Conflict
- Palestine and Israel Conflict
- Energy Transition and Climate Change challenges
- Reduce dependencies
- Create a safe space for dialogue
- Reform of the United Nations Security Council
- Implementation of the United Nations two State Solution resolution of 1967.
- Be genuine in exchanging the best practices
- Acknowledge the role of Parliament in unlocking challenges at an executive level.

4.1 Key Highlights on Enhancing the Legislative Sector Capacity and Oversight

The presentation relating to the aspects of the legislative sector with respect to enhancing capacity building and oversight was delivered by the Secretary of the National Council of

Provinces, Adv Phindela. In his background he articulated that the areas of collaboration between the South African legislative sector and European Union which dates back to 1996. It was further stated that the consolidation and enhancement of democracy and remarkable development of the South Africa Legislative Sector over nearly 30 years of democracy came about with significant & sustained support of the EU – through dialogue, technical assistance and development cooperation. This long-term, large-scale collaboration between the European Union (EU) and the SALS can be regarded as unique in scope and nature. The total EU support amounts to €55 million since 1996. The EU has thus supported all six of the democratic Parliaments - and broader Legislative Sector - since the end of apartheid, and has added much value to the strengthening of this branch of the State

The evolution of the South African legislative sector and the European Union was premised on the following areas of priority;

- **Parliamentary Support Programme** (1996-2003) focused on setting up democratic institutions

- **Legislative Support Programme** (2004-2008) focused on Facilitation of the advancement of democracy and good governance – based on SA Legislative Sector Policy and Strategic Framework.

- **Legislative Sector Policy Support Programme** (2009-2014) Budget support modality
    - Objectives: Deepening people-centred democracy; Strengthening law-making & oversight capacity; Building an effective and efficient Legislative Sector; and Strengthening capacity to oversee international relations.
    - Significant developments – development & implementation of Models/ Frameworks – notably the Sector Oversight Model & Public Participation Framework

4.1.1 Focus on the Current Development Cooperation

The presentation further payed attention to the contemporary priority areas of cooperation which included the following;

Enhancing Legislature Oversight Programme (ELOP) (2017-2024)

- Funding through SA-EU Multi-Annual Indicative Programme under focal area of “Building a capable and developmental State” (National Development Plan)
- **Overall objective -** to strengthen democracy and good governance through effective execution of the core mandate of the Legislative Sector
- The **specific objectives**

- To strengthen the capacity of the legislative sector to exercise oversight.
- To devise means and mechanisms to ensure public involvement in legislative processes.
- To strengthen cooperation and cooperative governance in the legislative sector.
- To improve knowledge, skills, systems & processes in the Legislative Sector.

Key amongst the areas of achievements articulated included Implementation of capacity development programmes for Members and staff, the Launch of the SA Parliamentary Institute (9 December 2021). In addition, various studies conducted as well as tools and mechanisms developed aimed at enhancing oversight and public participation. The sstrengthening of International parliamentary relations and engagement. This cooperation resulted into the strengthening cooperative governance amongst the spheres of government. There were also successes in enhancing gender mainstreaming and oversight, sstrengthening of provincial legislatures as part of democratic architecture and aadoption of the Sector Constitution regulating the Sector – aim to pass SA Legislative Sector Bill by term end.

The programmes have increased capacity of members to perform their constitutional duties including related soft skills such as public speaking etc. The Induction programmes

were standardised in all Legislatures, induction modules were developed in 4th term and reviewed in each term. Furthermore the SA Parliamentary Institute was established in the 6th term to cement the gains made in capacity building programmes of the Sector and to harness efforts aimed at harnessing efforts aimed at professionalization of the Sector and expanding and sustaining capacity building interventions.

Discussion and Analysis: Presentation on the Topics

Multilateralism: Peace, Conflict and Security: Russia and Ukraine Conflict

The South African delegation noted that the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine adversely impacts all African and European countries and refers to national positions as expressed in the UN Security Council and the UN General Assembly. Both delegations expressed their continued commitment to uphold the UN Charter and principles of international law, and reiterated that all governments must aCct in a manner consistent with the purposes and principles of the UN Charter in its entirety. All states therefore must refrain from the threat or use of force to seek territorial acquisition against the territorial integrity and sovereignty or political independence of any state.

The EP delegation reiterated its strong condemnation of the illegal, unjustified, and unprovoked war of aggression by the Russian Federation against Ukraine, which is causing immense human suffering and demands the complete unconditional withdrawal of all Russian forces from the territory of Ukraine. The EP delegation noted that the ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine adversely impacts all African and European countries and refer to national positions as expressed in the UN Security Council and the UN General Assembly.

Both Delegations agreed on the need to prioritize a process of peaceful resolution through dialogue and called for an end to human suffering and people dying. Equally, both Delegations further call for the United Nations Security Council to pursue its objective of maintaining international peace amongst the nations of the world. To this end, there is

an urgent need for substantive negotiations to commence towards achieving sustainable and lasting peace and security in the region.

Both Delegations expressed concern about the continued escalation of violence and its regional and international socio-economic implications. They further highlighted the human suffering and negative consequences of the war with regards to global food and energy security, supply chains, macro-financial stability, inflation and growth.

In calling for peace between Ukraine and Russia, the South African delegation emphasized the need to recognise that there are many other acts of aggression in many parts of the world such as Afghanistan, Palestine, Syria and Western Sahara where the global community has observed continued loss of lives, yet these have not received the global attention that has been given to the Russia-Ukraine conflict. The South African delegation therefore calls for consistency in the consideration, resolution and emphases placed on all global conflicts and reiterated the need for consistency in resolving global conflicts through neutrality, peaceful negotiation and consensus building.

Both Delegations unequivocally condemned all forms of violence and its use to obtain political goals, as well as recognised the need for closer cooperation in the fight against terrorism. They encouraged greater exchange of information and called for measures tackling the threat of radicalism.

The Delegations deplored the loss of innocent lives since 7 October in Israel and Palestine and the thousands of wounded, as well as called for an immediate and unconditional release of all hostages taken since then. Both expressed fear that escalation will inevitably cause more suffering to civilians, both Israelis and Palestinians and risks bringing grave instability to a region already plagued by tensions and war.

Both Delegations stressed the need to further advance on the joint commitment to promote effective multilateralism, as well as to work towards more converging positions in the multilateral fora. Both sides agreed to continue working closely in support of the on-

going UN system reform efforts, including of the UN Security Council, in order to make it more effective, representative, democratic and inclusive.

Trade (Economic Partnership Agreements, PA, Non-Tariff Measures/ barriers, Raw Materials/Mineral) Presentation Discussion.

The two delegations agreed that the overall objective of the EU-SADC EPA is to contribute through trade, to sustainable economic growth and poverty reduction in the Southern African countries. They noted that although trade has increased significantly between both sides, the two delegations agreed that the EU-SADC Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) needs to be modernised in order to adapt to dynamic developments like the African Continental Free Trade Area and to address more effectively pressing issues for the SADC region such as inequality, unemployment and climate change.

The IPM recognized that there are some trade impediments between the EU and SA that have to be solved through continuing constructive dialogue. Both delegations agreed to continue the dialogue and enhance collaboration to ensure minimal impact.

The South African delegation reiterated the importance of the IPM as a strategic conduit for facilitating parliamentary cooperation, consensus building, collaboration and finding lasting solutions to matters of common interest and common concern between SA and the EU. Both delegations therefore call for the facilitation of constructive dialogue towards the eradication of trade impediments, through the effective utilization of Parliament's core functions of law making, oversight and parliamentary diplomacy, to specifically address the following:

- Both delegations call for a constructive dialogue on the review of the EU-SADC EPA as well as trade irritants on both sides of the strategic partnership.

- Possible barriers to mutual and reciprocal market accessibility, which might exacerbate the proliferation of EU regulations that the South African side

considers as either costly or cumbersome, possibly leading to a significant impact on job security, an adverse impact on the SA economy and the advancement of SA development objectives. The South African delegation mentioned issues pertaining to Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) regulations which are becoming trade barriers to SA key industries and the EU side also mentioned certain trade irritants on its side

Both delegations would welcome the establishment of dedicated bilateral meetings on raw material value chains and energy transition. They envisage a great potential for both sides for more collaboration in this field to strengthen cooperation on aspects related to value chains for raw materials for future clean energy, technologies and the energy transition aimed at increasing value addition in Africa.

Climate Change

Members acknowledged the alarming global impact of climate change, and agreed that addressing global warming should be a joint sustainable development priority within the framework of the implementation of the Paris Agreement.

Members discussed the implementation of the EU's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) aimed at decarbonising trade to reduce global greenhouse gas emissions and agreed that it is crucial that its implementation is carefully executed and takes into account potential negative impacts on African economies and societies. A collaborative and multilateral approach is therefore desirable in ensuring that the CBAM does not result in unintended consequences that reinforce existing power imbalances in the global trading system. Both sides agreed to continue discussions on this issue.
Both delegations underlined that unlocking green growth on a scale that can contribute meaningfully to decarbonisation of the global economy will require a massive scaling up in funding, especially for the African continent.

The two delegations emphasized the outstanding importance of the “Just Energy Transition Partnership”, which is the first of its kind and ought to support South Africa’s move away from fossil energy sources and to accelerate its transition to a low emission, climate resilient economy.
The IPM welcomed the outcome of the first Africa Climate Summit in Nairobi and the European Union’s willingness to be Africa’s partner at the COP28 and in helping to finance and implement urgent climate action.

South Africa Perspective on Women and Empowerment, Entrepreneurship and Quality Education

Both delegations acknowledged the importance of education, for promoting equality and opportunity, creating a robust and innovative economy, resourced by a vibrant private sector and anchored in a solid public commitment to sound governance and common good. Although progress has been made in SA and the EU in advancing gender equality and creating job opportunities for women, much more needs to be done (on both sides) in areas of access to education, finance, entrepreneurship, labour market and all parts of society.

Members stressed that Women’s empowerment and gender equality are a common priority for the work of both Parliaments. They underline that gender equality and gender-sensitive Parliaments are drivers of change for more resilient and fairer societies.
The South African side acknowledged and expressed its appreciation for financial support by the European Union in particular under the EU-Africa Global Gateway Investment Package to the education sector in South Africa.

The South African delegation expressed appreciation of initiatives launched by the EU, such as Erasmus+, to build capacity in the vocational education and training sector as this is an area that South Africa regards as a strategic focus as it is an enabler in re-igniting the economy.

Elections

Both sides informed each other on the up-coming elections and expressed their aspiration to quickly re-engage afterwards in order to hold the 28th IPM in South Africa before the end of 2024. The two delegations highlighted the importance of democratic elections as the backbone of our democratic societies and values. Members called for the next SA-EU Summit to take place as soon as possible and to take into considerations all viewpoints and demands mentioned in this statement.

Conclusion

The IPM mandated their Co-Chairs to forward the key issues which were reduced to a joint statement to the President and Members of the European Parliament, the President of the European Commission, President of the European Council, and the European External Action Service (EEAS), and the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa, the President of the Republic of South Africa and the Executive.

(k) Report of the courtesy call on Mr. A Masondo, Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces (NCOP) by Dr. Marta Matri, the Deputy Speaker of the Parliament of Hungary and delegation 19 October 2023.

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Report of the Courtesy call on Mr AN Masondo, MP - the Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces (NCOP) by Dr Marta Matri – the Deputy Speaker of the Parliament of Hungary and delegation held on Thursday, 19 October 2023

1. Purpose of the Report

To report on the Courtesy call on Mr AN Masondo, MP - the Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces (NCOP) by Dr Marta Matri – the Deputy Speaker of the Parliament of Hungary and delegation held on Thursday, 19 October 2023

2. Background

The Embassy of Hungary in Pretoria initiated the meeting. First visit of Dr Márta Mátrai – the Deputy Speaker of the Hungarian Parliament to the RSA. She has been a Member of Parliament since 1998. The Speaker of Hungary, Mr Laszlo Kover paid an official visit to the Parliament of the RSA in 2016 and that visit was never reciprocated by the South African side.

3. Purpose of the courtesy call

The purpose of the courtesy call on Mr AN Masondo, MP was to meet and greet.

Hungarian delegation: Dr Márta Mátrai – the Deputy Speaker of the Hungarian Parliament; H.E Mr Attila György Horvath – Ambassador of Hungary; Ms Beatrix Kese – Deputy Director of the Directorate of Foreign Affairs of the Hungarian National Assembly; Ms Agnes Hryathne, First Secretary , Embassy of Hungary; Mr Aron Lephft , Member of the National Integration Office of the Hungarian Parliament;

South African Parliamentary side: Mr AN Masondo, MP - the Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces (NCOP); Mr Mokate – Executive director: Office of the NCOP Chairperson. Ms Nomfundo Sonjica, the Section Manager: Bilaterals and Multilaterals, IRPD; Mr Zingisa Cawe, the IR Officer: Bilaterals supported the meeting.

4. Meeting discussion

In her opening remarks, Dr Márta Mátrai – the Deputy Speaker of the Hungarian Parliament conveyed greetings from the Speaker of Hungary, Mr Laszlo Kover and extended invitation to Mr AN Masondo, MP - the Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces (NCOP) to pay an official visit to the Parliament of Hungary. She stressed that the invitation is extended on behalf of the Speaker of Hungary, Mr Laszlo Kover.

On Hungary in Africa, Dr Matri indicated that in the last elections, the ruling party got two thirds majority and established a Hungary – Sub-Saharan Parliamentary Friendship Group with Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda and South Africa as countries of focus. The intention would be to establish good relations with the countries in Africa. They intend to have embassies in many countries in Africa. By 2030, Hungry would like to be a country that provides support to many African states.

On higher education, she reiterated a call for cooperation on Higher Education sector and indicated that Hungary has established a scholarship programme - 100 students from South Africa get free tuition fees in three Hungarian institutions of higher learning. She urged South Africa to take such an opportunity. The focus had been on technical, agriculture and economics and keep contact with those students who studied in Hungary.

She also informed the Chairperson of the NCOP about the Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr Peter Szijjarto’s meeting with Minister Naledi Pandor, MP in the margins of the United Nations General Assembly. Minister Pandor, MP extended an invitation to Mr Szijjarto to pay an official visit to the RSA. They agreed for 5-7 December 2023 as a date for the visit. During that visit, a cooperation agreement between South Africa and Hungary would be signed. She hopes that agreement would be effective in boosting economic trade and other areas between the two countries.

He stressed the importance of signing the agreement so that both parties could have something to start working on.

In his response, Mr Masondo, MP - the Chairperson of the NCOP thanked teams from both sides Parliamentary staff and Hungarian embassy in the RSA) for arranging the courtesy call. He called for the strengthening of relations between the two Parliaments, reinforcement of people-to-people relations and cooperation on various areas including sports.

He reiterated the commitment of the RSA government in peace – build better Africa and the better world. He cited the recent trip by President of the Republic, Mr Ramaphosa and other African leaders to Russia and Ukraine – mediation efforts between the warring countries.

On current conflict between Isarael and Hamas, pointed out that South Africa will always continue calling for peace, de-escalation of the war and its call for humanitarian support and post-war humanitarian support.

He urged South Africa and Hungary to take the cooperation to a higher level. He stressed the importance of knowledge sharing and technology as critically important. He expressed appreciation to Hungary for its support in that regard and called for intensification of the parliament-to-parliament cooperation.

On BRICS countries, Mr Masondo, MP indicated that the meeting of the Brics Heads od States took place, Parliament of the RSA convened one for Brics Parliamentary Forum to look at matters of oversight and other related matters.

He further expressed his support to the idea of having international conferences and called for countries engaged in war to be invited. That would provide an opportunity for them to engage in negotiations because they can’t fight for ever. They would have to be persuaded to negotiate peace because peace is a prerequisite for development. He has taken note all what Dr Marta Matri – the Deputy Speaker of the Parliament of Hungary and delegation have raised.

In her concluding remarks, Dr Marta Matri – the Deputy Speaker of the Parliament of Hungary commended the role played by the RSA in world affairs. She pointed out that the 1990 situation in Eastern Europe led the

people of Hungary to intensify calls for a new government. By 2010, Hungary started a new era and had proper elections that led to the ruling party getting two thirds majority.

On Russia – Ukraine war, she pointed out that Hungary believes in having peace with neighbors that is based in respect territorial integrity and sovereignty of a state in essence Ukraine. Many Ukrainian refugees sought refuge in Hungary and had to be given temporary residence status. Those who are of school age had to be allowed to attend school and have access to health facilities.

On Hungary European Union (EU) membership, Dr Matra indicated that they are EU member however, they voted against sending weapons to Ukraine but were in favour of providing humanitarian aid to war victims because they strive for peace in Europe.

She expressed appreciation to the Chairperson of the NCOP for availing himself to meet with the delegation and reiterated the invitation to Chairperson of the NCOP to lead a delegation to Hungary at a mutually convenient date.

5. General outcome of the courtesy call

The deliberations and outcomes of the meeting were as follows:

1) The Chairperson of the NCOP undertook to report to the Executive Authority about the meeting with the Hungarian delegation.
2) Appreciation of South Africa's role in peace-making was expressed.
3) The idea of having international conferences by government of Hungary and countries engaged in war to be invited was supported.
4) The courtesy call was a success.

6. Recommendations and/or Action by Parliament

None

(l) Report of the meeting between Mr. L Tsenoli, MP, the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly and the visiting South Korean Parliamentary delegation led by Mr. Park Byeongseug, the former Speaker of the National Assembly of the Republic of Korea 20 October 2023.

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Report of the meeting between Mr. L Tsenoli, MP - the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly and the visiting South Korean Parliamentary delegation led by Mr. Park Byeongseug – the former Speaker of the National Assembly of the Republic of Korea held on Friday, 20 October 2023

1. Purpose of the Report

To report on the Meeting between Mr L Tsenoli, MP - the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly and the visiting South Korean Parliamentary delegation led by Mr Park Byeongseug – the former Speaker of the National Assembly of the Republic of Korea held on Friday, 20 October 2023

2. Background

The Embassy of the Republic of Korea in the RSA initiated the meeting.

3. Purpose of the meeting

The purpose of the meeting was to strengthen parliament to parliament cooperation.

Korean delegation: Mr Park Byeongseug – the former Speaker of the National Assembly; Ms Kim Sang Hee, MP; Mr Lee MMyoung Su, MP; Mr Lee Won Wook, MP; Mr Jeon Haecheol, MP; H.E Mr Park Chull -joo – Ambassador of Republic of Korea in the RSA.
Korean Embassy staff: Ms Yoo Narae; Mr Jeong Hanseul; Ms Choi Sunghyang and Ms Song Sung -eun.

Parliament of the RSA: Mr L Tsenoli, MP – the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly. Ms Nomfundo Sonjica, the Section Manager: Bilaterals and Multilaterals, IRPD; Mr Zingisa Cawe, the IR Officer: Bilaterals, IRPD and Ms Marlyn Mdlalo, Officer: Office of the Deputy Speaker supported the meeting.

4. Meeting discussion

In her opening remarks, Mr L Tsenoli, MP – the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly conveyed greetings from the Speaker of the NA, Ms NN Mapisa-Nqakula, MP and the Chairperson of the NCOP, Mr AN Masondo, MP who could not meet the delegation due to their trip to the IPU Meeting in

Angola. He pointed out few things that need to be done at a world stage especially the reform of the world institutions among others. He called for collaboration on reform and democratization of the United Nations Security Council, World Bank, IMF and other institutions.

On African Agenda, he emphasized that all countries in Africa had signed the Africa Trade Agreement which would be crucial for countries in Africa to develop together. He also shared information about the World science conference held in December 2022 in Cape Town which adopted the declaration on Science for Social Justice. According to the contents of the declaration – Any science discovery should benefit poor communities.

He further urged Koreans to share their experience gained over years on Indigenous Knowledge Systems because Asia has acknowledged value in Indigenous knowledge systems.

On the IPU Conference in Angola, Mr L Tsenoli, MP – the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly pointed out that the Parliament of the RSA support the candidature of Ms Tulia Ackson for the position of the IPU President which was also endorsed by the SADC-PF.

In his response, Mr Park Byeongseug – the former Speaker of the National Assembly and leader of the delegation mentioned a meeting he had with the Speaker of the National Assembly, Ms NN Mapisa-Nqakula, MP two years ago. He also expressed appreciation to the RSA for commemorating 20 years of diplomatic relations and mentioned his visit to the statue and gravesite that commemorate the South African soldiers who died in the Korean War. He expressed the sincere gratitude of the people and government of South Korea to those 500 soldiers who died in that war.

He noted the comments made by Mr L Tsenoli, MP – the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly on African Agenda, reform of the world institutions, Parliament of the RSA support of Ms Tulia Ackson for the position of the IPU President, indigenous knowledge systems, etc. He stressed the importance of African Economic growth and good bilateral relations between Korea and

African countries. He mentioned that Korea intended to host the Korea – Africa Summit in May 2024 but moved the date of the summit to early June 2024 because of the upcoming 2024 National Elections in the RSA.

On sharing information on programmes on Indigenous Knowledge Systems, he indicated that plans could be made available to Deputy Speaker to visit South Korea time permitting to observe at first hand such programmes in Korea. On the issue of protection of the elderly in Korea through welfare policies which was raised by the Deputy Speaker, he stated that people who are over 65 years of age constitute 60% of the Korean population. The welfare policies support through grants including those people with low income.

In his concluding remarks, Mr L Tsenoli, MP – the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly made an undertaking to share with H.E Mr Park Chull -joo – Ambassador of Republic of Korea in the RSA information on Parliament Institute which was established to build capacity of MPs so that they could use the acquired skills in resolving community challenges. He further pointed out the 2024 National Elections and already Parliament have programmes designed to induct new MPs after the elections and would be happy if the two Parliaments could share information on technology and knowledge which could empower MPs especially on use of technology.

He thanked the delegation for visiting Parliament of the RSA and urged the two countries and Parliaments to further strengthen relations especially on areas of people to people and parliament to parliament, and other levels.

5. General outcome of the meeting

The deliberations and outcomes of the meeting were as follows:

1) Leader of the delegation urged the Deputy Speaker to pay attention on Korean companies investing in the RSA and expressed his appreciation for meeting the Deputy Speaker and expressed a wish that meeting further enhance relations between the two Parliaments.

2) Mr Park Byeongseug – the former Speaker of the National Assembly extended an invitation to the Deputy Speaker, Mr Tsenoli, MP to lead a delegation to South Korea at a mutually convenient date. Areas that the Deputy Speaker would like to learn such as Indigenous Knowledge Systems, Welfare policies in support of the elderly and low-income earners, etc could be shown or seen in practice.
3) Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly made an undertaking to share with H.E Mr Park Chull -joo – Ambassador of Republic of Korea in the RSA information on Parliament Institute which was established to build capacity of MPs so that they could use the acquired skills in resolving community challenges.
4) The meeting was a success.

6. Recommendations and/or Action by Parliament

None

2. The Minister of Small Business Development

(a) Annual Performance Plan of the Department of Small Business Development for 2024/25.

(b) Annual Performance Plan of the Small Enterprise Development Agency for 2024/25.

(c) Corporate Annual Performance Plan of the Small Enterprise Finance Agency (SOC) Ltd for 2024/25.