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NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

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PROCEEDINGS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

The House met at 14:01.

House Chairperson Mr C T Frolick took the Chair and requested members to observe a moment of silence for prayer or meditation.

**STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER ON CREATING STRATEGIC MULTISECTORAL
PARTNERSHIPS FOR A DISABILITY-INCLUSIVE SOCIETY**

The MINISTER OF WOMEN, YOUTH AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES: Hon House Chairperson, hon members and fellow South Africans, especially the women, youth and persons with disabilities, let me begin by appreciating that the National Assembly has placed this matter before this august House for debate. Chris Hani once reminded us that what we need is not slogans but reality ...

[Inaudible.]

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Today under the theme "Disability Inclusion Creating Strategic Multisectoral Partnerships for a Disability-Inclusive Society."

I rise to implore us as a nation to reach for that unity of purpose in the inclusion of persons with disabilities.

Every year Disability Rights Awareness Month runs from 3 November to 3 December culminating in the International Day of Persons with Disabilities on 3 December that is tomorrow. This is a period on which our nation must honestly ask themselves: Are persons with disabilities able to enjoy the rights we have promised all South Africans, and we are removing the barriers that prevent full participation.

My responsibility in this ministerial statement is focused on reporting progress since the last 2024 Disability Rights Awareness Month to identify the gaps that continue to undermine inclusion and to outline how partnerships global, national and local are being used to build a South Africa that is genuinely disability inclusive.

Across the world more than one billion people live with disabilities. In South Africa, current estimates place disability prevalence at around 3,3 million people. However, we

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know that this is underreported especially in rural areas and among children. Behind these numbers are daily realities as children with disabilities are unable to access early learning or complete school.

Young people and adults with disabilities are overrepresented among the unemployed even when qualified. Persons with disabilities are facing heightened risk of violence and abuse. Therefore our disability and Gender-based Violence and Femicide responses must reinforce one another.

These realities confront our constitutional promise of equality and remind us of that full participation for persons with disabilities demands collective responsibility.

No single department, no single province, no single NGO nor family, nor Parliament itself or even the judiciary or the executive can deliver it alone. The systems that shape daily life must move with shared purpose. Experience here and abroad shows that we advance fastest when government, business and academia and civil society work to a common data-driven agenda with public institutions, planning and budgeting together businesses changing how they recruit and procure universities

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and driving innovation and organisations of persons with disabilities leading and holding us all to account.

Hon members, unlike on women, labour of finance, there is still no dedicated G20 working group on disability. However, for the first time in the history of the G20 South Africa has begun the process to change that. The United Kingdom out of our own initiative has committed to take this work forward during its Presidency.

In parallel, organisations of persons with disabilities and civil society convened the Disability 20 that is the G20 Summit whose disability inclusion call to action we welcome and support.

Hon House Chairperson, we were clear that we would not preside over this G20 Presidency and leave with nothing to show for persons living with disabilities. That is why as part of our chair ship of the G20 empowerment of women working group we committed to the Disability Inclusion Nerve Centre, a legacy project that will strengthen evidence co-ordination and accountability across the disability sector. The nerve centre is being designed with organisations of persons with disabilities

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in line with the principle of nothing about us without us, supported by the European House Ambrosetti an international institute specialising in observatories and evidence systems.

On the sidelines of the G20 ministerial meeting, we also secured R2,5 million in seat funding for the Disability Inclusion Nerve Centre from the Old China Women's Federation and received strong expressions of support from International Disability Alliance. An early but important sign that global solidarity is backing South Africa's disability work.

Domestically, the University of Cape Town and several private sector institutions have indicated clear interests in supporting the centre's research data and innovation work. We call on departments and public entities to back this initiative so that the nerve centre becomes the true engine of co-ordinated disability inclusion across the state.

Fellow South Africans, the Support Employment Enterprise Factories housed in the Department of Employment and Labour create sustainable jobs for persons with disabilities through factories that produce school uniforms, hospital linen, pyjamas, uniforms and office furnishings.

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Following our oversight visit to Pretoria factory with Deputy Minister Nemadzinga-Shabalala, Ministers of Labour and National Treasury, is procurement requirements allowing departments and provinces to buy directly from these companies.

At the launch of Disability Rights Awareness Month in Kimberly this year on 3 November Premier Zamani Saul committed the Northern Cape to significantly increasing its orders including 5 000 school desks for the coming school year. If all eight provinces and public entities replicate this approach we could create more than 3 000 additional jobs for persons with disabilities.

Work is also underway to expand the Social Employment Enterprise, SEE, footprint including ongoing efforts to establish a facility in Mpumalanga the only province without the SEE factory.

As government through the National Development Plan, NDP, we have set a 7% target for the employment of persons living with disabilities by 2030 with annual milestones that should bring department's steadily closer to the goal. By this year, public

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service should be at 4% but progress is uneven and we hope that Parliament will also do the same.

We have therefore engaged the Minister of Public Service and Administration and the ministerial directive will be issued to enforce annual targets, strengthen reporting and ensure recruitment processes that actively open opportunities for persons with disabilities. This effort extends to public entities and boards where departments are expected to increase meaningful representation and draw on the skills and leadership with persons with disabilities.

We therefore call on qualified persons with disabilities to apply for vacancies across government as we hardwire inclusion into the public service. We also call on the private sector to do the same in employing persons with disabilities at least at the target of 4% for this year.

Working with the Minister of Electricity efforts are also underway to ensure that all special schools are fully electrified with a strong emphasis on solar power so that learning is not disrupted by any eventualities.

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Alongside the review of White Paper 6 on inclusive education, we have conducted qualitative research on special schools profiling 120 across all nine provinces with the intention of matching them with corporate sponsors through their Corporate Social Investment, CSI, partnerships so that no child with a disability is excluded from learning because of access and infrastructure. The study also that we are speaking about makes findings and recommendations for implementation.

Hon House Chairperson, alongside these programmes we have commissioned research on how climate change and disaster affect persons with disabilities. This evidence is guiding our work on resilient accessible infrastructure and emergency responses. We are finalising the Disability Rights Bill incorporating public inputs so it can return to the legislative pipeline as a single instrument for driving disability inclusion across the state.

The Bill enforces the pillars of the White Paper on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities as well as the convention.

We are also re-establishing the Presidential Working Group on Disability to improve high level co-ordination with organisations of persons with disabilities, while standardising

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implementation tools across the public service including universal design and access plans the reasonable accommodation fund to support recruitment and retention of employees with disabilities and improved reporting.

We are also working with sister departments on accessible information and communication technologies, ICTs, emerging technologies and artificial intelligence to ensure these advances expand rather than restricts rights. Taken together, these measures I have mentioned aim to embed disability inclusion in law, in institutions and daily practices not living it to good will or to who holds office.

Hon House Chairperson, as I close allow me to remind this House of lessons from our own recent history. Two decades ago, South Africa faced one of the worlds most severe HIV and Aids epidemics. Our infection rates were among the highest globally yet when government, scientists, activists, faith-based communities, businesses and arts pull together we shared the costs of that epidemic. Millions of our people are alive today because of that unity of purpose. That is the spirit we now need to build a disability inclusive society. Just as we showed *Soul City* the movie yesterday and countless artist helped shift

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public understanding of HIV, we know that social mobilisation, culture and narrative change are powerful tools for transforming attitude towards disability, dismantling stigma and building communities where inclusion is instinctive not an afterthought.

This is why in our 2025 16 Days of Activism Campaign launched under the theme "Letsema, Working Together." We placed artists, media, film makers and story tellers in the centre. They in return displayed patriotism and commitment to using their platforms to confront Gender-based Violence and Femicide and to amplify the voices of survivors as well as those of persons with disabilities doing work that no secular directive or policy speech for that matter can do alone.

Hon members, the same collective effort is required now. The initiatives I have outlined today and the many that exist across public sectors will only succeed if every part of society pulls in the same direction with co-ordinated action, consistent accountability and public mobilisation that rejects stigma, exclusion and discrimination in all their forms.

As President O R Tambo reminded us of and I quote:

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It is our responsibility to break down barriers of division and create a country where everyone feels included.

Let us break down every barrier of exclusion and build a South Africa where all belongs and persons with disabilities are accommodated and included. I thank you very much.

IsiZulu:

Nk G MCHUNU: Sihlalo ohloniphekile, amalungu ahloniphekile, muzi wonke waseNingizimu Afrika, angiqale inkulumo yami ngokusho iqiniso elingenokuphikiswa, abantu abakhubazekile baseNingizimu Afrika abayidingi le nqwaba yemicimbi, imikhankaso nezinkulumo okucikozwa ngayo egcwele izethembiso ezingafezeki.

Abakhubazekile badinga uHulumeni ozobeka izidingo zabo phambili nsuku zonke. Uhulumeni osebenzayo, oqinisa imithetho futhi onikeza imiphumela eletha ushintsho ezimpilweni zabo. Kuyihlazo elikhulu ukuthi abantu abakhubazekile kuleli lizwe ...

English:

... are being failed by ...

IsiZulu:

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... uHulumeni wabo ababemthembile nobathembisile kodwa wangazifeza izethembiso zakhe. Sihlalo ohloniphekile, sekuyiminyaka ngeminyaka sizwa izithembiso mayelana nokubambisana phakathi kwezihlaka ezehlukene. Kodwa isikhathi sesiside kakhulu abantu abakhubazekile bephathwa kabuhlungu. Alukho usizo abalunikezwayo. Benziwa izihloko zezinkulumo kuxoxwe ngabo kukitazwe imiphakathi kubengathi lukhulu okucatshangwayo ngabo laba abakhubazekile kanti lutho kubukiswa ngabantu abahluphekile. Kukhulunywa ngokubambisana kodwa izingane ezikhubazekile zisavalelwe ngabandle kwezikhungo zokuthuthukiswa kwezingane ngoba othisha abaqeqeshiwe. Izikole zabakhubazekile zincane kakhulu, kuyafana ngokuthi azikho. Kunezingane eziphoqelesa ukuthi zilinde emakhaya ukuthola izikhala ezikoleni.

Ezokuthutha ziyihlazo zinsuku zonke. Amabhasi namatekisi awakwazi ukwamukela abantu abakhubazekile ngendlela efanele ngoba awalungele ukugibelisa abakhubazekile. Emitholampilo, ezibhedlela nasezinkambini zamaphoyisa kunzima ukuxhumana nabakhubazekile ngoba akukho ngisho abahumushayo ngolimi lwezandla. Abakhubazekile bantula imisebenzi. Bayayekelwa nje bengaqashwa, hhayi ngoba bengenawo amakhono kodwa kungenxa yobandlululo oluqhubekayo kanye nokungaqiniswa kwemigomo

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uHulumeni. Ukuntuleka kwemisebenzi kubantu abakhubazekile kuphezulu kakhulu kunesilinganiso sikazwelonke.

English:

This is not accidental. It is systemic exclusion. We cannot fight unemployment while excluding persons with disabilities.

IsiZulu:

Kunomnyango othunyiwe ukuthi uvikele amalungelo abantu abakhubazekile, kodwa usuphenduke indawo yokubala imibiko, izinkulumo ezingapheli, imihlangano yansuku zonke, kanye nokuhamba izinkomfa ezingenayo imiphumela kuchithwa izimali okungabe ifaka ekusizeni abantu abakhubazekile.

English:

How do we speak of strategic partnerships when ...

IsiZulu:

... izinhlangano zabantu abakhubazekile zithola uxhaso namuhla, ngakusasa alusekho? Baphile kanjani abakhubazekile uma bencikiselwa kangaka. Izinto ezibalulekile zokuhlangabezana nezidingo zabakhubazekile azikho. Uma kumele baye ezibhedlela bahamba kanzima. Izinsiza njengezihlalo zabakhubazekile,

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izinduku zokudondoloza abanazo. Abanye ubabona bethwele ngezingubo, abanye beqhutshwa ngamabhala belethwa emitholampilo.

Omama ubathole beme emigqeni emide nezingane ezikhubazekile zibelethwe emhlane. Lo Hulumeni umatasa usitshela ukuthi unguHulumeni onakekelayo, hhayibo, kuphi khona?

English:

This is not a partnership problem but a leadership failure. Partnerships must go beyond the government's boardrooms. No policies should be made for persons with disabilities without those people with disabilities being at the centre.

IsiZulu:

Abantu abakhubazekile bahlale nabo etafuleni la kuhlelwa uhlahlo kwabiwo mali kazwelonke. Kumele futhi kube yibona abahola izinhlelo zabo ezithinta izimpilo zabo, hhayi izimenya nezithameli zemicimbi.

English:

This is not a favour. This is a constitutional right.

IsiZulu:

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I-MKP iletha izimfuno eziphuthumayo neziqhamuka kubo abantu abakhubazekile uqobo ...

English:

... across the country.

IsiZulu:

Asiqageli. Abakhubazekile bayayihlala iminyaka belinde usizo lwezihlalo zabakhubazekile, izinduku zokudondoloza, nezinsiza zokuzwa. Minyaka yonke bayabhalisa ukuthi badingani kodwa akufiki lutho kubo.

English:

We demand a national audit, immediate procurement reforms, and strict delivery timelines. A wheelchair is not a luxury; it is mobility, independence and dignity.

IsiZulu:

Abantu abakhubazekile abanikwe imfundo esezingeni elifanele.

English:

Education is not a privilege. It is a right.

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IsiZulu:

Makube impogo ukuthi othisha baqeqeshwe ukuze abakhubazekile bafundiswe ngendlela efanele. I-MKP ifuna yonke iminyango engafuni ukuqasha abakhubazekile izezwe obala, ...

English:

... name and shame.

IsiZulu:

Kungagcini ngo ...

English:

... name and shame ...

IsiZulu:

... kube nesijeziso esiqinile ngesenzo esibi abasenzayo sokucwasa. Mhlonishwa Sihlalo, uHulumeni ngeke azibize ngoHulumeni onakekelayo uma uqhubeka nokushiya abantu abakhubazekile ngemuva. Siyi-MKP, ...

English:

... we stand firmly with persons with disabilities. We demand a state that respects, protects and fulfils their rights, not

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tomorrow, not next year, but today. Until that day comes, we will not rest.

IsiZulu:

Ngeke sithuke sivumele ukunganakekelwa kwabakhubazekile.

English:

And we will not apologise for telling the truth.

IsiZulu:

MaAfrika Amahle, i-MKP ifikile futhi ithelekile. Konke ukukhwabanisa okwenziwa uHulumeni ... [Akuzwakali.] ... sizobaveza obala futhi bazobanjwa ...

English:

... one by one.

IsiZulu:

Bazolikhuluma iqiniso. [Kwaphela isikhathi.]

Ms T A KHANYILE: Hon Chair, I rise today not only to speak but to demand action. For far too long, persons with disabilities in South Africa have been spoken about, referenced in policy,

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included in speeches, yet excluded in practice. We must confront the truth. Disability inclusion is still treated as an afterthought and a nice-to-have a footnote in our national development agenda. This remains unacceptable for a constitutional democracy committed to dignity, equality and human rights.

According to the latest official figures, over 2,5 million South Africans, around 7,5% of our population, live with disabilities. These are our children, our elders, our colleagues, our neighbours, and our fellow citizens. Yet their experience remains one of the lowest excess, highest exclusion and deepest marginalisation. This is a national crisis that demands co-ordinated multisectoral partnerships for fragmented, inconsistent and unmonitored interventions. The 15th Commission for Employment Equity Annual Report 2014-15 indicates that employed persons with disabilities are below 1%. While between 2015-20, only 1,2% of persons with disabilities were formally employed. In the current financial year, 0,95% of persons with disabilities were employed in the public sector, with only 1,2% of employees with disabilities in the private sector. This is a clear demonstration that all sectors failed to meet their 2% equity target. The current equity target has been set to 7%. Why

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has this target been increased when even the government is failing to meet its own 2% target? Hon Minister, ...

IsiZulu:

... ngoMeyi 2025, ubulana eNdlini wethula isitatimende ngalo udaba lwabantu abakhubazekile. Ake uchazele umphakathi onokukhubazeka ukuthi ukusukela ngaleso sikhathi kuze kube namhlanje, imuphi umehluko umnyango wakho owenzile ezimpilweni zabo ukuqinisekisa ukuthi bayawathola amathuba omsebenzi abaqeqeshelwe yona. Futhi, abaqashwa nje baphonswe noma ngabe ikuphi ngoba kugcinwa nje icala.

English:

Minister, your lofty overseas trips that have been packaged as working visits and study tours have promised to usher in grand disability and gender-based violence strategies, yet we await tangible implementation and results. If anything, your extravagant travel has been more of a wasteful expenditure trip and an insult to persons with disabilities. Hon members, in 2023, this Parliament took a historic step by recognising SA Sign Language as the 12th official language of the Republic. A milestone, a moment of pride, and a moment of hope for the deaf community. Two years later, what has changed for deaf South

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Africans? Let us be brutally honest, very little. Most government departments still do not have sign language interpreters, not in service offices, not in clinics and hospitals, not in police stations and courts, not in community meetings and outreach programmes, not in government communications, not in Parliament portfolio committee meetings, not in the Madlanga Commission, and absolutely not in the Ad Hoc Committee.

This is not just failure to implement; this is neglect. As a country, we cannot claim to recognise sign language while deaf South Africans still cannot access justice, health care, education or public information in their own language. Hon Chair, allow me to share something deeply personal. My own mother has a hearing and speech impairment. I have witnessed in my own home throughout my life the barriers she faces, the misunderstandings, the exclusion, the lack of interpreters and the frustration of being unable to access simple information or services because communication was not made accessible. Her experience is not unique; it is the daily reality of millions. And because of her, this fight is not abstract for me; it is personal. It is lived, and it is urgent. No South African should struggle to access their rights simply because we have failed to

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implement what we promised. Hon members, the very portfolio tasked with advancing the rights of persons with disabilities lacks a credible monitoring and evaluation to track departmental compliance, accessibility of services, budget allocations, sign language rollout and implementation of disability inclusive policies. Without monitoring, there is no measurement. And without measurement, there is no intervention. Without intervention, there is no progress. This leaves disability inclusion accounted for, unmonitored, and unsupported. This is not oversight; that is failure. We must correct it immediately.

Persons with disabilities must not be treated as an afterthought. Policy language has become polished but remains poor in implementation. Let me repeat this for all of us in this House. Persons with disabilities are not by the way. They are not optional, they are not charity cases, they are not burdens. They are equal citizens of this country with equal rights, equal value and equal claim to opportunity. Hon Chair, hon members, South Africans with disabilities have waited long enough. Now we need and deserve action. Let us write a new chapter where SA Sign Language is not only recognised on paper but implemented in practice. A chapter where disability inclusion is not charity but justice. A chapter where every department delivers services

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accessible to all. A chapter where persons with disabilities are empowered, respected and valued, not as an afterthought but as equals in this democracy. The measure of any nation is how it treats its most vulnerable. Let us prove through our actions, not our words, that South Africa treats all its people with dignity. I thank you.

Mr M SHIKWAMBANA: Hon House Chair, fighters and fellow South Africans, the EFF rises to declare with absolute clarity that the struggle for true freedom remains incomplete as long as persons with disability continue to be excluded, marginalised, and denied meaningful participation in our society.

We note the Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities' call for strengthened disability inclusion across all sectors, and we as the EFF intensify and amplify that call. We assert that persons with disability must be included, not symbolically, not as an afterthought, but meaningfully in policy development, in planning, in budgeting and in programme implementation.

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This is not merely a constitutional obligation. It's a moral duty. It is a national responsibility. It is a cornerstone of South Africa's transformation and development agenda.

Yet, the reality is this. Persons with disability remain at the bottom of socioeconomic power. They remain the most vulnerable to violence, to poverty, to unemployment and to exclusion.

This is not because they are incapable. This is because society has failed them, the government has failed them, policy implementation has failed them and political will has also failed them.

We emphasise today that empowering persons with disability is not charity. It is a fundamental prerequisite for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and for building a South Africa that is equal, just and humane.

This empowerment requires concrete actions, an accessible build environment where no one is blocked by infrastructure created for only a portion of society, inclusive education that is properly resourced and free from discrimination, equitable employment and economic participation because disability does

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not mean inability, access to assistive devices and support services without long queues, shortages or excuses, and access to strengthened social protection systems that restore dignity rather than deepen poverty.

Disability inclusion is not a favour. It is a call for a unified national stance. It's a consensus approach to protecting and promoting the right for persons with disabilities. This right must be mainstreamed across all sectors, ensuring that persons with disabilities are not further marginalised or excluded from decision-making, participation and beneficiation.

As we observe Disability Right Awareness Month, the EFF calls upon every sector of society, government department, private entities, civil society, communities and individuals to reflect seriously on this role. We must ask ourselves, have we progressed? Where have we failed? What gaps continue to silence and sideline persons with disability?

Our responsibility today is to confront those challenges honestly, boldly and urgently. We must commit, not in speeches, not in promises, but in action to build a South Africa where every person is recognised, valued, empowered and included; a

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South Africa where disability inclusion is not an event, not a slogan, but a lived reality. I thank you, Chair.

Ms B E MACHI: Hon Chairperson, the IFP recognises that creating a truly inclusive society for persons with disabilities requires co-ordinated action across government, civil society, businesses and communities.

Despite progressive laws and policies, many South Africans with disabilities still face barriers to education, employment, health care and full participation in society.

The IFP notes with concern that unemployment amongst persons with disabilities remains unacceptably high, access to assistive devices is limited and educational ... inclusive and uneven.

Women and children with disabilities are particularly vulnerable, facing compounded risks, including gender-based violence, GBV. Furthermore, persons with disabilities are too often excluded from decision-making platforms, as evidenced by recent lapses in the National Dialogue processes.

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Addressing these challenges requires sustained multisectoral collaboration with schools, workplaces, municipalities and community organisations, working alongside the departments of Social Development, and Employment and Labour, as well as civil society, to expand access to education, early childhood development, employment opportunities and assistive technologies.

Initiatives like the Supported Employment Enterprises, SEE, demonstrate the translatable impact of partnerships, showing how inclusion creates both opportunity and dignity.

We also emphasise the importance of community-based programmes that empower families and caregivers, ensuring that persons with disabilities receive the support and skills needed to participate fully in society.

Daily awareness campaigns ... [Inaudible.] ... infrastructure and targeted policy implementation are critical to moving beyond symbolic commitment towards tangible change.

The IFP further supports measures that guarantee the inclusion of persons with disabilities in all decision-making structures

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and platforms, including public entities, boards and national dialogues. Through ... inclusion requires that persons with disabilities are partners in shaping policies that affect their lives and not merely beneficiaries of programmes.

The fight for a disability-inclusive society is not a once a year effort. It is a daily commitment that requires innovation, unity and shared responsibility. By working together across sectors, we can ensure that persons with disabilities enjoy quality opportunities, dignity and the right to participate fully in all aspects of South African life.

The IFP fully endorses efforts to build strategic multisectoral partnerships that translate legislative and policy commitments into real, measurable outcomes for persons with disabilities. I thank you, Chairperson.

Ms J S PETERSEN: House Chair, hon members, members of the public, the Minister's statement on creating strategic multisectoral partnerships for a disability-inclusive society is not just timely. It is a long overdue call to action, because the truth is this. We cannot speak of democracy, transformation and nation-building while persons with disabilities are still

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navigating a country that was not built with them in mind. For years, disability inclusion has been treated as a side project, a footnote, an item to be ticked off in annual reports.

A society is not inclusive by intention. It is inclusive by design, by budget, by enforcement and by accountability. A disability-inclusive South Africa requires more than policies. It demands partnerships that are active, not performative. It demands that government departments stop working in silos, that the private sector stop treating accessibility as an optional expense, and that civil society is empowered as an equal partner, not a stakeholder we consult once a year.

If we are serious, then our schools must be accessible, our clinics must be equipped, our workplaces must accommodate, our transport systems must transform, our digital world must open its doors and our justice system must be responsive to the violence, discrimination and exploitation faced by persons with disabilities every single day.

We cannot continue building a country where people are left behind, not because they lack ability, but because we lack commitment.

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Therefore, we welcome the Minister's focus on multisectoral partnerships. However, partnerships must come with power, resources, timelines and measurable outcomes. Otherwise, they are just speeches wrapped in beautiful language.

Let this be the turning point. Let this be the moment we refuse to treat disability inclusion as charity. Instead, recognise it as a constitutional imperative, a human rights obligation and a moral test of who we are as a nation, because South Africa will never be truly free until every person of every ability can move, learn, work and live with dignity. Thank you.

Mrs H DENNER: House Chair, approximately 3,3 million individuals live with disabilities in South Africa. For persons with disabilities, the unemployment rate exceeds 80% in some regions. It even exceeds 90% in others. It is expected that the unemployment rate among people with disabilities may be higher, but these numbers are alarmingly high, indicating a crisis amongst the disabled working population. Unfortunately, we have to say this. This crisis is largely due to the structural failures of government over the past 30 years.

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Persons with functional difficulties are far more likely to experience multidimensional poverty. Households headed by persons with disabilities often have less access to basic services compared to others.

Too many schools operate in buildings never designed for accessibility. A child cannot enter a classroom with dignity. Resources, especially assistive devices, remain scarce. Many teachers have not been adequately prepared. Participation by children with disabilities lags behind that of their peers, and a low percentage of persons with severe impairments attain higher education.

Educational inclusion is not about fixing the learner to fit the system. It's about fixing the system to embrace every learner, and government has decades of systemic failure to its name in this regard.

Furthermore, as femicide rates climb, women with disabilities face compounded risk from GBV. Where is the protection?

Basic service delivery by local government, entrusted with upholding basic human rights, such as access to clean water, a

safe and healthy environment, reliable electricity and other essential services, is failing so spectacularly that the everyday hardships faced by all South Africans are even more acutely felt by people with disabilities whose access and well-being depend most critically on these fundamental services.

It is against these failures that we discuss strategic partnerships. There are some successes, like SEE factories, which will now apparently be able to supply goods such as furniture, uniforms and linen directly to government departments and entities without lengthy tender procurement processes. This is a long overdue step designed to preserve jobs for people with disabilities, reduce state costs and promote dignity.

This reform, which the FF Plus has insisted upon since the Sixth Parliament, promotes inclusion and supports local manufacturing.

Afrikaans:

Maar een swaeltjie maak nie 'n somer nie.

English:

The Minister herself has said on more than one occasion that the real test of government is whether inclusion moves from paper to

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practice. We can talk about strategic partnerships and building a disability-inclusive society, but while a disabled grandmother cannot get her wheelchair past the sewage flowing past her front door, while a disabled child cannot finish his basic education due to a lack of resources at his local school, while quality health care is not provided, and while disabled people cannot find work because of rigid labour legislation and red tape that continue to stifle job creation, we cannot talk about creating a truly disability-inclusive society.

Tomorrow is the International Day of Persons with Disabilities ... [Inaudible.] [Time expired.]

Dr T K S LETLAPE: Hon House Chair, it is quite fortunate that we have this discussion around the time of World Aids Day.

Sometimes we fool ourselves about the progress that we have made in relation to HIV. One of the things that I would like to remind all of us is that we have made that progress because people with HIV led the process. They dragged us into doing our job. The person that led that programme was a person living with HIV. If we want to make similar strides in terms of people with disabilities, the people must lead. It should not be able-bodied people that are doing for people with disabilities. What we

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should be asking ourselves, we should be asking them how we can help. So, we need to ensure that all the structures that are set up are led by people with disabilities. They should not come to participate. They should come to lead.

One of the things that I have learned in life is that those who live the experience are the ones that can lead. We do not understand what those people go through. One of the things that we should look at, is how we invest in the education system for people with learning disabilities and it is frightening how unsupported they are. In the schools that they have, the bright ones are separated so that they can accelerate. The ones that are slow are put in a separate class and they are just pushed through and when they get to matric, they do not have the requisite knowledge to be able to be useful citizens.

So, my appeal, Minister, is let us engage the technology department because when you look around the world, people use technology to help people with disabilities. With technology, they are able to compete with others. I just want to remind you that most people with disabilities have talents that people with abilities do not have. When you give them the assistance to bridge the gap you unlock human potential second to none. People

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with disabilities are capable. What we should ask is how we can help them and we should ensure that they lead and they are represented in all structures of society. Thank you.

Rev K R J MESHOE: House Chairperson, hon members, South Africa's commitment to a disability inclusive society requires more than policy statements. Yes, the ACDP concurs that it demands strategic multisectoral partnerships that unite government, civil society, business and international partners. However, the Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities acknowledged in its 2025 strategic plan that people with disabilities remain greatly marginalised and that mainstreaming requires co-ordinated leadership across sectors.

Government is seen to be failing people with disabilities by under delivering on employment equity, lacking representation in leadership and struggling to implement effective monitoring and accountability frameworks. People with disabilities make up only 1,4% of the workforce, far below the national target of three percent. Amendments to the Employment Equity Act in January promised stronger inclusion but critics argue these changes have not translated into real opportunities. Systematic barriers still face young people with disabilities in education, training

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and employment. The department's 2024/25 annual report noted delays in implementing monitoring frameworks and highlighted capacity constraints that weaken delivery and public discourse has amplified these concerns. Civil society organisations have repeatedly highlighted that government departments lack robust monitoring frameworks. This results in poor enforcement of disability rights and weak co-ordination across Ministries.

Professor Armand Bam, head of the social impact at Stellenbosch Business School, argues that disability inclusion is not charity, it is a legal requirement and a matter of social justice. To raise awareness, the National Council of and for Persons with Disabilities, NCPD, leverages media partnerships for its publicity, showing it to be strategic, impactful, authentic and transformative. The NCPD reported in October that media partnerships generated over 100 million impressions.

However, they also stressed the urgent need for government accountability and collaboration with grassroots organisations. Government failure lies not in the absence of policy but in weak implementation, poor accountability and lack of representation. To correct this, government must strengthen enforcement of employment equity, invest in youth inclusion and build multi-

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sectoral partnerships that will ensure that people with disabilities are visible, empowered and included in every sphere of society. Thank you.

Ms C T NONTENJA: Hon House Chair, strategical multi-sectoral partnerships hold significant promise for building a disability inclusive society. When designed ethically, with strong participation from persons with disabilities, clear accountability mechanisms and equitable power sharing, they create innovative, sustainable and holistic solutions. However, these partnerships must guard against tokenism, power imbalances and profit-driven approaches. The success of such collaborations depends on centring the voices and leadership of persons with disabilities themselves.

Partnerships sometimes involve people with disabilities organisations only superficially, just to tick the box. Without genuine participation, policies may not reflect real needs and can reinforce stereotypes. Governments and corporations often dominate the agenda. Non-profit organisations and grassroots communities may lack negotiation power or resources to lead. This can skew priorities towards donor or corporate interests instead of disability rights. Too many partners can slow

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decision-making. Co-ordination challenges include overlapping responsibilities, unclear leadership, duplicated activities. This can reduce efficiency and delay implementation. Partnerships often depend on short-term funding or political cycles.

If a donor withdraws or leadership changes, initiatives may collapse, leaving people with disabilities organisations without long-term support, which is a sustainability concern.

IsiXhosa:

Umzekelo, iiprojekhthi koomasipala ziyatshintsha xa kufika uceba omtsha kuba ufika afake ezakhe. Loo nto ibangele ukuba ezi projekhthi bezikhona zibengoodingindawo abangabalulekanga.

English:

On listening to the Minister's speech, the UDM did not get any assurance that this will not be the case. I thank you.

Xitsonga:

Tat S M GANA: Mutshamaxitulu, ndzi khensa Muchaviseki Mkhalipi.

English:

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Hon members and fellow South Africans, this afternoon, I stand at a podium that is not accessible to a person using a wheelchair. This is but one example of how subtly we lock disabilities out of places of power and influence. We have come a long way in making our society more accessible. Building quotes now mandate certain accommodations and discrimination based on disability illegal. Yes, these are important steps, but they do not go nearly far enough to ensure that persons with disabilities have the same enjoyment of their constitutional rights as anyone else. They do not address the fact that many in our country will have to ask for an accommodation to speak at this podium instead of just being open to do so.

Hon members, persons with disabilities are not a faraway subset of our population. It is the future of all of us as we grow older, and sometimes it can happen in an instant. Yet, every one of us want to live as independently and safely as possible. Every one of us want to be able to participate meaningfully in social, political and economic life. These are the things that bind us all together, and we should fight to ensure that it is possible to all. It is the duty of us all to create a society that is not just accommodating to persons with disabilities but

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welcoming. One that recognises unique needs and vulnerabilities but still ensures that we are all on equal footing.

Let us work together, government, private sector, and the people most affected by these barriers of entry to ensure equal opportunities to all. Let us ensure that our buildings, our public spaces, and our very way of work does not exclude anyone. Let us harness technology to build new opportunities and amplify the voices of those who have been silenced for too long.

Xitsonga:

Ndza khensa swinene, Mutshamaxitulu.

Dr M A MAIMANE: Hon members, ...

Setswana:

... багаетшо, dumelang.

English:

I rise today as an uncle, a brother, to a young South African who is living with disability. From the moment people with disability go through life, whether it be hospitals, whether it be places of work, most families have to battle the system just

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to get them through the process. Today, hon members, it is one thing to live with disability, it's quite another to have a government that in certain instances does not work to support you. So, hon Minister, I welcome your statement today.

I think it is not coincidental to note the fact that 7,5% of our population live with disability. This is for fellow South Africans with 3,3 million people who remain structurally excluded from functional education. Therefore, hon members, what the statement that the Deputy Minister of Employment and Labor say, that despite progressive legislation, persons with disabilities still face systemic exclusion from education and employment. So it's in their progression, Minister. It's a fact that they go to school and sometimes nutrition programs are not up to standard. It's that their assessment and the access to quality teaching is still a distant dream. It's that when they get to Tvet colleges, sometimes spaces are not acknowledged.

So hon Minister, today we can't rest and simply just speak about this issue. It is time to act, and we have to act soon. For like us and family members, we want a government that will work with persons with disability, not against them. So just a few things to suggest is that hon Minister, let us hold departments who are

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not reaching their targets as to a number of persons with disability who are working there. Those targets must be upheld. The second thing is let us fight hard that Small, Medium, and Micro Enterprises, SMMEs, funding and as our work of redress, that people with disability are able to gain access to contracts and be able to advance the economic opportunities. For it's one thing to live with disability, it's quite another to combine that with poverty.

The last issue I would raise is that let's ensure that our schools are accessible, our centres of learning. Because ultimately, disability should never be a death sentence. We should have a government that fights every day for inclusion of all citizens, and more specifically, people living with disability. I hope we can take action, Minister, and we will work as best as we can.

Setswana:

Re a leboga.

Ms T L MARAWU: House Chair, today's statement confronts a matter that goes to the heart of our constitutional promise. The creation of a South Africa where every person, regardless of

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ability, enjoys dignity, opportunity, safety, and full participation. The ATM rises firmly to support a disability-inclusive society and to insist that this inclusion must be intentional, measurable, and rooted in justice.

Hon members, for far too long, disability has been treated as a social issue to be managed, rather than a developmental priority to be integrated across all sectors. Government departments continue to work in silos, private sector initiatives remain fragmented, and community organizations are left carrying burdens that should be shared by the state and society at large. This is why the Minister's commitment to Strategic Multisectoral Partnership is an important point of departure, but it must go beyond promises and be linked to outcomes.

Firstly, a disability-inclusive society requires strong inter-governmental co-ordination. We cannot speak of partnership when departments do not align their policies, budget, or mental tools. The ATM calls for a centralized mechanism that ensures that disability rights are mainstreamed into planning, budgeting, and reporting across all spheres of government. Inclusion must be a performance indicator, not a public relations theme.

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Secondly, we must elevate private sector and labour partnerships beyond organism. We cannot continue celebrating isolated co-operating social responsibility projects when unemployment among persons with disabilities remain disproportionately high.

Strategic partnership must enforce compliance with employment equity targets, incentive inclusive workplaces, ensure that persons with disabilities have access to skills, technology and entrepreneurship support.

Thirdly, the success of multi-sectoral partnership depends on the meaningful participation of persons with disabilities themselves. Nothing about them, without them.

House Chair, we must also confront a reality that too often the majority of ignored people are from rural areas, including persons with disabilities. This is where exclusion is at its worst. In these communities, accessible to transport is almost non-existent. Clinics are under-resourced. Schools lack specialized support and assist devices take even longer to reach those who need them. Rural families shoulder unbearable burden simply because disability services are centralized in cities.

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The ATM therefore calls a binding national framework that compels all sectors to collaborate on disability-inclusive development, stronger public-private civil society combat backed by accountability mechanisms, increased budget allocation that support community-based disability services, assistive technology and inclusive infrastructure, a special rural disability support strategy anchored in decentralized services and local partnership, data-driven monitoring so that progress is measurable and government is held accountable.

Let us therefore commit collectively across all sectors to build a South Africa where inclusion is not symbolic but structural - not aspirational but real. I thank you, Chair.

Mr I ISMAIL-MOOSA: Malibongwe! Respected hon Chair, hon members. Firstly, we seek protection with the Almighty from Satan, the accursed. In the name of Almighty, the most merciful, the most gracious, I greet you with a universal greeting of peace to all our families, South Africans. In the name of Almighty, the most merciful and the most gracious, and that is what we should look at mercy when it comes to wheelchairs. One of the greatest characters of the disability sector is resilience. As a sector

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of society, persons with disability have to work double the effort to raise awareness about their needs and recognition.

Right now, as we speak, a group known as Diffabled, Not Disabled, is doing a 190-kilometre wheelchair push from Harding to Durban to raise funds to purchase active wheelchairs for those who cannot afford to purchase it. Furthermore, Al Jama-ah salutes the organization, Muslims Against Illegitimate, MAIL, leaders, who frequently provides wheelchairs to free, frail, and disabled persons. It is unacceptable that disabled people must risk their lives on routes such as the N2, as in the case of the Wheelchair Push event to highlight their plight and neglect of government to the nation.

The Treasury appears to be nonchalant about the needs of disabled persons. Al Jama-ah calls on Treasury to immediately identify savings and use the money for the Minister to purchase active wheelchairs. Like the mines have social projects, so too must companies outside the mining industry have a social plan. All social plans, including that of mining industries, must make provisions for wheelchairs. Al Jama-ah party will introduce a Private Members Bill to make it compulsory for all companies to

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have social plans. Many companies do not have social plans as they have no regard and empathy for persons with disabilities.

We call on Treasury to stop the Cinderella Phenomenon treatment of the Minister's department by allocating a budget which does not suffice to address the needs of persons with disabilities. We appeal to the Minister of Finance, when allocating budgets, please consider the needs of disabled persons. Malibongwe!

Mrs T M CHAUKE-ADONIS: Hon Chairperson of the session, greetings to fellow hon members who are gathered, greetings to fellow South Africans, to the broader society, all South Africans and to the disability sector, I stand here before you not just as a token and a symbol of sympathy, I stand here appointed by the ANC to represent the most vulnerable and marginalised in society. I stand here as a young African woman living with blindness disability, ready to lead in society and contribute towards legislatives that are progressive. Through the ANC-led government, we domesticated the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, UNCRPD, into the White Paper on the Rights Of Persons with Disabilities. Through this it provided a road map and a blueprint on inclusion,

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integration, accessibility and participation of persons with disabilities.

But yet we stand here and we debate about the exclusion of persons with disabilities. These are the lived realities of millions of South Africans. It is not that there is a lack of political will. It is based on attitudinal individual barriers that do not allow us who have made the laws, who have put forward legislations and policies that are progressive, transformative and inclusive to be successfully implemented on the ground. It is equally important for us through various government departments, institutions entities and agencies to ensure accountability.

Previous speakers have spoken about naming and shaming. Hon members. This is important in ensuring that we are promoting and advancing inclusion of persons with disabilities, and not merely just putting it as a tick box exercise. Departments who fail to ensure the integration, participation and employment of persons with disabilities and the legislative reforms that take place and policy implementation within the department, must be held accountable.

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It is equally our responsibility as members of the National Assembly to review policies and review whether they are still fit for purpose. With this review I challenge and call upon yourself as the National Assembly, the Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities, relevant departments, stakeholders and the President to advance and accelerate the adoption of the disability rights Bill. This Bill will create equal access and opportunities for persons with disabilities, not merely relying on a White Paper where those who choose to be governed by it have a deciding factor. It is important for us to look at the disparities that are faced by South Africans with disabilities and their families.

Almost one million young children with disabilities are left out of the educational system. This is coming from an Auditor-General's, AG, report. This speaks to our failure as legislators, as government, leaders of society, civil society and communities but yet we have legislations through the ANC-led government that are progressive and speak to ensure inclusion and integration of learners with special needs. Why do these policies not have teeth? I call upon the Minister, the Portfolio Committee on Basic Education to re-evaluate whether the inclusive policy for Basic Education is still fit for purpose.

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Does it have teeth? Will it yield or is it yielding tangible results or is it just a mere policy left to gather dust? What are the actionable steps to hold those who are failing to implement it accountable?

We look at the high unemployment rate of persons with disabilities almost reaching 90%. Therefore, this means almost 90% of persons with disabilities are living below the poverty line. This is a reality. This day, this debate too many might be a joke, but to those who are watching and to who are deeply affected it means an opportunity of reigniting hope, restoring dignity and to us reaffirms our commitment to improving their living conditions and creating opportunities. Unemployment discussions, debates and reforms cannot take place without the integration, participation and representation of people with disabilities.

I sit here and remind you that I am a young disabled African woman living with blindness. The ANC has instilled and given me the responsibility and harnessed my potential for me to lead in society. With this statement, I call upon and challenge all political parties that sit in this grand House to say equal representation must be reflected within the political landscape.

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It means 7% must not just be for the private sector and for government. We must see it here in the National Assembly and in the legislatures. The seven percent is distant to us but yet we call those to come and account, but yet we are unable to meet it ourselves, speaks of a systematic failure that we continue to perpetuate. I challenge us. We exist, we are competent, we are capable and we qualify. We are educated and we are ready. We are going nowhere.

It is said that every single second household within a community is affected directly or indirectly by disability. What does this mean? This means as you sit and look to your neighbour in one way or another, they are affected by disability within their family and community. It is not a call of sympathy. It is a call to action. We are not just a token and a tick box exercise. We are equal contributors. Economic access must not be limited to the abled and the disabled continue to be marginalised. We say we must not just be beneficiaries, but we must be active participants and contributors towards the economy of this country. We must participate in the political landscape of South Africa. We must be part of making legislative reforms and contribute towards development, sustainability and meeting the goals that are set for all South Africans. We do not want to sit

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in a private holding to debate amongst ourselves as persons with disabilities. We want to be part of the broader discussion. We want to be part of making decisions.

I would like to congratulate the National Youth Development Agency, NYDA, in the process of appointing the NYDA board for the very first time ever, where a young disabled candidate was appointed by the President. This is history. This must be something that continue and must not remain history. Through this the NYDA has pushed forward ... [Interjections.]

This is what happens when you are not directly affected by disability. It becomes a joke. What we are discussing is very much serious. [Time expired.] Thank you. Stand and raise. You are known and you are acknowledged.

IsiXhosa:

Amandla!

The MINISTER OF WOMEN, YOUTH AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES: Hon House Chairperson, I want to thank all members for their contributions. The engagement in this House today reflects a shared understanding that disability inclusion is not a marginal

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issue. It is central to our constitutional promise. Persons with disabilities must be full and equal participants in the life of our nation.

What we have noticed and noted is that Parliament already sets aside annual debates for Youth Day, Women's Day, Human Rights Day, International Aids Day, Freedom Day and the 16 Days of Activism. These debates signal national priorities and keep us accountable.

Hon Rwegana...

IsiZulu:

... asixoxi ngabo sixoxa nabo. Sinabo sikhuluma nabo. Bayazikhulumela asixoxi ngabo. Yikho sikhuluma nge-ministerial directive isibonelo esiyishoyo. Uthi wena ngeke sithule, uthi asenze kodwa inkulumo-mpikiswano yakho uthi angeke sithule angeke singasho kodwa iqiniso le ndaba ...[Kwaphela isikhathi.]

English:

... and the fact of the matter is ... [Time expired.]

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The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr C T Frolick): We have been informed that the hon Rwegana resigned just before the debate. Hon Mchunu, and not the hon Rwegana, participated.

Debate concluded.

DEBATE ON WORLD AIDS DAY: OVERCOMING CHALLENGES POSED BY FUNDING CUTS AND DISRUPTIONS TO HIV PREVENTION AND SUPPORT SERVICES, AND TRANSFORMING THE AIDS RESPONSE

The MINISTER OF HEALTH: Hon House Chair, hon members of the House, please allow me not to show the video because I'm in a very difficult place regarding connectivity.

Today, I stand before you with deep appreciation of this opportunity to address the House as we commemorate World Aids Day. This is an occasion for our collective leaders of constituencies to reflect on our collective progress, confront the gaps that persist and renew our commitment to ending Aids as a public health threat in South Africa.

World Aids Day is more than a symbolic moment. It's a reminder of the responsibility we carry as leaders. Ours is a country

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that endured immense pain from the HIV epidemic, but also one that has demonstrated extraordinary resilience, innovation and community leadership. Yesterday, we commemorated World Aids Day at Ga Masemola village in Sekhukhune District in Limpopo, under the stewardship of the Deputy President of the country in his capacity as chairperson of the SA National Aids Council, Sanac. The significant day was commemorated under the theme: Renewed Efforts and Sustainable Commitment to Aids.

This theme reinforces the sentiment that ending Aids in our beloved country is possible, but only through revitalised leadership, resilient health systems and meaningful partnerships with communities, civil society, and people living with HIV and Aids. We are a country that refuses to be defeated. South Africa has walked a long road with HIV, one marked by pain, courage and determination. We have faced moments that would have brought other nations to their knees. Yet, it is time our people refuse to surrender, as we are a resilient nation.

It is for this reason that we continue to invest in community-led interventions, outreach services and patient-centred care. Our current situation in 2025 is as follows.

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We are a country of 63 million people. Eight million individuals are estimated to be living with HIV and Aids, of which 6,1 million are on antiretroviral treatment. Out of this 6,1 million, 4,17 million have their viral load tested, and it shows that 4,03 million are virally suppressed. This indeed is very encouraging because it shows a viral suppression rate of 96% and it shows that the more people that we put on antiretrovirals, ARVs, the more people will be virally suppressed.

These numbers reflect the health system that has done extraordinary work, but they also warn us that risks remain high. Too many South Africans still circle in and out of care. Too many feel alienated by stigma and discrimination. Too many, especially men and young people, delay seeking help until it's too late. If we are to end Aids as a public health threat, as we wish to, we are going to have to confront these weaknesses honestly.

You must recall that events that took place early this year nearly destabilised our efforts to implement interventions designed to scale up HIV prevention and treatment services. The abrupt funding withdrawal by the United States of America

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through the President's Emergency Plan for Aids Relief, PEPFAR, taught us critical lessons about accountability within the HIV/Aids response. It underscored the need for a strong national ownership of programmes, despite interruptions caused by the implementation of HIV prevention and treatment interventions designed to improve health outcomes.

It became evident, hon members, that while we accept international solidarity and international partnerships, we must also realise that reliance on external donors will definitely destroy us. Furthermore, it made us appreciate the wisdom of decisions to invest in domestic funding for the larger part of the HIV/Aids programme.

This is the reason why, hon members, 90% of all the ARVs consumed by the 6.1 million people come from our own fiscals, our own treasury and the remainder of 10% is funded through the Global Fund. If this was not the case, we will have perished when the United States withdrew PEPFAR.

On the 25th of February, we launched the 1.1 Million Close the Gap campaign - a determined national effort to initiate or re-engage people who had fallen out of the system to come back for

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treatment. This is one of the largest treatment acceleration campaigns that we have undertaken in the past decade. We have made some progress.

It reflects province by province mobilisation, strong district leadership, workplaces and households. We bring back people to care. This engagement remains a critical challenge in some of the provinces. As many as 23% of clients still cycle in and out of care. In other words, one moment they are in care, the next moment they are out, and we have got to go and look for them. This trend must be reversed urgently through treatment literacy, strengthening facility practices, follow-up systems and community linkages.

In trying to pursue the end of HIV and Aids, hon members, this year we have launched what we call a 6MMD, which is going to transform how we deliver treatment. Six MMD means six multi-month dispensing, whereby instead of giving people ARVs for one month or even for three months, we give them a total supply of six months. We started this in August, but I launched it officially on 13 November, in Mangaung in the Free State Province.

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The early results are encouraging. It shows that since then, 49 744 clients have taken up this six-month dispensing. Six MMD reduces pressure on patients, health care workers and facilities. It supports adherence, improves retention and makes the treatment programme more efficient.

Hon members, combination prevention remains foundational for the future of Aids prevention. We must continue condom distribution and safer sexual practices, HIV testing and immediate linkage to care, pre-exposure prophylaxis, PrEP, and PrEP access, voluntary medical male circumcision, behavioural change intervention, reducing gender-based violence, GBV, and harmful gender norms, addressing social and economic vulnerabilities, and eliminating stigma.

This year, our national prevention agenda received an important boost through a targeted support from China. On the 20th of November, two days before the heads of state met at the G20 Leaders' Summit, the Chinese embassy announced a R60 million partnership for a youth programme to strengthen availability and distribution of prevention commodities, expand youth-focused prevention programmes, enhance community outreach, improve

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literacy and demand creation, and support more co-ordinated efforts. This support comes at a crucial moment in our lives.

The other programme, which is very important, hon members, is the appearance of lenacapavir on the scene. This is a six-month injection, injected subcutaneously, meaning just below the skin. For the first time in the history of the fight against HIV and Aids, we have found a drug that is not going to be administered to people who are HIV-positive, but to people who are HIV-negative.

For the past 44 years, since the advent of HIV and Aids, every medicine to treat HIV has been given to people who are HIV-positive. Lenacapavir is going to be given to those who are HIV-negative, for them to stay negative forever. This is very encouraging. We are going to launch this programme early next year, in either March or April. We are looking forward to it. We've already met to decide who must be first in line for lenacapavir. The first in line are going to be young girls and young women between the ages of 15 and 24. Thereafter, pregnant and lactating mothers, and key populations like men who have sex with men, and sex workers.

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We are looking forward to this, and we wish for the hon members to help us to convince communities, because some community members ... just like it happens with vaccines, even though lenacapavir is not a vaccine, but there is going to be doubt. We rely on the leadership of the hon members of this House to help communities to realise that lenacapavir is really a game-changer. Thank you very much.

Mr M P MOTUBATSE: Hon House Chair, hon members and fellow South Africans, we rise today as the MK Party in solemn remembrance, in honour, in reflection, and in renewed commitment as we mark World AIDS Day. A day that carries the collective memory, pain, resilience, and triumph of our people. The history of struggles against HIV and Aids in South Africa has been long, winding, and deeply human. It is a history marked by denial, activism, scientific breakthroughs, political choices, and determination of ordinary families who buried loved ones by the hundreds of thousands. There was a period in our national discourse, a shameful period, of course, where instead of confronting the brutal reality of the virus that was disseminating our communities, some amongst us, the so-called clever blacks, engaged in debates about whether HIV causes Aids, whilst our

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people were dying in hospital corridors, in rural villages, and in mining hostels, and in townships.

In hindsight, this debate was not only absurd, but it was deadly. While intellectuals argued, our people needed medication. As a health worker or a medical student learns from the first days of training, medication cannot be taken on an empty stomach. Antiretrovirals require nutrition, stability, dignity, and material means to live. The treatment is not merely science, it is socioeconomic. It is during this period that President Gedleyihlekisa Zuma, whatever one's political persuasion, understood the imperative with decisiveness. Under his administration, South Africa saw the largest rollout of antiretroviral treatment in the whole world, a historic effort that saved millions of lives. He understood that rolling out treatment without food security would fail, and therefore, his term saw expanded access to ARVs, social support that enabled adherence, economic initiatives that linked livelihoods to public health, significant job creation that linked infrastructure delivery, a measurable reduction in Aids-related deaths.

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Perhaps, one of the most profound and humane achievements is that mother-to child transmission, MTCT, of HIV, drastically reduced, saving the entire generation of children who would otherwise have been born carrying the virus. Those children, the ones saved by policy direction, should today be building, studying, working, innovating, carrying forward the legacy of a nation that rescued them. However, what do we see today? We see the same children, now young adults, facing 42% unemployment rate. We see a generation saved from HIV only to be condemned to poverty; we see progress in treatment access, but regression in social condition and we see clinics without staff, communities without hope, prevention campaigns without energy and civil society. Once the backbone of HIV activism weakened and marginalised, we hear the language of the new dawn, yet we witness rising infections among young women and girls, shrinking budgets for community health workers, declining food security and erosion of gains once thought irreversible.

Hon members, HIV is not a biomedical condition, no, it is a socioeconomic condition, its job is prevention, food is adherence, dignity is treatment, hope is public health. Therefore, this House must recommit itself to, firstly, restoring community-based prevention and education, civil

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society, traditional leaders, youth formation, faith structures, all must be returned to the centre of this battle. Secondly, in order to strengthening health care worker responsibility, every point of service must identify, counsel, refer and support. It is a personal obligation, it is not a favour. Thirdly, ensuring treatment is supported by nutrition and livelihoods. No South African should have to choose between taking ARVs or surviving hunger. Rebuilding the gains of maternal child health, no regression, no reversal, no neglect of pregnant mothers and re-energising job creation as a health intervention.

Youth unemployment is now a driver of infections. Parliament must recognise this, holding the executive accountable for measurable outcomes, monitoring transparency, reporting, not slogans. We must also acknowledge shifting global dynamics that bear on our national health sovereignty. The recent held decision by the administration of Donald Trump to extend support through the President's Emergency Plan for Aids Relief, PEPFAR, until the end of March 2026, underscores the stark reality that such generosity is temporary and uncertain, particularly given the recent unpredictability of that administration's behaviour. This raises a critical question for us as a nation and as Parliament. Why should we continue to be living on America's

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handouts on foreign goodwill, when we should build our own sustainable foundation? It is for this reason, therefore, that the MK Party reiterate its position that a wealth tax should be introduced to generate domestic resources, to fund health care, to support social safety nets, and to ensure that South Africa is never again held hostage by foreign aid contingencies for a care of our people.

Furthermore, we must recognise and welcome the approval and rollout of the advanced treatment, including lenacapavir, as a great achievement. This long-acting antiretroviral offers hope for better adherence and long-term viral suppression. However, its success depends on supply chains, robust health infrastructure and economic empowerment. We mourn those who lost, we honour those who fought, we acknowledge those who led, we defend those who live, and we refuse a future where progress is undone. The struggle against HIV and Aids is not over, it cannot be abandoned, and it must never again be reduced to academic gains whilst our people die. On this World AIDS Day, let us declare a recommitment to life, a renewal to political win, a restoration of progress, a defence of the gains through sacrifice, a move towards fiscal independence and a future where our people, especially our youth, can thrive without relying on

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foreign handouts, for a healthy nation, is a free nation. A nation that allows its people to die through policy neglect, is worthy of its liberation history. I thank you.

Mrs M O CLARKE: Chairperson, World Aids Day is not merely a date on our calendar; it is a solemn reminder of the millions of South Africans whose lives depend every single day on the strength and stability of our public health care system. It is also a reminder of the global solidarity that has sustained the fight against HIV for more than two decades. Today, however, we meet under circumstances that are both unprecedented and dangerous.

South Africa remains the largest HIV-positive population in the world, with 8 million South Africans living with HIV, a national prevalence rate of 12,9% and 18,1% among people aged 15 to 49. More than 6,2 million people rely on antiretroviral therapy, ART, to stay alive. They are not statistics; they are human beings. Yet the foundation of that lifeline has been shaken. The abrupt freeze of US President's Emergency Plan for Aids Relief, PEPFAR-funded programmes resulted in job losses of 8 457 workers across NGOs and facilities nationwide.

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These workers provide HIV testing, ART initiation, adherence support, TB and HIV integration, and community-level tracing - services that keep our treatment functioning. In 2024 alone, South Africa received \$453 million in Pefar funding, and in October this year \$115 million for the bridge plan that was announced. This funding is essential to maintaining the stability of our public health response. The funding could be at risk should President Trump act on his threat last week to stop all payments and subsidies to South Africa with immediate effect.

Despite Minister Ntshavheni's warning that further assistance should not be expected beyond March 2026, the sudden withdrawal of the Bridge Plan Funding would be a terrible blow. While guidance to ensure uninterrupted HIV services include viral load testing, ART reinitiation, same-day scripting and three to six months dispensing was welcomed, it needs consistent implementing and monitoring.

In July, Professor Francois Venter, a clinician researcher at Wits University, sounded the alarm over Minister Motsoaledi's purported successes in keeping the HIV programme afloat. I wonder if Minister can, without his usual spin, explain why

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National Health Laboratory Services, NHLS, data showed CD4 test volumes were down sharply from 2024; why Rachidi's reported steep drops in testing, medicine pick-ups, and staff capacity in government facilities offering HIV services, or why Aids Vaccine Advocacy Coalition, AVAC, reports that most key population programmes have been terminated - at a time when the Minister claimed that more than half a million people were initiated on HIV treatment. We welcome SA Health Products Regulatory Authority, Sarptra's, approval of Lenacapavir.

This revolutionary twice-yearly HIV prevention injection is one of the most powerful tools we have ever had to prevent new infections. It is expected to be available for distribution in February 2026, pending final roll-out arrangements. This medicine is a potential game-changer for young women, adolescents, people at high risk, and communities where daily pre-exposure prophylaxis, PrEP, pills are hard to maintain. Yet, despite Sarptra's approval, the United States has confirmed that they will not supply South Africa with any Lenacapavir doses, while distributing thousands of doses to Eswatini, Kenya, Lesotho, Uganda, Zambia, and others. With Zambia and Eswatini having already received the first 1 000 doses. This exclusion is a direct consequence of our strained diplomatic relationship

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with the US. A medicine that could transform HIV prevention in our country, approved, safe, and administered twice yearly, will be delayed, undersupplied, and out of reach if we do not prepare our international relationships.

South Africa should be at the forefront of the queue, not at the back. We must also confront our own failures. In April, the Minister chose to advertise on 1 500 posts, despite the 10 000 vacancies in our public health system, leaving 85% of critical frontline positions empty. The DA welcomes the 1 500 posts, but this is a drop in the ocean. During recent oversight visits to Sebokeng and Rahima Moosa hospitals, we saw firsthand how dangerously understaffed facilities have become. Patients wait hours for basic observations. Some are turned away without treatment. The Pefpar freeze made this worse. But the underlying crisis is the department's own making.

Instead of prioritising the urgent filling of posts, the Minister continues pouring energy and resources into an unworkable National Health Insurance, NHI, scheme. While he chases a fantasy for the future, the present system is collapsing, and lives are being lost. At the G20 Summit, the United States pledged \$4,6 billion to the Global Fund, yet South

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Africa risks losing our desperately needed Pefpar Bridge Funding due to political tensions and poor diplomatic engagements.

The global community remains committed to the HIV response, but South Africa must not isolate itself at this critical moment. To weather this crisis and build a strong future, South Africa must urgently ensure a reliable funding source to replace Pefpar through transparent, proactive, diplomatic engagement. Secure accelerated access to Lenacapavir to ensure roll out in February 2026 is not delayed or limited. Fill all critical health care vacancies immediately. Expand multimonth ART dispensing and strengthening medicine supply security. Ensure uninterrupted PrEP and post-exposure prophylaxis, PEP, services, especially for youth and key populations. Demand that the Department of Health report to Parliament within two weeks on HIV funding and Lenacapavir roll out planning. Rebuild international trust by ending political posturing and adopt evidence-driven health diplomacy.

In conclusion, millions of South Africans depend on the choices we make today. We cannot allow political miscalculations, administrative paralyses and ideology distractions to erode the progress we have fought for over decades. As the DA we believe

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that today, World Aids Day, restore the funding, reinstate the workers, secure Lenacapavir access, fix the health systems, save lives, because every delay costs lives and the people of South Africa deserve better. I thank you.

Sepedi:

Moh N N CHIRWA-MPUNGOSE: Thobela bagolo ba ka, bana ba mmu, anke badimo le Modimo ba le bulele tsela, toka e rene.

English:

Yesterday, the EFF marked World Aids Day by highlighting that of the over eight million South Africans reported to be living with HIV, only 78% of them received treatment. Nearly one in five still receive no treatment and 170 000 new infections were recorded in the last reporting period. This is a concern because it highlights that the efforts for strengthening prevention are insufficient. We have long stated this. At the centre of it is a compromise prevention plan by the national Department of Health.

It is unfortunate that for all these years, you just don't hear what the EFF is saying due to unnecessarily inflated political egos. The numbers alone should be proof enough that the Minister of Health must talk less and listen more. Whilst other countries

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are conversing on 95-95-95, South Africa is yet to reach 90-90-90 of 2020 and stuck on 78%. Minister, acknowledge that the insistence to have the last word comes with the cost of doing the same mistakes over and over again. The price is dire. It equals the unending cycle of new HIV infections that are preventable.

We have long established that the NHI will not give us Universal Health Coverage in rural areas, in former settlements and in townships. There is no netcare and life health care in these areas to tender out through public health care that so happens to be where black people are. Sex education is not reaching the parts where we need it the most. We still have children that are born with HIV despite the existence of interventions that can prevent that. And those who don't get transmission from their mothers sadly encounter infections as teenagers and as young adults. This cycle affirms that we have an unsustainable HIV infection prevention plan.

While we welcome the approval of the long-acting antiretroviral HIV injection, Lenacapavir, the Minister must ensure that roll out begins in places where infections are higher in contrast to other areas. Black women must be first in line as evidence

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suggests that black women and girls are the most vulnerable to new HIV infections. These conversations are not occurring with the vigour they deserve because you have failed to destigmatise HIV.

There are people who still don't know that adhering to treatment can completely eradicate possibilities of infecting sexual partners. There are women who are victims of sterilisation of public hospitals because they are HIV positive and black. The EFF brought this matter to Parliament in 2020 and to date, no justice has been served for sterilisations against HIV-positive black women. As it stands, we have lost the fight against stigma.

Whilst we strongly criticise the Trump-led decision to halt funding under PEPFAR, had we taken up the consistent calls by the EFF to invest in state capacity and reduce dependence on foreign aid, we wouldn't have to negotiate between our state sovereignty and access to the most basic of health needs. We call on the government of the day to ensure that the blockage of African countries from manufacturing generic versions of Lenacapavir is countered with strength and might. We don't

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afford to bow down at the feet of profit-based capitalist captains who own Big Pharma and make a profit from HIV.

Our African herbal medicines were given over to Health Gogos free of charge. Some of our prominent traditional health practitioners were even killed for their capitalist African medical interventions. We are unable to stand up to Big Pharma as the government of the day because you are secretly funded by Bill Gates and his fellow health terrorists. They write your laws, you question nothing and you run to implement them because you have personalised state duty and responsibility. You think with your big stomachs that are filled with corruption proceeds and have no care that South Africa must still thrive after your time on this earth has lapsed. Bring back Soul City Institute programme for elders; bring back Soul Buddys Club for children and intersections for young idols and other groundbreaking media-based templates that get the messaging on prevention and education correct.

This battle is winnable, Chairperson. It is a lie premised on political laziness and cowardice to fail to stand up against those who profit from a diseased Africa to pretend otherwise. An HIV-free generation is possible. The problem is the ANC and the

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DA political marriage of inconvenience that threatens our future and our hope for an HIV-free generation. I thank you.

Ms N H MHLONGO: Hon House Chair, World Aids Day should not only be a commemorative event or a symbolic exercise; it should be a reminder of the impact HIV has on millions of South Africans who are living with it and reflect honestly on the effectiveness of our response. Despite the medical progress the country has made so far, our response to the HIV crisis continues to be weakened by budget cuts and the growing disruption in the public health services.

Our concerns are not limited to funding cuts alone. The greater concern is how this reduction translates into fewer community outreach programmes, weaker prevention efforts and understaffed clinics. The impact is felt directly by communities who rely on public health care, as their only option.

The IFP reiterates that HIV prevention must remain a national priority. It is the cheapest and most effective long-term solution, yet it is often the first to be sacrificed when funding declines. Every rand spent on prevention reduces future treatment cost.

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Education programmes and testing campaigns should remain at the heart of our response. The effect of this funding cuts is most visible in rural communities. It further cripples health care facilities that are already struggling as it is.

Community health workers are stretched beyond capacity. Some villages are forced to travel long distances to access care, only to find medication out of stock or services completely unavailable. Transforming the Aids response therefore requires more than filling funding gaps.

We need reliable supply chain, functioning data systems and increased support for health care workers. The IFP acknowledges and commends the registration of Lenacapavir, as we have noted in the House before. However, such programmes mean nothing if access remains unequal. It must be merged by a delivery system that reaches every community.

The measure of this Parliament will not be how we speak today, but how committed we are to protecting lives when the spotlight of the day fades. I thank you.

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Ms S PETERS: Hon House Chair, hon members, on this World Aids Day, we stand united in remembrance, in resilience and in resolve. We remember the millions of lives lost to HIV and Aids. We honour the survivors and salute the doctors, nurses, caregivers, community health workers and activists who continue fighting this battle daily. Most importantly, we stand in solidarity with all those living with HIV today, reminding them that they are not alone and that their lives matter.

South Africa has made remarkable progress over the years. We have the largest antiretroviral therapy programme in the world. Mother to child transmission has drastically decreased. Life expectancy has improved. Communities that once suffered in silence now speak with strength and dignity. But today we must speak openly and honestly about the challenges that threaten to reverse these gains.

We cannot allow financial constraints to cost human lives. Our response must transform from dependency to sustainability, from reactive to proactive, from treatment focus to holistic. We propose the following key shifts.

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Number one, strengthen local funding models by reducing reliance on donors and incorporate sustainable HIV programmes into national and provincial budgets. Number two, integrate HIV services into primary health care by streamlining access, so no patient has to choose between traveling great distances or not receiving treatment. Number three, prioritise prevention and education, especially among youth, women and vulnerable groups.

Number, four, invest in community-based systems to empower local clinics and traditional leaders and partner with NGOs and faith-based groups. Number five, reintroduce psychosocial support, because treating HIV is not just medical; it is emotional, social, as well as economic. Number six, leverage innovation and technology through home testing kits, mobile health apps, telemedicine and digital awareness platforms.

And lastly, tackle stigma fiercely. Stigma kills, silence kills, education heals, support restores dignity.

Today, I stand to remind us of a simple truth that, ending Aids is not only a medical responsibility, it is a social, economic and moral obligation.

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South Africa has overcome greater challenges than this. With political will, community collaboration, innovation and unwavering compassion, we can transform our response to HIV and Aids and ensure that no life is left behind.

In conclusion, together, let us build a future where HIV is no longer a threat but a chapter in our history. Thank you.

Afrikaans:

Mr P A VAN STADEN: Agb Voorsitter, hierdie debat is meer as 10 maande te laat. Hierdie Huis moes hierdie debat in Februarie vanjaar gevoer het, toe daar reeds 'n aanduiding was dat die Amerikaanse regering gepoog het om die President's Emergency Plan for Aids Relief, Pefar, VSA-fondse te onttrek, wat die lot van 800 000 gesondheidswerkers in die gedrang gebring het en wat gehelp het teen die bekamping en die behandeling van MIV/Vigs op voetsoolvlak.

Die ANC moet nie kwaad wees vir die VSA nie. Die Adjunkpresident moet nie kwaad word vir my in hierdie Huis as ek hom in 'n mondelingse vraag gevra het hoe hierdie krisis aangepak en uitgesorteer kan word nie. Sy optrede teenoor my daardie dag het

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my laat besef dat die agb Adjunkpresident nie eintlik antwoorde gehad het oor hoe om hierdie krisis te hanteer nie.

Dit is 'n krisis wat deur Luthuli-huis en die ANC veroorsaak is en nie die Parlement of die Regering van Nasionale Eenheid nie.

In stede daarvan om vanuit Luthuli-huis, die VSA-regering en President Trump aan te val oor sy optrede vroeër vanjaar en 'n ondersoek te las na die spandering van die Peflar-fondse, moet daar eerder bilaterale gesprekke met die VSA aangeknoop word en diplomaties opgetree word, om die betrokke probleem te probeer oplos.

Maar nee, toe blaas Luthuli-huis hulle monde op en probeer aan die VSA voorskryf hoe en waar hulle die geld van hulle belastingbetalers moet en kan spandeer. Dit is toe dat die VSA-regering alle fondse na Suid-Afrika opgeskort het. Hierdie probleem is 'n direkte oorsaak van die ANC en Luthuli-huis.

Die VF Plus het die Minister van Gesondheid in die portefeuljekomitee aangeraai dat daar eerder 'n diplomatieuse roete met die VSA hieroor geneem moet word. Die teenoorgestelde het plaasgevind en ons land is in 'n krisis gedompel.

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Ek stem saam met die gesondheidsaktiviste wat op 14 Mei vanjaar 'n sitting van die Portefeuljekomitee oor Gesondheid ontwrig het, weens die gesloer met die beehandeling van MIV en Vigs. Hulle was en is nie verkeerd nie. Hulle was korrek dat die Departement van Gesondheid en die portefeuljekomitee nie genoeg aandag gegee het aan die probleme rondom Vigsbehandeling, wat ontstaan het weens die onttrekking van Pepfar en VSA-fondse aan Suid-Afrika nie.

Hierdie probleem kan net voor die deur van die ANC gelê word. Die hulpkrete van die publiek kan en mag nie langer geignoreer word nie.

English:

This whole situation is still one big blunder. I thank you.

Dr T K S LETLAPE: Hon House Chair, this leads that we have a funding crisis but we behave like we are awash with money. So, part of the discussion has to be: Where will the money come from? In the first area is for us to reduce wastefulness. We currently have two Ministers of Police and two deputies, and we claim we have a funding crisis. We have Deputy Ministers that

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are a luxury and that we can do away with if we really think we have a crisis.

Part of the issue has to be where the money comes from, so that we can assert the independence that we purport and so that we can leave within our means. Let's do away with political patronage for now so that we can fund an essential service like what has been cut by people keeping their money. We shouldn't abuse or waste this crisis. It is time we begin to understand that treatment is important. However, we will not treat ourselves out of this pandemic, we also have to make prevention work.

There has been very little effort that we put on nonpharmaceutical prevention. We need to begin to come up with a campaign that does not come from the World Health Organisation, WHO, but comes from us because we need it. Where we need to encourage people living with HIV to be able to say: It stops with me. That they make a concerted effort not to pass the virus to anybody by ensuring that they are on antiretrovirals, that they have low viral loads but they commit not to pass the infection to anybody.

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Let us not abuse what science has made available in terms of the new drug. Let us be cautious about making it available generally to 15-year-olds when on the one score we are saying they should not be engaging in sexual activity, we are now equipping them to say, I will not get infected. Let us ensure that when these pharmaceuticals are being made available, they do not promote irresponsibility. That we ensure that people are properly guided. What we need to bring to the fore is to make prevention work.

For any South African out there, any human being that is not infected, they need to understand that it is their personal duty not to be infected, so that they take all precautions to be in safe relationships. We cannot abandon the basic wisdom of safe sexual practises. There are things that we can do by having a social narrative. To make prevention work, to make women to be safe in relationships and to make our men and boys to be responsible.

However, it is your duty not to pass the infection, and if you are infected, it is your duty not to be infected. Those things can be achieved without waiting for the generosity of the White House. Let us ensure that we take full responsibility, we re-

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educate and we engage communities. As Parliament and as government, we stop being wasteful and we prioritise things that will benefit the people of this country. Thank you.

Rev K R J MESHOE: House Chairperson, on this World Aids Day, we must confront the sobering truth. HIV and Aids in South Africa is not only a medical crisis but a moral and cultural one. With 7,8 million South Africans living with HIV, the majority are women and girls. UNAIDS confirms that 65% of those infected are females, reflecting the devastating impact of cultural pressures that push young girls into sex before marriage.

Antenatal HIV surveys conducted by the National Department of Health and the National Institute for Communicable Diseases show much higher HIV prevalence among black African women compared with Indians, coloureds and the whites. Teenage pregnancy rates follow a similar pattern. Research at universities show that boys are often expected to prove masculinity through sexual activity while girls are pressured into compliance, leaving them vulnerable to pregnancy and HIV, and then their babies vulnerable also.

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Young people's early sexual activity is found to be compounded by the silence in families about delaying sexual activity until marriage and HIV prevention. While the ACDP asserts that sex education must be changed to impress the value of abstinence until marriage, government must put its weight behind efforts to make abstinence the right thing to do. Parents and uncles and aunts need the support and encouragement to make it clear to kids that sex before marriage can have grave repercussions.

Boys and men must be taught not to pressure girls into sex and legislation must be implemented making them or their families responsible for the maintenance of the children they ...

[Inaudible.] ... Too many girls are left carrying the baby alone. The ACDP calls for the convening of a multisectoral national dialogue on HIV, teen pregnancy and cultural transformation, convened by Parliament in partnership with the government, the Commission for Gender Equality and with participants from Treasury, faith-based organisations, civil society and a wide base of other participants.

Since the United States Agency for International Development, USAID, was cut, Aids cases are rising in the country. We must interrogate the Aids response, focusing on not only adequate

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funding but also principled values installed when children are young that protect our daughters, empowers our sons and restore hope to the nation, whether we have enough money or not. I thank you.

Mr N L S KWANKWA: House Chair, for decades our country has borne the heaviest weight of the global HIV epidemic. Yet we've also witnessed extraordinary progress where health systems were built from the ground up to save millions of lives while protecting many more from acquiring HIV. This progress was earned through the struggle and solidarity of public health sector, non-profitable organisations and dedicated activists and workers.

However, today these gains are under threat. The reason is, this year's World Aids Day theme is an urgent call for government to take immediate action to overcome the withdrawal of US funding and address the disruptions to HIV prevention and support services. As it stands, about 6 million South Africans on HIV/Aids treatment and more than 3,5 million are virally suppressed. We cannot allow this critical progress to be undermined by the United States' decision to withdraw its funding.

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A serious question now hangs over our government's ability to mobilise alternative resources and take full ownership of its HIV response. We acknowledge that in July this year, the National Treasury allocated about R753 million to the Department of Health to help bridge the shortfall caused by the withdrawal of US funding from HIV and Tuberculosis, TB, grants. Additionally, some prominent donors have pledged support for HIV research. However, this remains insufficient when compared to the R7,9 billion in annual US funding previously spent on these programmes.

We need sustained financial investment and renewed commitment to HIV/Aids and Aids prevention. Government and SA National AIDS Council must engage emerging global partners, particularly China, to diversify funding for HIV and TB programmes and integrate such programmes into the national public health strategy. China has already committed through the Forum on China-Africa Co-operation Beijing Action Plan 2025 to 2027 to support African countries in combating infectious diseases to clinical and public health co-operation.

Why has our government not followed up on this despite our many efforts to raise this is a question to the Deputy President of

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the country and him committing to doing something about this matter insofar as this promise is concerned. At this very moment we have a breakthrough and long-acting injection for HIV prevention and one of the most significant advancements in HIV/Aids prevention to date. We need increased funding to procure this treatment because without adequate resources our people will be left vulnerable to infection even when effective prevention exists. Thank you. [Time expired.]

Xitsonga:

Tat S M GANA: Mutshamaxitulu, ndzi khensa Muchaviseki Mkhalipi nakambe.

English:

As we participate on this debate on World Aids Day, we are reminded not only of the struggle we have endured as a nation but also the remarkable progress we've made together. South Africa's HIV response has shown the world that when there is political will, community commitment and scientific innovation, we can achieve what once seemed impossible. Our improvements in HIV testing and the successful management of the ARV programmes stand as a clear proof that we are strongest when we work together.

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Nevertheless, we also gather here at a time when funding cuts threaten to reverse the gains we have made. These cuts jeopardise prevention campaigns, support services and treatment access, the very pillars that have brought us this far. We cannot allow budget constraints to weaken the health and dignity of the people of this country. One of our most urgent tasks is to accelerate the enrolment of those who have tested positive but are not yet on treatment.

Thousands of South Africans know their status but remain outside care, putting their health at risk and increasing the chances of new infections. We must reach them, support them and bring them into the system before it is too late. As Rise Mzansi, we fully support the 95-95-95 approach, that 95% of people know their status, 95 of those diagnosed on treatment and 95 of those on treatment being virally suppressed. Achieving this target is not just a technical exercise, it is the key to ensuring that the virus is suppressed to the point where it cannot be passed on.

We also welcome the approval of Lenacapavir, a long-acting injectable that represents a true gamechanger in our fight against HIV. This innovation gives us hope, especially for those

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who struggle with daily adherence or face barriers in accessing regular treatment. Prevention, however, remains our greatest weapon. We must accelerate education and awareness, especially among young people and key vulnerable groups. The more we strengthen prevention, the fewer people will require treatment and the less pressure will place on already strained budgets. Hon members, we may not be where we want to be but we are far from where we started.

Xitsonga:

Xitsonga xi ri, ekule hi le ndzhaku.

English:

Funding cuts may slow us down but they will not defeat us.

Xitsonga:

Ndza khensa swinene, Mutshamaxitulu.

Dr M A MAIMANE: Chairperson, hon members, as we commemorate World AIDS Day, we do so against the backdrop of understanding the complexities of our nation, and I want to draw inspiration from activists who fought the struggle. To ensure that more people were tested, more people got antiretrovirals. It is those

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South Africans that today we can look back and say, we have made progress in this regard and yet without doubt, we still have a long way to go.

Five million South Africans receive antiretroviral treatment, and with the right investments, we could certainly ramp up more to ensure that we continue to reduce mother to child transmission. So that the rate is eventually below 2%. But this is not a moment to self-congratulate, it is a moment to reflect on the fact that the fight must continue. Four thousand adolescent girls and young women aged 15 to 24 were infected with human immunodeficiency virus, HIV, globally each week, with 77% of these cases occurring in Sub-Saharan Africa. And so, if we are going to continue the fight, we need to recognise the second most crucial question, which confronts us as South Africa today, which is the issue of funding.

Many members have spoken here today, and it is important to reflect on what global research is already starting to tell us about the withdrawal of funding on a global basis. It tells us a story. That there are substantial reductions in testing those are down by 8,5%. That HIV diagnosis is now down by 31% and treatment initiation is down by 30%. This only tells us that in

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fact, when testing and diagnosis is going down, infections are bound to rise, and we will face a new pandemic in a matter of time.

So, hon members, if we are going to see this fight continue, I want to urge you to take urgent and deliberate actions. Our funding is heavily slanted towards treatment. We need to ensure that we do more to fund programmes that deal with education and prevention. We must make sure every South African in schools, in communities is well informed about their HIV status, how they can prevent transmission and ensure that they themselves are conscientizing society. And this is where civil society organisations need to come a bigger deal.

Secondly, we need to fund treatment. We must provide funding, - and Dr Motsoaledi, I think we will continue the fight here. If we do not increase healthcare funding and address the loss resulting from the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, PEPFAR, we will face difficulties. We have lost US\$4 billion in allocations from PEPFAR. The special appropriation fund is only half a billion rand, or just above that. This will not be enough to resolve the issue.

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Lastly, when looting occurs, as it did at Tembisa Hospital, it undermines the fight against HIV and Aids. Corruption is also costing lives. Let us fight corruption, eradicate waste, and ensure funding for treatment. Thank you very much.

Ms T L MARAWU: Hon member, today we mark World Aids Day under the global theme of resilience, solidarity, and renewed commitment. For South Africa, this day is more than symbolic. It is a reminder of the millions of lives we have lost, the families still affected, and the progress we must defend with vigilance.

Hon members, the fight against human immunodeficiency virus, HIV, and Aids is at a critical crossroad. Funding cuts, economic pressures, and disruption to prevent and support services now threatens the hard-won gains of the past two decades, we cannot allow complacency to reverse the progress that our people, especially women, young people, and vulnerable communities, desperately need.

South Africa carries the world's largest HIV burden, and therefore we cannot afford a weakened response. When donor support declines, when clinics reduce operating hours, when

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prevention programmes are interrupted, and when community health workers are underpaid and overstretched, the virus moves faster than our interventions.

Firstly, we must face the reality of funding cuts. The reduction in global contribution to the HIV response, including pressures on President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, PEPFAR, the Global Fund and international non-governmental organisation, NGOs, is already being felt in testing rates. Condom distribution, outreach, and adhered support. The African Transformation Movement urges government to safeguard domestic funding, bring first essential HIV programmes and prioritise frontline prevention and treatment in our national budgeting processes.

Secondly, service disruption has led thousands without consistent access to antiretroviral, ARVs, drugs, testing services and psychosocial support. Many of these disruptions were worsened by the COVID-19 period. And by ongoing weaknesses in our health system. We must strengthen supply chains, expand mobile clinics, and integrate HIV services into broader primary healthcare so that services interruption does not become life crisis.

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Thirdly, transforming the Aids response requires community centres and multi-sectoral partnerships, our frontline workers, including community caregivers and NGOs, are the backbone of prevention, support, and treatment adherence. Their work must be funded, formalised, and supported. Technology must also be used more effectively to promote treatment literacy, track stockouts, and support adherence among young people.

House Chair, we must also address the unequal burden faced by young women and girls, key populations, and people living in rural areas. Rural clinics are overstretched, transport is unaffordable, and stigma remains high. A transformed Aids response must bring services to the people, especially in remote villages. Ensure that no one is left behind because of geography or poverty.

Hon members, we know what works. Early testing and treatment consisted of access to a to ARVs behavioural and structural prevention programmes, youth focus education, economic empowerment of women, committee-based support, and strong political commitment ... [Time expired]

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Ms J Q KHUMALO: Hon Chairperson, hon members, as the African National Congress, our conceptualisation and understanding of the fight against human immunodeficiency virus, HIV, and Aids, is inseparable from the broader struggle for equity and social justice. Our conception of health is not limited to an institution of service delivery, but also as a site of social transformation, playing a vital role in advancing the national democratic revolution and the realisation of our shared vision of South Africa as envisaged in the Constitution.

The ANC manifesto affirms that the strength of our nation lies in the health of our people. There can be no social cohesion, no nation building, and no economic prosperity when the health of our people is compromised. Strengthening and integrating the health system is imperative for building resilience against diseases and overcoming the legacies of colonialism of a special type that continues to shape our health outcomes and broader socioeconomic relations.

The lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic taught us that an integrated, well-co-ordinated health system is fundamental in saving as the first line of defence, not just against new

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pandemics, but against persistent challenges like HIV, tuberculosis, TB, and maternal mortality.

Having come a long way in the HIV and Aids response from a system in which HIV services were isolated, fragmented, and stigmatised, the progress we see today - where prevention, testing, and treatment have been integrated into primary health care - is a testament to the commitment of an ANC-led government. The integration of HIV and TB programmes continue to show remarkable progress with many patients being on treatment with continuously improving TB preventive programme.

When our clinics are well equipped with vital medicines, upgraded infrastructure and health workers who are supported, we make inroads towards transforming not only the healthcare system, but also transforming broader society towards feathering the aspiration of the National Development Plan.

Chairperson, the National Health Insurance, NHI, remains the cornerstone of this transformation by ensuring that healthcare is not determined by race, income, or geographical location. Through the NHI, the ANC is resolved to ensuring that our health system is based on equity and underpinned by the principles of

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Ubuntu and shared humanity. This vision remains guided by the Freedom Charter, which continues to serve as a blueprint for our transformation, declaring that the state shall run a preventive health scheme.

Hon members, as the ANC, we will continue to give life to this vision by investing in the strengthening of our health system to serve all South Africans. The progress we have made in South Africa will not have been possible without global solidarity and a critical role played by international institutions such as the World Health Organization, the Global Fund and the UN Sustainable Development Goals framework to fight Aids, TB and Malaria.

This partnership reminds us that health is a shared human responsibility and bring the global community together to ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all. These interventions are also aligned to our own frameworks in the form of the National Strategic Plan for HIV, TB and sexually transmitted infection, STIs, which cause for integrated people-centred care and stronger intersectional collaboration.

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Our role on the continent and in the Southern African Development Community, SADC, region remains essential for advancing co-operation, strengthening civilian systems, and sharing resources. These are imperative to enhance African unity and ensuring that no African country is left behind in the global response to HIV and Aids.

Hon members, ending HIV and Aids is possible. It is within our reach, and the World Aids Day provide us with an opportunity to reflect on how far we have come and to renew our commitment to creating a health system that serves all of us, leaving no one behind. The continued success of our efforts against HIV and Aids depends on our unity and shared commitment to preserve lives and affirm human dignity. These sentiments are best expressed by Elton John in the UNAIDS World AIDS Day Report 2024, under the theme "Take the Rights Path to End AIDS," where he said:

I know the feeling of shame and what it can do. As long as HIV is seen as a disease for others, not for so-called decent people, AIDS will not be beaten. Science, medicine, and technology may be the 'what' in ending AIDS, but inclusion, empathy, and compassion are the 'how.'

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Thank you very much, Chair.

Mr I ISMAIL-MOOSA: Hon House Chair, hon members and fellow beloved family of South Africans, I seek protection in Allah from Satan, the outcast. Today, we reaffirm national and global commitment to combating and ultimately eradicating HIV and Aids. As we mark World Aids Day, we are reminded that despite decades of progress, where the pandemic continues to affect millions across the world and in our own very South African nation. Al Jama-ah supports this year's call to action to end Aids through renewed effort and sustained commitment, especially in the face of funding cuts and disruptions to prevention and support systems and services.

Government, together with NGOs, faith-based organisations, and the private sector, have made real progress in slowing transmission and expanding treatment. I am today a very proud South African because, despite President Trump's cuts for HIV/Aids, we must acknowledge the strong leadership of the Deputy President, hon Paul Machatile, and the Minister of Health, Hone Aaron Motsoaledi and SA National AIDS Council, Sanac.

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Yet the crisis persists. South Africa remains among the most affected countries, and current fiscal pressures threaten to reverse hard-won gains. Interruptions to testing, shortages of prevention tools, and reduced outreach to vulnerable communities cannot be allowed to continue. Hon House Chair, family, South Africans, hon members, we must intensify prevention efforts, safeguard uninterrupted treatment, and strengthen partnerships across all sectors. Ending Aids is not about politics, it is a moral obligation.

Under the leadership of Deputy Minister hon Ganief Hendricks, and in partnership with Health and civil society, Al Jama-ah will continue advocating for sustained funding and comprehensive services to protect our people and end this pandemic once and for all. Malibongwe! [Let it be praised!]

Dr K W D LE ROUX: Hon House Chair, since our last Aids Day debate on 26 November last year, the situation in the HIV arena in South Africa has changed dramatically and not for the better. Most members of this House will be well aware that the United States President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, PEPFAR HIV funding that was administered through The United States Agency

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for International Development, USAID was abruptly stopped in January this year.

This has dramatically affected 13 out of 26 priority districts in South Africa. The PEPFAR funding coming through the Centre for Disease Control has after a short pause, continued to flow to the 14 other districts. But there is real concern that this funding will be stopped in March 2026, further impacting people living with HIV. Furthermore, many national institutes of health grants from the United States, US government that have supported our world-class research infrastructure have also been withdrawn, putting crucial HIV and TB research at risk and stopping some studies outright.

This abrupt change has come as a shock to all South Africans and has put our antiretrovirals, ARV programme on the back foot. It has also made it clear that we need to fully fund our HIV programme from within South Africa so that as not to be independent on overseas support. In dealing with this crisis, the Minister and Department of Health deserve credit for some of the high-level response. They have appealed for and been allocated some bridging funds from Treasury and have also

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secured significant commitments from the Global Fund to plug some gaps that will hopefully be made available soon.

But the real-world response to this crisis on the ground has been extremely disappointing, slow, lackadaisical and bureaucratic. What has this meant practically? Let's be clear, our ARV programme is not collapsing. Free HIV testing and free ARVs continue to be available in the public in government health facilities, and nearly 6 million South Africans remain on ARV treatment. But there are fewer HIV counsellors in clinics and hospitals, so it takes longer to be tested.

On an oversight visit at a community day hospital, I saw how patients were told to come back the next day for HIV testing due to a lack of counsellors, a golden opportunity to test someone for HIV lost. Our response to the more challenging aspects of the HIV epidemic have been eroded, including the tracing and re-engagement of patients who have fallen out of care. Mentorship programmes for doctors and nurses looking after patients with HIV have stopped completely. Complex data systems and analysis used, including systems helping to link people to care, have come to a grinding halt. Filing systems are in disarray and waiting times in clinics have become even longer.

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Many specialised services for key populations who are at risk of HIV infection and transmission have also closed down. As a result, we have data from Johannesburg that shows an 8,5% decrease in HIV testing, a 30% decrease in HIV diagnoses, and a 31% decrease in HIV initiations in the past quarter compared to the first quarter of 2025.

Minister, the South African HIV programme may not have collapsed, but it is under significant strain. And unless we act with urgency, many of the gains we have made will be reversed. Again, let's make this real. This will mean that more children, men, and women will be infected with HIV. More people living with HIV will become ill, and more people will die unnecessarily from HIV.

Hon members, the biggest problem we have in the South African ARV programme is that a significant portion of people for whom we have done the hard work, who've been tested, who've been found to be HIV-positive, and who've been initiated on ARVs, and whose HIV should be totally under control, are falling out of care every single year. This happens for a variety of reasons, but the most concerning are the long waiting times for patients

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collecting treatment at clinics, and the mistreatment of HIV patients by overstretched clinic nurses and doctors.

There are two major challenges when patients fall out of care. If ARVs are not taken religiously every single day, resistance can develop, making management more expensive and complicated once patients re-engage care. Secondly, those who fall out of care are often too scared to go back as they are shouted at by healthcare workers and labelled defaulters, and often only re-engage when they become severely ill, by which time the immunity has been destroyed and they are on the brink of death. This puts massive pressure on our already stretched public hospitals and sadly results in many completely avoidable deaths.

Minister, this is not actually a difficult problem to solve. We need to drastically decongest our clinics by giving stable, uncomplicated ARV patients six months of treatment at a time, so-called 6-Multi-Month Dispensing, 6MMD of ARVs. Our clinics are currently overrun with uncomplicated, healthy ARV patients who sit for hours waiting for treatment, wasting their time every month, while we neglect priority areas like prevention and making sure that we can get the game changing, Lenacapavir long-acting preventive injection out to as many at-risk people as

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possible. Or like making testing easy, quick and private so that we can identify the many HIV positive people who still don't know their HIV status and are currently spreading HIV without knowing it. And like giving complex cases where patients are on complicated regimes and have advanced diseases the attention they deserve.

In the last Aids debate, the DA called for 6MMD to be implemented as a matter of urgency. Civil society has been agitating for 6MMD for even longer. A member from the Director-General, Dr Buthelezi, in February, in response to the Pepfar funding crisis encouraged clinics to try to put people on 6MMD if possible. But in the last year, only 50 000 of a possible 3-4 million people who qualify have been put on 6MMD. That's only about a percent of those people who qualify.

We are glad that on 13 November, there was an official launch of 6MMD with much fanfare. But Minister, it is inexplicable why the department is only allowing 10 facilities per province to start with 6MMD for now, and the provinces will only be able to ramp up 6MMD in April next year. All clinics and hospitals should be encouraged to give every ARV patient that is stable, six months

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of treatment starting tomorrow. We cannot delay this a minute longer lives are literally at stake I thank you.

IsiZulu:

Nk F L SHABANGU: Sihlalo ohloniphekile, malunga ale Ndlu ahloniphekile, kuyabonakala ukuthi impilo yabantu ayincikanga kulokho okwenzeka ezikhungweni zezempilo kuphela, kepha iphinde incike kwezinye izimo ezibaluleke kakhulu, njengezimo zomnotho nezenhlalakahle kanye namathuba. Okunye okubalulekile, njengemfundo umsebenzi, amanzi kanye nokuhlanzeka.

Lokhu kubonisa ukuthi utshalomali lwethu ekulweni negciwane lesandulelangculazi nengculaza ngeke lube nempumelelo uma lulodwa ngaphandle kokuthi kube nendlela ehlelekile ehlanganisa ukulwa nobubha, ukusetshenziswa kabi kwezidakamizwa, udlame olubhekiswe kwabesifazane namantombazanyana okunye kwezinto eziyimbangela enkulu zokwandisa kwe-HIV and Aids.

Kuze kube yimanje siyawuncoma umsebenzi owenziwa wuMnyango wezokuThuthukiswa koMphakathi kanye nokuhlinzeka kwemihlomulo, phecelezi social grants, okuyiyona esindisa izimpilo zabantu abaningi ababuthakathaka nabaphila nobubha. Kuyabonakala ukuthi lezibonelelo zidlala indima ebalulekile ekwehliseni indlala

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nokuqiniseka ukuthi laba abagulayo bathole ukudla phela ngaphambi kokuba bathathe imishanguzo yabo.

Siswati:

Ngenca yesimo lesibucayi lesibukene nebantfu labasha, kubalulekile kubambisana kweLitiko Letemphilo neleMfundvo Lesisekelo neLitiko Letemfundvo Lephakeme Nkucecesha Kwebucwepheshe, kucinisekisa kutsi tinsita temphilo titfolakala lula ngekusebentisa tinhlelo nemikhankhaso lefana nabo "Be Wise", "She Conquers", bo"Love Life" tonkhe leto tinhlelo.

Hulumende waKhongolose, uyacinisekisa kutsi lwati lufinyele emphakatsini kucinisekisa kuvinjelwa kwetifo, nalaba labadzinga lusito lwekwesekelwa batikhandze balutfola ngendlela lefanele.

Loku kubita kutsi umphakatsi wonkhe uchubekisele embili imitamo yahulumende yekubhekana netimo letibanga kutselelana ngeligciwane.

Umhlaba wonkhe jikelele sibalo sabomake nemantfombatane labangenwa ligciwane singetulu kakhulu kunalobunye bulili. Imipumela lekhishwe i- Human Science Research Council,

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engcungcutseleni ye-Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome, Aids, ivete kungalingani lokuchubekako ngekusabalala kwaleligciwane. Kubomake lihamba ngesivinini lesikhulu kakhulu kufinyelela ku-16,4 kantsi kulabadvuna i-8,8.

English:

Hon members, these are not merely statistics but are a representation of human lives. The statistics reveal to us that many women and girls continue to experience skewed poverty dynamics that limit their ability to negotiate for safe sexual encounters.

Therefore, this calls for a whole of society approach that addresses the weaknesses in the intersection of gender inequality, patriarchal norms, and poverty towards empowering women and girls to take control of their health and their bodies.

Siswati:

Sabelani madvodza!

English:

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Equally important, hon members, is the acknowledgment that the empowerment of women will continuously be undermined without the transformation of men.

Siswati:

Niyabitwa madvodza!

English:

This demands that we end oppressive practices in culture, schools, churches, workplaces, at home and communities with men and boys playing a central role in understanding the program and forming part of the solutions. Men must be at the forefront of ending all forms of violence against women and advocating for gender justice.

Furthermore, the fight against human immunodeficiency virus, HIV, that we invest in education, that shift attitude and behaviour towards embracing inclusivity. To this end, we cannot end HIV if sex workers and members of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (or Questioning), Intersex, and Asexual, LGBTQIA, community continue to face discrimination, stigma, and criminalization, as these are the factors that deter

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people from assessing health care facilities and much needed care.

Keeping in line with aspirations of the *Freedom Charter* and the Constitution of our country, ours should be central on the building a healthcare system that dismantles inequalities. Human rights must underpin our HIV/AIDS response as all life matters and remain deserving of care and respect.

Prevention remains the most powerful tool we have. Every infection prevented is a life-saved, a family strengthened, and a burden eased on our healthcare systems.

Therefore, expanding access of pre-exposure prophylaxis and post-exposure prophylaxis, PreP and PEP, is non-negotiable. These preventative measures empower individuals, especially those at higher risk, to take control of their health. The PreP and PEP must be available in all settings where they are needed most, such as clinics, schools, universities, and community healthcare centres.

Today, we also honour those who fearlessly fought and succumbed to the virus. We honour them. We honour their courage their

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courage to transform global perspective about the HIV/AIDS. We know the stigma that was there, but then that was transformed by the fighters of this HIV/AIDS. We honour them. We remember all those voices and futures that were cut too short.

Their courage and determination must live and find expression in our actions towards strengthening investment and equitable access to healthcare services towards realization of a HIV-free society.

On this occasion, hon members, of the *World Aids Day*, we are reminded that the struggle against HIV is about advancing the National Data Repository, NDR, as a vehicle for equitable state where no one is left behind.

It is a broader struggle, a struggle for the working class and the poor, a struggle for dignity, a struggle for equality, and a struggle for justice.

We want to thank the Minister for his presentation earlier and the systems that he presented to us that there will be a new system of issuing HIV medication. We want to upload that because it will assist a lot of patients that are taking HIV medication

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to get their medication at least for six months. And all the other programs that the Minister spoke to, we want to applaud the Department of Health for the improvement. Thank you.

Siswati:

Lukhalo lusaseludze, kodvwa lokunyenti hulumende we-ANC ukwentile. Siyabonga.

English:

Thank you.

MARINE OIL POLLUTION (PREPAREDNESS, RESPONSE AND CO-OPERATION)

BILL

(Consideration of Bill and of Report thereon)

Mr S D SELAMOLELA: Chair, colleagues, Members of Parliament, compatriots, and people of South Africa, the Marine Oil Pollution (Preparedness, Response and Co-operation) Bill has the backing and support of the ANC. As the ANC, we believe that this is of critical significance to the transport sector in South Africa and the economy at large.

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The international guidelines for the prevention and management of marine oil pollution serve as the foundation for all marine oil pollution legislation, which is vital for the oceans and for the pursuit of an effective and efficient ocean economy for countries with respect to environmental standards.

Whilst it is true that the nation enforces the strictest environmental and safety regulations in all forms of transportation, that maritime sectors are built to function effectively and safely is crucial for us all. Due to our country's remote location from global markets, shipping is essential to the nation's economic development and expansion. The oceans economy has the potential to support a variety of industries for national growth, for job creation, and for sustainable development, and the economy is extremely important to our country, South Africa.

There are benefits from sectors like fisheries, aquaculture, marine transportation, offshore oil and gas, coastal tourism, and marine manufacturing because South Africa has one of the longest coastlines in the world and strategic access to important international shipping lanes. Together, these industries create increased economic activity, they assist us in

generating jobs, particularly in coastal regions, and they draw in both domestic and foreign investment. In addition, colleagues, in promoting biodiversity and environmental conservation initiatives, the oceans economy is essential to food security through fisheries and aquaculture.

The protection of marine life and the ocean environment is essential to the health and expansion of the economy. By passing legislation to prevent marine oil pollution, the nation guarantees that the fishing sector can operate in our territorial waters for the benefit of the nation and permits the shipping business to operate efficiently. To guarantee that there is no marine pollution in South African waterways and that the nation is equipped to handle any incident of marine oil pollution, both legislation and regulation are necessary.

One such piece of legislation is what we are tabling here before you today, hon members, the Marine Oil Pollution (Preparedness, Response and Co-operation) Bill. As a member of the International Maritime Organisation, South Africa is required by its international obligations to adhere to international maritime conventions and incorporate them into our legislation.

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There is no rational argument against South Africa using worldwide best practice, hence it is crucial that it does so.

This law also aims to safeguard the nation's economic interest. In terms of transportation and infrastructure, this legislation aims to guarantee that the nation and all those involved in the marine oil business have a risk mitigation plan to prevent marine oil pollution and are equipped to handle any occurrence. According to this law, formative measures must be taken to guarantee safety and prevention in order to avoid any incidents with marine oil pollution and to have the ability to handle any that do arise. The best way to safeguard the sustainability and preservation of the marine environment is to ensure that all shipping and oil sector participants have a safety and preventative strategy to avoid marine oil pollution management.

Hon members, I table this before you, and I thank you.

There was no debate.

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP OF THE LARGEST MINORITY PARTY:

Chairperson, I move:

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That the Bill, as amended, be passed.

Declarations of vote:

Dr C H H HUNSINGER: Hon House Chair, this Marine Oil Pollution Bill focuses on preparedness, response, and co-operation, highlighting our standards of preparedness for effectively and efficiently managing marine pollution, especially in the event of significant oil spills in the ocean waters and the nearby inland waterways of South Africa. Numerous interest groups, sector representatives of national and regional marine service providers, participants, nongovernmental organisations, and stakeholders are brought together by this issue. Marine life is physically harmed by oil, which is poisonous.

Being ready enables the quick deployment of equipment and containment measures to stop oil from getting into delicate territories like salt marshes, mangroves, and coral reefs, which are vital nurseries and protective barriers for our coastlines. In addition to safeguarding biodiversity and minimising animal poisoning and collapse, prompt reaction can make the difference between a controlled spill and a disastrous one. Under the authority granted by the Marine Pollution (Control and Civil Liability) Act, Act 6 of 1981, particularly concerning control

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and civil liability, the Department of Transport is legally obligated to provide and fulfil statutory obligations towards marine pollution prevention and response along the Republic of South Africa's coastline of more than 3 200 km.

The Marine Pollution (Prevention of Pollution from Ships) Act, Act 2 of 1986 addresses ship pollution prevention, whereas the Marine Pollution (Intervention) Act, Act 64 of 1987 addresses interventions, in particular. In accomplishment of an updated status triggered by these principal laws, this phase seeks to provide for the protection of the marine environment, to provide for the prevention and combating of pollution of the sea by oil and other harmful substances. It also seeks to determine liability for loss or damage caused by the discharge of oil from ships, tankers, and offshore installations and to act accordingly.

The Marine Pollution (Prevention of Pollution from Ships) Amendment Act, Act 36 of 2024, which was brought into law in January 2025, focused on the prevention of pollution from ships and is something this Bill aims to finalise and successfully connect with. Once authorised and put into effect, these modifications will significantly enhance the marine regulatory

environment and make it easier for the law to be effectively advanced and consistently fulfilled. In accordance with our participation in the International Maritime Organisation, this upgrade now also helps the nation fulfil its commitments under international law and associated accords.

The International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, MARPOL, is the main international agreement for preventing ship-related or negligent contamination of the marine environment. These modifications, specifically included in MARPOL annexes four and six, broaden the scope of regulation to include marine air pollution, sea spillage of sewage, and greenhouse gases in addition to oil spills. As a greater deterrent for both local and foreign vessels, fines for serious pollution offences have been raised from R500 000 to R35 million, with a 10-year jail sentence.

The Bill that is being considered here today aims to improve accountability by using the polluter-pays principle, thereby ensuring that the accountable owner pays for all clean-up and reimbursement expenses. Much is done to address and to protect the marine environment, now also specifying ship-to-ship transfers and bunkering. This will significantly improve South

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Africa's preparedness for, and the government's reaction to, oil spills inside the country's 1,5 million km² exclusive economic zone, which spans the Atlantic, Southern, and Indian Oceans. Both the portfolio committee's report and this Bill's passage are supported by the DA. I thank you.

Mr T T S KUBHEKA: Hon Chair, I rise today on behalf of the MKP to reject this presentation on the Marine Oil Pollution (Preparedness, Response and Co-operation) Bill. This legislation, intended to safeguard our oceans, safeguard our coastlines, and safeguard our communities from devastating oil spills, reveals profound shortcomings in accountability, state control, and alignment with our transformative ideas.

Firstly, the document exposes glaring gaps in departmental transparency. There is no audit opinion, no financial spending data, and no annual report linking performance to strategic objectives. How can Parliament hold the Department of Transport accountable when we are left in the dark? Internal, coherent systems are structured on paper via the incident management organisation that is co-ordinating transport, environment, fisheries, disaster management, and energy departments, plus industry stakeholders, but it crumbles under scrutiny.

Risk assessments every five years feed into the national and site-specific contingency plans, the equipment inventories, and the tiered responses from Tier 1 for small spills up to Tier 3 for transboundary disasters. Yet planning, finance, and implementation misalign dangerously, and funding leans on private levies from ports, oil facilities, and ships, with incident commanders limited to spending 50% of the Maritime Pollution Fund without guaranteed state backup.

No evidence of over- or underspending appears and no metrics on service delivery efficiency, like waste minimisation in clean-ups, or post-incident evaluations. This reliance on polluters for equipment stockpiles and readiness undermines our sovereignty. Owners of offshore installations and shipping firms must maintain their gear at their cost, interoperable with national inventories.

What happens if they fail? Our high-risk biodiversity zones, protected marine areas, bird colonies, and coastal ecosystems face threats from shipping routes and oil operations without ironclad ownership of response assets. Training exercises and mandatory regional co-operation via the Abidjan and Nairobi Conventions are outlined, and cost recovery from international

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funds is enabled, but enforcement powers for inspectors lack proof of past efficacy.

What is worse is that this Bill diverges sharply from the principles of radical economic transformation, worker empowerment, and a people-first government. Where are the mandates for state-led response fleets? Where are the mandates for job creation and coastal communities in rehabilitation? Where are the mandates for black-owned firms in the contracts?

The presentation on the Maritime Oil Pollution (Preparedness, Response, and Co-operation) Bill is unacceptable. We demand that the department explains audit outcomes, spending variances, coherence lapses, and steps embedded to programme ideas like bolstering the fund with public resources and community oversight. We will not support a Bill that endangers our seas and our sovereignty. We will not accept half measures. Change now or face our scrutiny. I thank you.

Ms H O MKHALIPI: House Chair, the EFF rises to express conditional support for the Marine Oil Pollution Bill. This is a critical piece of legislation that strengthens our country's

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capacity to prevent, manage, and respond to marine oil pollution incidents.

South Africa is a maritime nation with one of the busiest shipping routes in the world, and any failure to protect our oceans from oil spills will be a direct attack on our environment, our coastal communities, and our economic interests. We support this Bill because it brings South Africa in line with the International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness Response and Cooperation. This ensures that we adopt globally recognized standards for disaster readiness, reporting systems, rapid intervention, and cooperation.

This is especially important given our proximity to high-traffic shipping lanes, offshore oil and gas activities, and environmentally sensitive areas such as the Wild Coast, Algoa Bay, and the West Coast. We commend the Bill for providing a framework for national contingency plans, improved coordination between departments, and clear lines of responsibility in the event of the oil pollution emergency. It demands that those who profit from our sea ship companies, offshore operations, and oil handling facilities must contribute to and comply with national and response systems.

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This is a long overdue step. However, hon Chair, true to the revolutionary character of the EFF, we cannot support this Bill uncritically. We support it with the firm conditions because while the Bill has strong foundations, it failed in several areas that must be corrected for the legislation to have a real impact.

Firstly, the Bill does not go far enough in ensuring accountability and enforcement. South Africa has a progressive environmental law yet continue to witness a pattern where polluters walk away with small fines while communities live with long-term ecological destruction. The Bill must include harsher penalties for negligence, stronger liability provisions, and explicit protection for coastal communities whose livelihood depends on fishing and tourism.

Secondly, the Bill relies too heavily on the assumption that the Department of Transport and related entities currently have the internal capacity, equipment, and expertise to respond to oil spills. We know this is not true and is not possible. Ports are understaffed, environmental specialists are in short supply, and the state has repeatedly outsourced co-function to private contractors, increasing coastal weakening capacity.

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The EFF insists that the government must build state-controlled and state-capacitated marine pollution response units in all major coastal regions.

Thirdly, the Bill is silent on how South Africa will confront the growing threats posed by offshore oil and gas exploration. We cannot protect the ocean from oil pollution. Therefore, we support with those conditions, Chair. I thank you.

Mr A K NGOBESE: Hon House Chair, on behalf of the IFP, I would like to congratulate both hon Minister Chrissie and hon Deputy Minister Hlengwa for South Africa's re-election back into the International Maritime Organization Council. This is indeed good news, especially considering that South Africa has been left out of this council since 2021. The IFP support for this Marine Oil Pollution Bill is premised on the fact that in our manifesto, we make clear and deliberate commitments to safeguard our environment.

A critical focus for the IFP is the protection of marine ecosystems. We seek to implement policies and practices that reduce human activities which negatively impact the greater African sea forest and other vital ocean systems. We support

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initiatives that promote the strengthening of marine protected areas and public education and awareness campaigns to deepen understanding of the environmental threats we face.

We are encouraged that the Department shares these sentiments, particularly in the light of the Deputy Minister of Transport, hon Hlengwa's assurance that this marks a significant step towards safeguarding our marine environment and coastal resources. Moreover, we welcome the department's zero tolerance approach which includes hefty fines for non-compliance with additional measures to address repeat offenders under existing legislations. The IFP accept the report. I thank you.

Afrikaans:

Me J A BASSON: 'n Nasie en 'n land eet uit die see, van arm tot ryk. Ons vra nie vrae as ons by Woolworths die skoot inpak nie, net soos die strandloper nie vrae vra wanneer daardie stukkie vis sy laaste oorlewing is nie.

As parlamentslede is dit ons plig om seker te maak dat elke voedselitem wat uit die see uitkom veilig is. Van arm tot ryk maak voorsiening op die see.

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English:

We as the PA support this report. It is up to us to ensure we safeguard our ocean, but this Bill needs a lot of work. We need to put more emphasis on prosecution.

Polluting the sea is a criminal offence. It's poisoning a nation. It's killing a child.

It's killing the poor of the poor to the rich of the rich. Not just will the food in the sea be dangerous to the person living from the sea, but even you, purchasing at Woolworths. Therefore, we also support the amendment to the Marine Oil Pollution Bill.

Oil spills and pollution in our oceans have devastating consequences. Marine life is lost. Every dolphin that dies is blood on our hands.

Every penguin that has to fight for survival, it's our fault. We need to ensure jail time for the people that's polluting our oceans, not just words on paper. Action is proven. Thank you.

Mr P A VAN STADEN: No declaration, Chairperson, but we support.

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Ms M P KOBE: House Chair, this Bill was first introduced in the Sixth Parliament in 2022, and as noted in the report, has undergone limited editorial changes as proposed by the National Council of Provinces.

ActionSA does support the Bill. However, we must register our concern about the confusion caused by the circulation of incorrect versions of the Bill to the committee. This is not an isolated error, House Chair.

It speaks to a far broader problem in the processing of legislation in this Parliament. The delays, the inconsistent frameworks, the backlog of residual bills that emanate from the Sixth Parliament, and even a few that are predating it, expose just how cumbersome and sluggish our lawmaking process has just become. The journey of this Bill marked by unnecessary delays and procedural confusion at various stages is deeply unfortunate, but certainly not unique.

Take for instance, ActionSA's own Private Members' Bill, the Enhanced Cut Cabinet Perks Bill introduced by hon Beesley, which has been left in limbo for 175 days and counting, without even a single meeting that is convened by the committee.

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We therefore urge the House committee chairpersons not to neglect the legislative duties of this House. South Africans deserve a Parliament that processes legislation efficiently, transparently, and with the seriousness that it demands. We support. Thank you, House Chair.

Rev K R J MESHOE: Hon House Chairperson, the ACDP welcomes the Marine Oil Pollution Bill as a necessary step to align South Africa with the International Convention on Oil Pollution, Preparedness, Response and Co-operation. Clause 5 of the Bill requires risk assessments, a national contingency plan and site-specific response measures to protect a fragile marine environment. We know that the department in its memorandum on the objects of the Bill emphasises the importance of preparedness and co-operation, recognising that oil spills are not only environmental disasters, but also economic threats to fisheries, tourism and coastal livelihoods.

In the past year, oral submissions to the Select Committee on Transport highlighted delays in updating the National Oil Spill Contingency Plan and concerns about the adequacy of equipment inventories. Social media commentary has also criticised the department for slow responses to smaller coastal pollution

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incidents, raising questions about capacity and transparency. As kingdom builders, the ACDP supports this Bill, but urge that implementation be monitored rigorously and preparedness must be matched by enforcement.

South Africa must not only sign conventions but demonstrate integrity in protecting environments and safeguarding communities from the grave repercussions of marine oil pollution. Failure to do so is proved to be devastatingly expensive, not only to the economy, but to the very morale of the nation. I thank you.

Mr N L S KWANKWA: No declaration, House Chair, we support.

Xitsonga:

Ttn S M GANA: Mutshamaxitulu wa Yindlu ...

English:

... as Rise Mzansi, we support the Bill. We support the Bill, even though there are a couple of things that we want to highlight. One of them is just the quality assurance, and we raised this issue that sometimes what delays the Bills being implemented or being signed into law, even at times once they

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are signed into law, we find or pick up that the editing on the side of Parliament has been lacking. We could have considered this Bill a month or so ago, but the back and forth between the legal division and the committee is what delayed the presentation of this Bill to this House.

I think going forward, House Chair and hon members, if we are to speed up in terms of Parliament processing the Bills, we need to ensure that there's adequate quality assurance. There was an Act that the President signed, but it could not be implemented on account that the editing or the wrong date was inserted. Therefore, before this Bill is sent to the President for assent, it needs to be double-checked and triple-checked that the correct dates are inserted and all the agreed amendments between the NCOP and what we had agreed to as the Portfolio Committee on Transport, they are correctly captured because we would not want to see the implementation of this Bill, which will then have to become an Act being delayed on account that the editing didn't take place.

Xitsonga:

Ndzi khensile swinene, Mutshamaxitulu wa Yindlu.

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Mr I ISMAIL-MOOSA: Malibongwe [Let it be praised]! Hon House Chairperson, hon members, family and beloved South African citizens, today we consider the Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Co-operation Bill and the accompanying report of the Portfolio Committee on Transport. This Bill is a timely and necessary intervention to strengthen South Africans' capacity to prevent, manage, and mitigate the devastating consequences of marine oil spills. As a coastal nation with strategic shipping lanes and a growing maritime economy, South Africa cannot afford gaps in preparedness or co-ordination. Oil pollution threatens our marine ecosystems, fishing communities, tourism sector and food security.

This legislation brings us in line with international best practise, enhances intergovernmental co-operation, and ensures clearer responsibilities for rapid and effective response. We welcome the committee's work and note the Bill's focus on improving emergency readiness, modernising response mechanisms, and strengthening collaboration with coastal provinces, ports and international partners. Crucially, it also ensures that polluters are held accountable and that environmental community interests remain protected.

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Hon House Chairperson, Al Jama-ah supports this Bill as a vital safeguard for our oceans, our economy and our coastal communities. It advances responsible stewardship of our natural resources. Jazakallah khair [May Allah reward you with goodness.] Malibongwe [Let it be praised]!

Mr C N MALEMATJA: House Chair, hon members and fellow South Africans, the ANC supports Marine Oil and Pollution Preparedness, Response and Co-operation Bill. As the ANC, we believe this will create integration government framework for the sustainable growth of ocean economy that maximises socioeconomic benefit while ensuring adequate environment protection. The ANC has made a pledge to continue developing port infrastructure, modernise maritime transportation, encourage investment in offshore oil, gas exploration and production as growth sector, while striving to increase support for aquaculture and sustainable fish-related lifestyle.

In keeping with its larger objective for economic reform, the ANC sees ocean economy as a lever for employment as well as growth and gross domestic product increase, particularly in coastal and historical underprivileged communities. You must remember that the work of this legislature did not start today.

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That is why we have confidence in it. Several government departments, state-owned entities, including Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, as well as Transnet, were consulted prior to the drafting of this Bill. Presentations were received from the Southern African Foundation for the Conservation of Coastal Birds, SANCCOB, which welcomed the legislation as a significant step in improving South Africa's preparedness for marine oil pollution and was pleased to see that wildlife response has been included under several points of the Bill. It also raised important issues on ship-to-ship oil transfer that occur at sea or on oil and gas exploration.

The goal of Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Co-operation Bill is to create a thorough legal framework for handling marine oil pollution in South Africa. Its primary goal is to incorporate the terms of the 1990, International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Co-Operation into domestic legislation in order to respond to and control spills whether of oil or any other pollution from ships, offshore installation, seaports, oil handling facilities, or other sources that might endanger the marine environment aquatic resources, coastlines, or related interested.

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The government intends to ensure the safe, effective, efficient management and deployment of sources under the Bill by preventing or eliminating oil-related harm to animal, coastal ecosystem and the economic and social interested associated with marine settings. The Bill seeks to decrease regulated pollution of the marine environment and safeguard biodiversity. Thougher initiative has been as such as Operation Phakisa Ocean Economic Programme. The government aims to maximise the economic potential of nation's innermost maritime zone and 3 000 kilometres of coastline in industry like maritime transportation and manufacturing, aquatic cultures, offshore oil and gas exploration, coastal and marine tourism, marine protection and service.

The policy seeks to create jobs, grows investment and encourages sustainable growth by improving essential expanding ship building, repair capability, and developing ecological response ... [Inaudible.] ... projects. The government seeks to strengthen global maritime influence while ensuring that environmental protection remains central. With this integrated approach, the ocean economy is positioned as a major force behind long-term economic relations, technological advancements and includes development.

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The implementation of this Bill will determine its effect by ensuring risk mitigation method of preventing marine oil pollution in place and that ports have the necessary equipment and capability to handle any incident involving marine oil pollution. This will be done by establishing South Africa as a vital maritime hub. A robust ocean economy fosters regional integration within the Southern African Development Community, ultimately supporting economic expansion and development of sustainable transportation. That is why as the ANC, we support this Bill.

House Chair, it will take long for cacophony of jabbering from those who are ... [Inaudible] ... if not allergic to progress to ever agree with any progressive move. It is not by mistake or by incident. It is a matter of understanding that this House is burning. It will never produce anything progressive. The MKP has a lot to look after, resignation after resignation, movement of position of the movement. It can't be correct that when we deal with the Bill, we are object or subject to the Auditor-General. This thing is dying, just come back home. The ANC supports the Bill. Thank you.

Motion agreed to (uMkhonto weSizwe Party dissenting).

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Bill, as amended, accordingly passed.

**CONSIDERATION OF THIRD REPORT OF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY RULES
COMMITTEE FOR SEVENTH PARLIAMENT, COMMITTEE ON THE PRESIDENCY,
QUESTIONS, PROCEDURE, COMPOSITION OF COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT
UNDERTAKINGS AND PETITIONS.**

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP OF THE LARGEST MINORITY PARTY: Hon House Chairperson, hon members, I wish to commit the report of the National Assembly Rules Committee to the House this afternoon. The report before the House concerns three matters, two of which involve proposed changes in the Rules. These include the Rules for Oversight Committee on the Presidency and the procedures intended to enhance questions for oral reply to the executive in the House.

Hon House Chairperson, the National Assembly has been considering the possibility of a committee to oversee the operations of the Presidency for some time. The argument first arose in the Sixth Parliament and later found expression in the state capture commission report. It is nevertheless important to note that committees of this kind, those that can scrutinise the office of the Head of State, are not a common feature of

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Parliaments elsewhere. This is due in part to the fact that the Head of State has distinct responsibilities.

Moreover, it is also true that some functions within the Presidency Vote are already scrutinised by portfolio committees. For these reasons, the Rules Committee deemed it necessary to first solicit research from the Parliamentary Budget Office on the oversight of Vote 1, the Presidency, and thereafter to undertake a benchmarking exercise to assess practices in other countries.

The proposed committee is expected to focus on the budget and administration of the Presidency and to call a member of the executive, delegated by the President, to account, therefore. In this way, it will function in a similar way to a portfolio committee. But the Rules also permit the committee to call on the President and Deputy President once every year to discuss policy matters of national and international importance.

As I have mentioned, liaisons with the Head of State can pose unique procedural considerations for the Assembly. The Rules therefore allow for a committee to adopt practical guidelines to promote greater certainty on how members can engage the

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President and the Deputy President, respectively. The proposed committee on the Presidency is a notable development, one which sets the House apart from many other Parliament legislatures.

Of course, we know that the Assembly Rules allow members to pose questions for oral reply to the executive. For each question posed, a Minister must provide a reply. Thereafter, the Rules allows members to pose four supplementary questions, the first opportunity being given to the member who posed the initial question.

Over time, it was deemed necessary to review the nature of oral questions to promote spontaneous exchange in the House. The Rules Committee has therefore recommended that the prevailing question process be reformed to incorporate features of interpolations, and specifically to allow a member who has posed a question for oral reply to be given both the first and the last opportunity to ask supplementary questions.

To ensure that members have the same number of opportunities for questions, question time for Ministers will be increased from three to three and a half hours. The report also records the decision on the composition of the Committee on Executive

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Undertakings and Petitions, which can now commence its important work.

Hon House Chairperson, these initiatives are all intended to expand the scope of parliamentary oversight and to ensure the House can pursue all avenues in furtherance of a responsive and accountable state.

I should state that the Rules Committee remains occupied with other proposed reforms to parliamentary procedure, and I must welcome the submission made by several members in this regard.

Parliamentary procedure must continue to evolve as circumstances demand. Hon House Chairperson, I hereby present the report of the Rules Committee for adoption by the House, and I thank you.

Declarations of Vote:

The CHIEF WHIP OF THE SECOND LARGEST MINORITY PARTY (Mr G Michalakis): Hon House Chairperson, it is more than a year since I moved in the Rules Committee to refer to the subcommittee the task of developing the rules tabled before this House today. This after years of debate on these matters as the Deputy Chief Whip has indicated. Indeed, it is long overdue, but better late

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than never. I am convinced that these procedural developments will go a long a long way in ensuring a more effective, a more robust and better Parliament.

We should all be in favour of these. In fact, it was a pleasure to see that both the subcommittee and the Rules Committee that parties were indeed in broad agreement with principles contained therein.

These rules will now ensure that the director-general and the Presidency will also come and account. Therefore, the entirety of the national budget will be put to Parliament to be scrutinised in detail. The President will also now account to us on major policies in a truly interactive and robust way.

However, most importantly the Committee on the Presidency will add a layer of accountability that the Zondo Commission recommended and that will hopefully go a long way in the future to protect our democratic institutions against State Capture and corruption.

In terms of interpellations the hybrid model that we are adopting is in my view indeed a good midway between what was

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initially proposed and the old system of oral questions which was by no means perfect. The new model will make provision for of the cafe questions by Members of Parliament, MPs, for more robust accountability and will hopefully go somewhere to ensure that Ministers indeed answer the questions put to them or get called out for failing to do so. This is good for democracy.

Finally, the National Assembly will again have a dedicated petitions committee after it was lost following the Oriani Ambrosini case in 2012. Traditionally, it is the Lower House as the direct representatives of the people who deal with petitions. This committee will now again take its rightful place in our House and allow for more direct access to Parliament by the people.

Hon House Chairperson, these developments are fundamentally important to improving the way in which our House fulfil its constitutional mandate and should be supported by all who want to see this institution thrive. I do want to extend my sincere thanks to colleagues from both sides of this House for the constructive way in which we arrived at the rules presented to this House today. However, more importantly as always we owe a great deal of gratitude to the table for crafting rules that

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will hopefully stand the test of time and will become a testament to their skill and dedication to our democracy. The DA strongly supports this report. Thank you.

Ms M C MAFAGANE: Hon House Chairperson, the MK party as the official opposition respond to the Rules Committee submission. We supported the establishment of the Portfolio Committee on the Presidency because South Africa desperately needs stronger oversight over the most powerful office in the Republic. However, our support is principled and automatic.

Oversight must be real and not ceremonial gesture. We welcome the recognition long overdue that the Vote No 1 cannot be treated as a scarce space beyond parliamentary scrutiny. The President is not above the law. Therefore, oversight over the Presidency cannot be timid, diluted and procedurally constrained.

However, the proposed composition of the committee undermines its very purpose. A body dominated by the ruling coalition cannot be credible and hold the executive to account. The MK party insist on more proportional multiparty structure that

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reflects this House and that ensures genuine scrutiny not managed by compliance.

We are further concerned by the liaison guidelines that requires lengthy notice periods and allow the President to defer matters. Oversight cannot operate on terms dictated by the executive. Accountability is not voluntary.

Crucially, the Ministry of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation must include the Presidency in its oversight programme. It makes no sense that every department is subjected to performance tracking except the very centre of government.

The Presidency cannot be an island exempted from monitoring while it co-ordinates, influence and directs the entire executive. There is indeed a gap. Ministers regularly make undertakings in the House that simply evaporates. However, the structure proposed is weak. Without stronger enforcement tools this committee risk in becoming another administrative peace stop with no consequences for noncompliance. South Africans deserve better than polite reminders of absent Ministers.

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Incremental changes are welcomed. Especially given the original questionnaire the first and the last supplementary. However, these reforms remain superficial. Question Time is still overly choreographed and excessively protective of the executive.

Adding the one extra supplementary question and extending the time to 30 minutes does not fundamentally shift power back to Parliament. We require a true interpellation and real time accountability mechanism.

We reject the skewed composition that shields the executive. The weak liaison guidelines that allow presidential avoidance, the superficial questioning reform that do not strengthen accountability, the continued exclusion of the Presidency from the Planning, Evaluation and Monitoring oversight cycle. Oversight must bite and must be equal for all. Above all, the Presidency is not above the law. We therefore call for the entire report to be sent back for revision so that Parliament may adopt rules that truly strengthen accountability does not protect those in power. Thank you.

Mrs N J NOLUTSHUNGU: Hon House Chairperson, it is important for this House to note that it was in 2023 when the EFF wrote to the then Speaker of the National Assembly, to request to consider

the establishment of a permanent committee to provide oversight on the work of the Presidency. When we made this proposition, we were concerned that there was a growing concentration of key state functions in the Office of the President. Without there be a parliamentary mechanism for holding the Presidency to account in relation to these growing functions in the Presidency.

The view was premised on the fact that since its establishment, Parliament has had no mechanism in the form of a standing committee whose role was to provide oversight on the work of the Presidency. The rapid concentration of power in the Office of the President ever since Mr Ramaphosa took over power warrants the establishment of a Standing Portfolio Committee on the Presidency.

Therefore, in this regard, we fully support recommendations of the rules subcommittee for the establishment of a separate Portfolio Committee on the Presidency. The establishment of a separate Portfolio Committee on the Presidency marks decisive and consequential victory for constitutional democracy in the country.

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In addition and most importantly, Parliament is enjoined to ensure overseeing the effective management of government by individual members of the executive in pursuit of improved service delivery for the achievement of a better quality of life for all the citizens.

The EFF affirms its commitment to hold government accountable by offering rigorous, robust and constructive opposition through superior logic and evidence-based substantive criticism.

We are also in support of the recommendations of the composition of the committee on government undertakings and petitions. This is a crucial development in our quest to make Parliament accountable to people. This committee will ensure that none of the undertakings made by government slip through the fingers without a proper mechanism for measuring progress.

Equally, we support the new rule on questions. Even though this rule does not provide for interpellations as previously practised in the House. However, the provision to allow a member who originally asked a question an opportunity to also ask the last supplementary question to the Minister permits for a much broader engagement with members of the executive. This rule must

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however be linked to an extended time for oral replies for Ministers because this rule will inadvertently extend time needed for Ministers to reply in the House.

The EFF in support of the report of the subcommittee rules. I thank you.

Ms N M HADEBE: Hon House Chairperson, the IFP welcomes the report which reflect meaningful progress towards strengthening accountability, improving parliamentary efficiency and ensuring that our rules evolve with the needs of a modern democracy. We support the introduction of a dedicated committee on the Presidency, a long overdue mechanism that will enhance oversight and ensure structured engagement with the President and Deputy President.

This development gives Parliament a firmer hand in scrutinising the highest office and appreciate the detailed framework outlining the committee's functions liaison guidelines and composition.

We also welcome reforms to the questions procedure including extending Question Time and allowing the originating member both

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the first and last supplementary. These changes will revitalise quality of exchanges in the House and create space for more effective accountability on the executive.

In addition, we note the formalisation of the committee on government undertakings and petitions ensuring that ministerial commitments from the House do not fall through the cracks and that public petitions are treated with the seriousness they deserve. The IFP supports the adoption of this report and remains committed to working with all parties to build a Parliament that is responsive, ethical and firmly anchored in constitutional principles. I thank you.

Ms J S PETERSEN: Hon House Chairperson, no declaration we support this report.

Mr W W WESSELS: House Chair, the FF Plus supports this report and the recommendations to the rules made. The debate on the desirability of an oversight mechanism on the President and the presidency has been ongoing for many, many years as a lot of speakers as already said. The Deputy Chief Whip is correct that it is not convention in most jurisdictions to have an oversight committee on the head of state.

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However, over the last few years, our presidency has become a fully-fledged department where many functions reside and with those functions are over normal workings of department with procurement and so forth, accountability and correct oversight is thus very important. Thus, we welcome this proposal and we also commend the subcommittee and the Rules Committee for going as far as setting out the rules on such a committee to provide oversight and to have especially the accounting officer of the presidency account to Parliament, which is currently a void and where there is currently no oversight over that accounting officer.

Also, with regards to policy, it is important to have the President as the head of state account to Parliament. With regards to the other amendments, we do welcome the fact that we can improve and evolve our oversight responsibilities and as Parliament and the National Assembly, we have to be cognisant of the fact that a lot of our working are and is checkbox exercises where we go through and a lot of the work without it translating into real effect and real advancement of the people out there ... corruption. Thank you, Chairperson. [Time expired.]

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Ms L M NGOBENI: Hon House Chairperson, for too long the presidency has operated as a centre of concentrated authority with Parliament limited to written and oral questions as its primary tools of scrutiny. This imbalance has fuelled what may be rightly called a super presidency, where immense executive power has not been matched by equally robust parliamentary oversight.

Today marks that decisive corrective step. The establishment of the committee on the presidency finally restores the constitutional principle that no public office including the highest office in the land, can operate without proper reach of Parliament. Vote 1 has always been part of the national budget. It has never been exempted from the laws and prescripts that govern public expenditure. Yet Parliament has in practise lacked a dedicated structure to interrogate the presidency's work, spending and commitments. That ends today.

This committee will ensure the structured appearance of the President and the Deputy President. It will enhance scrutiny of the administration of the presidency and it will empower Parliament to call upon the necessary executive authorities with clarity and authority. This represents meaningful progress for

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accountability, transparency and constitutional democracy.

ActionSA is proud to support the work of the Rules Committee in bringing the House to this moment.

The committee on the presidency strengthens Parliament's hand and ensures that the most powerful office in the Republic accounts directly to the people consistently and without exception. ActionSA supports this report. I thank you.

Mr S N SWART: House Chair, the ACDP believes that one of the most glaring examples of the deficiency of Parliament's oversight over the presidency was highlighted by the Constitutional Court in 2016, when it told that the National Assembly failed to hold former President Zuma accountable by disregarding the remedial action called for by the Public Protector in her report.

The court said on a proper construction of its constitutional obligations, the National Assembly was duty bound to hold the President accountable by facilitating and ensuring compliance. It added that the National Assembly's resolution based on the Minister's findings, exonerating the President is inconsistent with the Constitution and unlawful. This was a very severe

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indictment on Parliament having been found to act unconstitutionally and unlawfully in not exercising its oversight function properly.

The Zondo Commission also recommended that Parliament consider establishing a specific portfolio committee to oversee the presidency. This has now been remedied with this rule amendment which establishes a designated portfolio committee which the ACDP welcomes and support. We've also taken note of the composition of the committee and believe that given the very important role that this committee will play, it should have a larger membership.

Greater clarity for 200 members, as well as other members who may wish to attend this committee is also required. Lastly, the ACDP also supports the hybrid model for questions, as well as the return of a dedicated Petitions Portfolio Committee and we support the report. Thank you.

Mr N L S KWANKWA: The UDM supports the report of the Rules Committee now in collective pursuit of strengthening accountability over the presidency. A number of study tours have been conducted or undertaken over the years. In 2018, the Chief

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Whip's Forum undertook a study tour to Ghana and the United Kingdom, followed by further visits to Ireland, among others, to examine international best practises on how legislatures hold their presidencies and executive officers accountable.

In addition to these initiatives, the Rules Committee itself undertook a number of study tours to assess how other countries ensure effective oversight over their presidencies. The proposals before us today are a direct outcome of these inputs and efforts. One of the key issues identified was the anomaly that the director-general in the Office of the Presidency was the only director-general, DG, who did not report to Parliament on the use of resources allocated to the office. We are pleased that this gap on oversight is now being addressed.

The UDM, for the record, has consistently called for such measures since 2011. Though our proposals received limited support in the past, it is encouraging to see that our longstanding call is finally being taken seriously and is now being supported across the House. Parliament must, of course, appreciate and respect the sensitivities involved in holding the presidency to account. However, this reform affirms a

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fundamental principle that the President is not immune from scrutiny and is not above accountability to Parliament.

We also support the amendment that allows the sponsor of a question during a question session to ask the final supplementary question. While it may appear a modest procedural refinement, it gives meaningful and practical effect to the constitutional values of transparency and responsiveness and accountability as outlined or articulated in our Constitution. The Constitution places an unequivocal duty on this House to hold the executive accountable. [Time expired.]

IsiXhosa:

Pewuuu, kanene anisifuni, enkosi.

English:

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): But you know that you have two minutes, hon member.

Xitsonga:

Tat S M GANA: Mutshamaxitulu, ...

English:

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I would have just sat there and said that Rise Mzansi supports and no declaration. What made me to come here is because having been in the kitchen when working on these rules and cooking the rules, making sure that there is alignment across parties. I heard the speaker from the MK Party saying that the report must be sent back to the committee. That is what the MK Party said.

It says we must send back the report to the committee. Everyone else agrees that the report must be passed. By the way, the only contention that the MK Party had, which I mean, like at the time was like no, no, maybe let us hear it out, was that, no, let us expand the committee. I was in the kitchen and the MK Party was there.

Nevertheless, is that a reason enough to say that let us send the report back? Even if we were to send back the report to the Rules Committee, the MK would still not win the argument. So, everyone else in this Parliament agrees to this report other than the MK. Even ourselves we made arguments, I mean, some of the arguments that ourselves as Rise Mzansi made was that, let us extend the time of questions by 30 minutes, let's allow members ... [Interjections.] ... but we did not win the argument ...

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The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): ... hon members, hon members, hon Gana, hon Gana, uh hon members! Hon members from uMkhonto weSizwe! No, no, you can't drown the speaker. You are allowed to speak but not to drown the speaker. No, it is part of the debate, you can't drown the speaker. I am saying, we also want to hear because you will be raising point of orders here and I, myself, cannot hear what the member on the podium is saying. So, can we, please, have order. Continue, hon member.

Mr S M GANA: Two last points, Chairperson. We can make the questions more productive if we stop making statements and ask questions. That is how we can make the questions more productive. However, on the other issues, I must say, I expect the MK to call for a division today so that all the other members can show them who supports this report and who doesn't.

Xitsonga:

Ndza khensa swinene, Mutshamaxitulu.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Hon members, hon members, no, he has left the podium. There is absolutely nothing that says you must make noise.

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Mrs N L HLAZO-WEBSTER: Chair, I want to first start off by saying that BOSA does support and is in full support of real reform, but we want to caution that if we design rules now around the present political configurations rather than constitutional principles that have to endure, then, we weaken this very institution in years to come.

So, we want to begin maybe with the proposed committee on the presidency and express that the presidency is the centre of executive authority, and so, oversights of the presidency has got to be disproportionately weighted toward the opposition. Yet in this composition it gives the governing blocks six seats and the full opposition only five, and that ultimately translates to self-monitoring. So, Parliament has got to think beyond the Government of National Unity, GNU. We've got to think beyond this term and we've got to think beyond the temporary coalitions of today.

Oversight committees over the executive should either be opposition majority or at a minimum, they've got to be opposition equal. That is something we still need to engage further. On the questions procedure, we welcome the additional time and the revival of interpolation like supplementary, but

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substance matters more than form. Ministers routinely turn questions into rambling monologues rather than direct accountability, and so we need for this House to have rules that enforce concise factual answers and not political theatre.

The greatest failure that remains untouched, that we can't put on record, is that the President appears before Parliament Only four times a year. That's indefensible in a country where we face unemployment, crime and economic crisis. And so, we propose increasing that to at least five or six appearances annually as a minimum democratic standard. We've got to have rules that allow for full accountability and oversight, otherwise, we might as well close this House. We do support the report but want to put all of that on record. Thank you.

Mr I ISMAIL-MOOSA: Hon House Chair, hon members, and respected fellow beloved family of South Africans, today, we consider the Third Report of the National Assembly Rules Committee of the Seventh Parliament dealing with the Committee on the Presidency, the Questions procedure and the Composition of the Committee on Government Undertakings and Petitions. As Aljam-ah, we appreciate and acknowledge that this report reflects an important step towards strengthening accountability, enhancing

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responsiveness, and improving the overall functioning of this House.

The establishment and refinement of the Committee on the Presidency ensures greater oversight of executive priorities, while the updated Questions procedure promotes clarity, efficiency, and meaningful engagement between members and the executive. Equally significant is the strengthened Committee on Government Undertakings and Petitions. This committee plays a vital role in amplifying the concerns of all our beloved family South African citizens, ensuring its proper composition enables us to respond more effectively to commitments made by the executive and to petitions submitted by our beloved family of South African citizens.

Hon Speaker, Aljam-ah supports with all its blessings this report as it advances transparency, deepens oversight, and reinforces Parliament's constitutional duty to serve our people with integrity and accountability. I thank you.

IsiZulu:

Malibongwe!

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English:

Mr C M DUGMORE: Hon House Chairperson, when the ANC adopted our manifesto as we prepared for the 2024 General Elections, we committed to improve the capacity of Parliament and our legislatures to fulfil their legislative oversight and accountability responsibilities. I think it is very clear that what is happening here today, which I would argue is actually historical, is part of that effort by the movement, the ANC, working with other parties to make sure that this Parliament is able to be effective in its oversight, to build accountability, and to be responsive. I think it is a special day for Parliament.

The Constitution, as all of us know, in section 55, empowers the National Assembly to provide for mechanisms, firstly to ensure that all executive organs of state in the national sphere of government are accountable to it and also to maintain oversight of the exercise of the National Executive Authority, including the implementation of legislation and any organ of state. It further requires that the Rules and Orders of the National Assembly must provide for the establishment, composition, powers, functions, procedures, and duration.

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I want to salute our Deputy Speaker, members of the Rules Committee, and the subcommittee for the work that they have done. Relative to other democracies, our country has a robust system of oversight and accountability of the President and the Deputy President. Chair, some people have come here and raised the composition of this committee. We must understand that the composition comes.

IsiXhosa:

Asibonyuli.

English:

When we vote, the composition follows. That is how it works. So, we must earn at the ballot box what we want to achieve here in Parliament. That is the composition and let us work with that. I also want to say that I find it strange that the MKP talks about accountability and wants to have issues. But I want to issue a warning that for as long as the MKP does not have an elected leadership ...

IsiXhosa:

... niza kulwa nodwa oko apha phambi kwethu.

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English:

You will continue fighting amongst yourselves. You will change your Chief Whip every month or two. You will not have any mandate to come to this House. So, we must also, in conclusion, understand that we support this measure and what we have achieved today. The interpolation, the mini debate, is progressive and we should celebrate the fact that we now have a committee on government undertakings and petitions. That is progress that allows the people access, and it is a major step forward.

As the ANC, we support a people's parliament. We support an activist Parliament that drives transformation, redress and responsiveness and this Rules Report that we are adopting today, it helps us to achieve that. Let us celebrate a significant achievement in the Seventh Parliament. Thank you.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Thank you very much, hon member. It is good to see that you are alive. You know I have been missing you for the past two hours. Yeah, you have been very quiet, but I can see that you are here now. I will now recognize the hon Chief Whip. You see? It is the MKP again.

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The CHIEF WHIP OF THE LARGEST MINORITY PARTY: House Chairperson,
I move that the report be adopted.

Motion agreed to (uMkhonto weSizwe Party dissenting).

Report accordingly adopted.

CONSIDERATION OF BUDGETARY REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATION REPORT OF
PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS ON 2024-25
ANNUAL REPORT OF CASTLE CONTROL BOARD, CCB, AND ARMSCOR

CONSIDERATION OF BUDGETARY REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATION REPORT OF
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CONSIDERATION OF BUDGETARY REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATION REPORT OF
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There was no debate.

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP OF THE LARGEST MINORITY PARTY moved: That
the Reports be adopted.

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Declarations of vote:

Mr C HATTINGH: Ten years after Parliament applauded and approved the 2015 Defence Review, not a single milestone has been achieved. Three consecutive Ministers have failed to implement it. As a result, the SA National Defence Force, SANDF, is operating without a valid force design, without a modern posture, and without any strategic direction. Instead of tabling the overdue reassessment by October 2024, the Minister now hides behind a vague slogan: Journey to Greatness - a document with no plan, no timelines, no costing, and no credibility. The Minister herself admits it is only a discussion process, not a strategy.

For more than a decade, the SANDF has been chronically underfunded, and nothing in the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework, MTEF, shows that this will change. Yet, while the Minister blames underfunding for the SANDF's decline, she has taken no steps to restructure the Force, to right-size it, or redesign it to live within the budget we have. There are no tough decisions and no internal reform. The result is a Navy which is unable to patrol our waters, an Air Force grounded by scarcity, and an army hollowed out by uncertainty. This is now more than a budget issue. It has become a leadership vacuum.

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The department and the SANF command have ignored years of warnings from the Auditor-General, AG, the Special Investigating Unit, SIU, the Hawks, and this Parliament. Material irregularities grow, investigations stall, and failures repeat. On 12 November, the SIU, the Hawks, and the AG briefed Parliament on widespread corruption, blocked investigations, missing documents, and the collapse of consequence management.

House Chair, the Minister must take the Budgetary Review and Recommendations Reports, BRRR, seriously. It is the starting point for urgent repair. Minister Motshekga must table a credible, fully costed Force design and recovery plan by a fixed deadline. If she cannot deliver that, she must step aside. I thank you.

Mr Z K A CELE: Hon House, fellow South Africans, today, we consider the BRRR of the Department of Defence, the Department of Military Veterans, and the Castle Control Port at Armscor. Let us be honest, these reports all reveal the same truth, that South Africa is failing its own defenders, and the Government of National Unity, GNU, continues to speak the language of austerity while expecting miracles from the starving Defence Force. The SA National Defence Force is the pillar of the

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Republic. It protects our borders, our airspace, our oceans, our dignity, and our sovereignty. Yet every year, the Treasury cuts deeper, Cabinet delays longer, and the threats grow sharper. The BRRR exposes that our soldiers are being sent into complex theatres of war and peacekeeping with obsolete equipment, collapsing bases, maintenance failures, no maritime protection, the Air Force grounded by fuel shortage, and the army expected to secure borders with fewer members. This cannot be tolerated. Prioritization of the SANDF is no longer a policy option; it is a constitutional duty. A sovereign nation that cannot defend itself is not sovereign at all. A military that must privatize many of its core functions is captured.

Hon members, we must also speak on behalf of those who defended this nation long before many of us entered this House - our military veterans, or ex-combatants. The Department of Military Veterans has failed to capture ex-combatants using their Force numbers, CPR numbers, original file number records, and help them set them up ... Instead, they waste taxpayers' money on an endless verification process that re-traumatizes freedom fighters and treats them like criminals begging for scraps. MK is clear ... [Time expired.]

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The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Hon member, your time has expired. Just a reminder, hon members, these declarations are only two minutes. The EFF!

Mr C G NIEHAUS: Hon Chair, the EFF categorically rejects the combined BRRR Defence reports. It hides the total disintegration of our defence capability. The SANDF is in the throes of collapse with an austerity budget, leaking barracks, no fuel, no spares, and soldiers training with outdated gear. The Secretary of Defence has been acting for years with no permanent appointment forthcoming. Billions in irregular expenditure, zero consequences. In an overall corrupt and incompetent GNU, the Department of Defence stands out as the super champion of corruption. The 2015 Defence Review gathers dust, and the so-called Journey to Greatness remains hidden from Parliament. All of this while our airspace, borders, and seas are defenceless. Vice Admiral Monde Lobese warned that the Navy is being defunded with a deliberate intent by members of the executive to help drug cartels, and Minister Motshekga's response? A cover-up. Frightening him with disciplinary action. It is disgraceful.

The EFF demands an immediate increase of the Defence budget to 1,5% of the gross domestic product, GDP, the total overall and

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forced renewal of the SANDF, the removal of the inept leadership command, the immediate resignation of the bundling and incompetent Minister Motshekga and her two Deputies.

The Department of Military Veterans has collapsed. It is rotten to the core and is still run illegally by an acting director-general, DG, under dark clouds of corruption. Armscor and Denel are disgraceful failures.

To support this report is to mislead Parliament and to commit treason against our nation's sovereignty. The EFF rejects it completely and with the contempt it deserves. Thank you.

Inkosi R N CEBEKHULU: Our nation's sovereignty is the foundation upon which our democracy rests. It is the safeguard for our citizens' rights and freedoms, and it must be vigilantly protected against both internal and external threats. The IFP remains deeply concerned about the financial constraints facing the department, especially given the critical role it plays in upholding national security. Our freedom came at an enormous cost in both life and labour. Those who sacrifice for our liberation must be honoured, safeguarded, and afforded the dignity they deserve.

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While we appreciate and welcome the delivery of 115 houses, the reality remains that this falls short of the commitments made. The IFP equally welcomes the provision of educational support to more than 2 700 military veterans and their dependents. We recognise the financial constraints facing the department. However, we call on both the department and national treasury to prioritise the well-being of the men and women who selflessly fought for our freedom and democracy. Their sacrifice must never be repaid with indifference, but with a decisive and compassionate action. In consideration of these issues we have raised, the IFP accepts the report. Thank you.

IsiXhosa:

Mnu. E HENDRICKS: Sihlalo weNdlu namalungu ale Ndlu, mandiqale ngokunibulisa kuquka nabahlali baseMzantsi Afrika abasivoteleyo.

English:

The Patriotic Alliance, as a partner in the Government of National Unity, rise to affirm our support for this Budget Review and Recommendation Report on the Portfolio Committee on Defence and Military Veterans. On the annual report for 2024/25 covering the Castle Control Board, Armaments Corporation of South Africa, ARMSCOR, the Department of Defence and the

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Department of Military Veterans. These institutions are central to safeguarding our sovereignty, supporting our veterans and ensuring that defence resources are managed with integrity.

We declare our support for this report. It strengthens parliamentary oversight and provides a framework, accountability and improved service delivery. Defence and veterans' affairs must serve the people, especially those who sacrifice for the Republic and those historically marginalised in access to opportunities within the defence sector.

Hon members, we commend Armaments Corporation of South Africa, ARMSCOR, for progress for progress in for progress in procurement, transparency and the castle control board for maintaining heritage assets responsibly. Yet, challenges remain. The Department of Defence must address insufficiency in expenditure to protect operational readiness, while the Department of Military Veterans must intensify its work to deliver benefits fairly and equitably. Veterans from all communities, including coloureds veterans and other historically excluded groups, must receive the recognition and support they deserve. We further emphasise that the South African Cape Coloureds Military Veterans Association, SACCMV, must be

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formally recognised and included in the framework of benefits. Perhaps the reason they have not yet been recognised is because most of their members were coloured. And that is precisely why we say with conviction, like all lives, coloured lives matter. Their service and sacrifice [Time expired]

Ms L M NGOBENI: House Chairperson, the report before us paints a deeply troubling picture of our national defence. It confirms what South Africans already fear. The South African National Defence Force, SANDF, is stretched far beyond its means, and its critical capabilities are steadily collapsing.

We have an army that overspent on employee compensation by almost R2 billion, yet still lacks the basic equipment and mobility needed for landward readiness. The South African Navy cannot perform a single long-range maritime patrol because its vessels are unserviceable. Our air force is flying barely half the hours required to maintain operational competency.

They are not isolated failures. They signal a structural breakdown in force readiness across all arms of service. The Budget Review and Recommendations Reports, BRRR, makes it very clear, the South African National Defence Force is now used

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primarily for domestic stabilisation, not because the strategy has changed, but because it is conventional capability has degraded far beyond the thresholds set in the defence review.

Border safeguarding is still conducted with the same number of subunits, the same inadequate vehicles, limited surveillance technology and chronically weak logistics. Even our peacekeeping missions are slipping. Compliance levels are failing, and South Africa is risking losing credibility with regional bodies like the Southern African Development Community, SADC, Standby Force.

Chairperson, this is not only unsustainable, but also irresponsible governance. Our national defence is not a luxury; it is a constitutional imperative. Until the department is properly funded, stabilised, and structurally reformed, South Africa will remain without a credible defence capability. We owe our soldiers better, and we surely owe our country better. Thank you.

Mr S N SWART: House Chair, the ACDP has taken note of the reports, which paint a dismal picture. The SANDF's operational condition is now at critical levels, with the Auditor-General saying the serviceability of prime mission equipment remains

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below acceptable levels, and maintenance backlogs are worsening due to the reallocation of funds and personal expenditure.

Due to severe underfunding, the South African Navy operates one of four frigates and one of three submarines and is unable to patrol our waters effectively. The Air Force only has a handful of Gripen fighters and Oryx helicopters flying, while most transport aircraft are grounded for lack of spares. The Army's infantry combat vehicles and trucks, many over 30 years old, have poor availability rates, and ammunition stocks are low.

It is no wonder that the Chief of the South African Navy, Vice Admiral Monde Lobese, has severely criticised government for underfunding. Whilst his comments may verge on insubordination, they are made from a deep-seated frustration and echo many warnings from the Chief of the South African Defence Force, SANDF, as well as members of both portfolio committees. We are failing to provide the resources necessary for an efficient SANDF. Whilst there are insufficient financial resources, we are also concerned about adverse audit queries, including two material irregularities. In addition, cost of employees takes a lion's share of the budget, 67%, whilst only 33% is allocated towards maintenance and capital acquisition.

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Lastly, the ACDP is equally concerned about the dire situation facing the Department of Military Veterans, and whilst we appreciate what the report sets out, - and will support it, we do believe additional resources are required for the SANDF.

Thank you.

Ms C T NONTENJA: House Chair, while the UDM supports the report of the committee and the recommendations thereof, the UDM would like to raise some areas of concern. For Department of Defence, it continues to receive a qualified audit report. More needs to be done to promote accountability within the department. Lack of consequence management and failure to adequately implement the Auditor-General, AGSA,'s recommendations. Deteriorating of technology and equipment amid the changing nature of threats. Major concern is the shortage of body armour, boots, tents, etc.

While the committee referred to poor state of border fence, the UDM noted the absence of border fence, which impacts the South African National Defence Force, SANDF,'s ability to fulfil its border safeguarding functions.

On Defence and Military Veterans, DMV, the ongoing instability in top management with key positions filled with acting capacity

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and delayed permanent positions. Ongoing delays in appointing permanent directors-general, DGs, is of great concern. Over expenditure on operating leases of 156% is the largest deviation ever. The same applies to computer services, which is 133,2%.

The 203,9% massive overspending in social contribution, the Department has a persistent challenge of failure to provide houses to qualifying military veterans. Only 15 houses were allocated in 2024/25. That is 51% less on the annual target of 225 houses.

IsiXhosa:

... ummiselo (target) lowo ophantsi kwawona.

English:

On the bursary allocations ... [Time expired]

Mrs N L HLAZO-WEBSTER: No declaration from BOSA, Chair.

Ms T L MARAWU: No declaration from the ATM, House Chair.

Mr I ISMAIL-MOOSA: Hon Chair, hon members, fellow beloved family of South Africans, today we consider these reports. The Castle

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Control Board remains a key custodian of one of South Africa's most important heritage sites, and its work continues to promote social cohesion, tourism and historical preservation.

However, the board must strengthen its financial management, expand revenue-generating initiatives and ensure that oversight structures remain fully compliant with government standards. The castle plays an important role in education, tourism, cultural preservation and nation-building.

The board has continued its outreach programmes and heritage initiatives, and we acknowledge these efforts under challenging fiscal conditions. However, the report highlights ongoing concerns that require urgent attention, instability in governance structures, weaknesses in revenue generation and continued reliance on limited departmental support.

The board must strengthen financial controls, improve maintenance planning and ensure that the site is managed in a manner that reflects its historical significance and its potential as a sustainable heritage asset. Far too many veterans still struggle to access housing, health care, education, support and economic opportunities. These delays undermine the

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very purpose of the department and erode trust among those who served our country with distinction.

Hon Speaker, Al-Jamah-ah supports the committee's recommendations and calls for improved accountability, stable funding and stronger institutional capacity and effective oversight. A well-governed defence sector is vital for national readiness, economic contribution and the protection of our constitutional democracy. Let us reaffirm, at the same time safeguarding of a national treasure.

IsiZulu:

Malibongwe!

Setswana:

Rre M D D LEGOETE: Mmusakgotla le Maloko a Kokwano ya Bosetšhaba, a ke tseye tshono eno...

English:

... as the ANC, we support these reports of the Department of Defence, Armscor, the Department of Military Veterans and the Castle Control Board. Any sovereign state cannot stay without a national defence force because failure to defend, to secure and

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to bring peace and stability would undermine economic growth, job creation and the defence of our sovereignty.

So, the Department of Defence is very key in safeguarding our national interest, our national sovereignty and our territorial integrity. On the Department of Military Veterans, it's very key that we appreciate the work that was done by the heroes and heroines of our military for the sacrifice and the price they've paid. Their welfare still is our responsibility as this Parliament. It was this Parliament that allowed the wrong policy choices for defence money to be taken to bail out incompetent SOEs and boards of SOEs in the past. Almost R53 billion was shifted from the national defence force budget, which is very wrong. And we need to take accountability as this Parliament to improve and correct that particular situation than shouting at the problem. We must bring a solution.

Under Armscor, it's obviously true that our sovereign capabilities cannot be left without proper research and development. We need that particular allocation of 1,5% because money does not go only to uniforms and arms. It goes to research and development. So, we support this particular budget, with the control board included. Thank you.

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Motion agreed to.

Report on 2024-25 Annual Report of Castle Control Board and Armscor accordingly adopted (uMkhonto weSizwe Party, ActionSA and Economic Freedom Fighters dissenting).

Report on 2024-25 Annual Report of the Department of Defence accordingly adopted (uMkhonto weSizwe Party, ActionSA and Economic Freedom Fighters dissenting).

Report on 2024-25 Annual Report of Department of Military Veterans accordingly adopted (uMkhonto weSizwe Party, ActionSA and Economic Freedom Fighters dissenting).

**CONSIDERATION OF BUDGETARY REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATION REPORT OF
PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION ON
PERFORMANCE OF DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION
FOR 2024-25 FINANCIAL YEAR**

There was no debate.

Declarations of vote made on behalf of the Democratic Alliance,
uMkhonto weSizwe Party, Economic Freedom Fighters, Inkatha

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Freedom Party, Freedom Front Plus, ActionSA, African Christian Democratic Party, Al Jama-ah and African National Congress.

Declaration(s) of vote:

Ms N W MAZZONE: House Chairperson and fellow members, today I rise to discuss the committee observations and recommendations on the Department of Science, Technology and Innovation. The department before us highlights the critical role science, technology, and innovation, STI, plays in driving our development and our progress. As we all know, countries who invest in research and development, R&D, are ones that thrive. South Africa's National Development Plan has rightly placed STI at the centre of our developmental agenda, and we must work towards achieving the targets as set out in the plan.

However, the document does reveal something concerning.

Investment in R&D remains very low at 0,61% of our gross domestic product, GDP, far below our target of 1,1%. Let's not even mention 1,5% by 2030. This underfunding has limited the scope and impact of initiatives aimed at increasing its size, coherence and effectiveness. I'm encouraged by the department's achievements, including 85% of their 24, 25% targets and 96% of their total budget spend.

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However, we must address the mismatch between expenditure rate and performance. I remain deeply concerned and absolutely alert to the fact that yet again, a notorious state-owned entity, Denel, is seeking relevance and quite frankly, an economic lifeline in an area where its contributions are now outdated and obsolete. Given the amazing work done by South African scientists and South African innovators, we cannot let the precious little money that our department has been sucked up and wasted. We see you and we will not let you.

I support the recommendations that the Minister and the department exercise appropriate monitoring and oversight of its entities, address leadership deficiencies and assist entities in dealing with public procurement processes. We must work together to ensure that our ... is effective. I thank you. The DA supports the recommendations. [Time expired.]

Mr T S MJADU: Hon House Chairperson, I rise on behalf of MK Party to reject this budget. This budget and this report show that our science and innovation system is in serious trouble. We have a government that makes big promises but does not provide the money to support them. Our goal was to spend 1,1% of our national budget on research, but we only spent 0,61%. This is a

betrayal of our future. We are starving our scientists and our next generation.

The allocated budget that we get from Government of National Unity, GNU, government is not enough, as such as allocated funding does not meet its target. This is unfair to people of South Africa, our hardworking citizen. The situation here is unacceptable. This is a failing institution that is blocking black businesses. Their delays and corruption harm the small companies. We need to create jobs. We cannot accept this. Therefore, today I say clearly, this report is unacceptable.

This budget has failed. We demand a major change in science funding. No more excuses. We demand immediate action at tier. Remove the managers who fail. We will not support any plan that continues to damage our future.

IsiZulu:

Ngifuna ukuthi eNingizimu Afrika ningabavoteli ngo-2026 ngoba babulala izwe lethu. Nivotele uMkhonto Wesizwe ngoba uMkhonto Wesizwe unohlelo bayawazi amagalelelo kaMongameli uJacob Zuma. Ningabavoteli ngonyaka ozayo badayisile ngani. Badlala ngeNingizimu Afrika behlangene nabamhlophe bathatha izwe

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balibuyisela kwabamhlophe. Ningabavoteli ngonyaka ozayo
Ningizimu Afrika votelani uMkhonto Wesizwe. Ngiyabonga.

Dr S S THEMBEKWAYO: House Chairperson, the EFF rejects the Budgetary Review and Recommendation Report tabled here today because the department has failed to make decisive interventions. The National Development Plan 2030, identifies science, technology and innovation as crucial for accelerating economic transformation and improving South Africa's global competitiveness. It therefore requires substantial and consistent investment in research and development. Yet, the very entities driving STI research are experiencing budget cuts.

These funding reductions have compromised plans across multiple institutions, threatening implementation timelines and leaving South Africa further behind in a rapidly advancing global technological landscape. Science and technology evolve continuously, and our delayed progress widens the gap even more. The report does not adequately demonstrate how reductions in the Doctor of Philosophy, PhD, research budget, innovation austerity measures and broader funding cuts are eroding our national capacity to innovate and advance in critical technological fields.

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It also fails to show how STI, whose development must align with the productiveness of industry, has been weakened by the department's limited focus on collaboration with the private sector to meet the requirements of the modern economy. The underspending recorded in this financial year stems largely from delays in transfers and subsidies, specifically the late transfers of strategic science platforms funds to the National Research Foundation. This resulted in the delayed finalisation of an expired human capacity. The EFF rejects this report. Thank you. [Time expired.]

Mr S S ZONDO: Hon House Chairperson, the IFP has considered this report and commended the department and most of its entities for achieving commendable performances and clean audits. However, the report exposes the systemic risk that compromises the long-term viability of the national systems of innovation. It must be noted that the gross expenditure on research and development remain critical low, resulting in significant underfunding.

This means the parliamentary grant cannot even cover the salary Bill of entities like ... [Inaudible.] ... and the Human Sciences Research Council, HSRC, therefore leading to several capacity challenges and higher vacancy rate. Furthermore, the

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Technology Innovation Agency was the only entity not obtaining a clean audit, which revealed the failure to enforce consequence management for irregular expenditure. Therefore, we strongly urge the department that Technology Innovation Agency must implement immediate consequence management and strengthen its financial review processes as these necessary steps toward restoring the department's institutional integrity. The IFP accepts this report and retaliates the call to urgently engage with the National Treasury for a lasting funding solution to address the great deficit. Thank you.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr W Horn): Thank you. Hon members, before we proceed, please do not play whatever audio on your cell phones. It is disturbing. The PA!

Ms J S PETERSEN: No declaration. We support.

Afrikaans:

Dr W J BOSHOFF: Agb Huisvoorsitter, die Departement van Wetenskap, Innovasie en Tegnologie is een van daardie aandrywers van die Suid-Afrikaanse ekonomie en dit is gelukkig een van die departement wat nogal redelik goed funksioneer, wat 'n skoon

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oudit het, wat meeste van die doelwitte behaal en wat suksesvol is.

Daar is 'n paar goedjies wat die VF Plus graag wil noem, wat behoort om verbetering teweeg te bring. Die een is dat die Wetenskaplike en Nywerheidsnavorsingsraad of CSIR deur die staat befonds word, deur 'n parlementêre toelaag, om wetenskap en navorsingsgebaseerde oplossings vir die staat te gee en tog moet dit elke keer 'n kompeterende proses volg, as gevolg van die reëls van staatsverkryging. Daar kan 'n redelik eenvoudige toewysing van die Tesourier wees of 'n verandering van wetgewing kan dit vir die staat moontlik maak om waarde vir die geld te kry, wat hy reeds bestee sonder vertraging.

Die tweede ding is die National Research Foundation wat onderbefonds is. Hierdie instansie is verantwoordelik vir 'n hele klomp goed, maar onder Andere, om nagraadse studente se studies en navorsing te finansier. Dis iets waarvoor hulle nooit genoeg geld het nie. Ons weet almal dat met 'n enkele graad, 'n mens eintlik net nog voorbereid is vir volgende studie. Jy het 'n nagraadse kwalifikasie nodig om werklik 'n bydrae te lewer.

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Die derde saak is die South African Radio Astronomy Observatory, Sarao, op die Square Kilometre Array, SKA, wat 'n baie groot deel van die ekonomie in 'n sekere deel van die Noord-Kaap verwyder het, en in ruil sê dat hulle nuwe geleenthede skep, maar toe die amateur-sterrekundiges in hierdie terrein gebruik wil maak van die opleidingsgeleentheid van die toerismegeleenthede, en toe mense hulle wou registreer vir die tweede jaar daarvan, toe kry hulle die nuus dat hierdie program beëindig is weens 'n gebrek aan fondse. Dit is 'n groot probleem en 'n gebreekte belofte.

Vir die res, doen die departement eintlik baie goed. Baie dankie.

Mr M P KOBE: House Chair, before I start, allow me to convey my apologies to you and I am sure you know for what. An amount of 5 936 students in our entire country is funded by the National Research Foundation for postgraduate qualifications. Now, compare that to the roughly 100 000 first year students funded by NSFAS each year. The imbalance speaks for itself.

We are severely handicapping our country's future by refusing to expand NRF funding. It simply cannot be that only 5 936

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postgraduate students receive support in a nation of 16 million people with an economy that is desperate for advanced skills. And then we wonder why we struggle to produce engineers, scientists, accountants, farmers and other critical professionals required to develop our country, grow our economy and confront the challenges of a rapidly growing and changing world.

South Africa cannot compete globally, while starving its knowledge pipeline. As Action SA, we support the BRRR but strongly advocate for increasing NRF funding as a national imperative, in order for our country to truly reach its potential. Thank you.

Mr W M THRING: Hon House Chairperson, the ACDP notes the report of the Portfolio Committee on Science, Technology and Innovation on the performance of the department for this 2024-25 financial year.

We acknowledge the department's progress in expanding research infrastructure and supporting innovation hubs, as highlighted in the annual report, where some R1,2 billion was allocated to research and development programmes. However, the Auditor-

General again flagged weaknesses in project monitoring and irregular expenditure of some R87 million, which occurs while young researchers voice frustration at limited bursary opportunities and administrative bottlenecks.

The committee rightly noted that South Africa's investment in research and development at 0,62% remains below the 1% of GDP target set by the NDP. It is the view of the ACDP that this underinvestment is an impediment to economic growth.

Furthermore, we call for the implementation of consequence management towards those responsible for delays in funding approvals, which have stalled several university industry partnerships in research and development.

The ACDP calls for stronger financial discipline, increased research and development, transparent monitoring and the prioritisation of youth innovation, where science and technology is harnessed not only for economic growth but to restore opportunity, hope and dignity to our young people. The ACDP will support this report.

Ms C T NONTENJA: No declaration. We support.

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Mrs N L HLAZO-WEBSTER: No Declaration from Bosa.

Ms T L MARAWU: House Chair, no declaration.

Mr I ISMAIL-MOOSA: Hon House Chair, hon members, fellow beloved family of South Africans, Al Jama-ah considered the Budgetary Review and Recommendation Report of the Portfolio Committee on Science, Technology and Innovation, DSTI, for the 2024-25 financial year. The department continues to play a critical role in driving research excellence, advancing innovation and strengthening South Africa's global competitiveness.

We acknowledge progress in expanding research infrastructure, supporting postgraduate training and promoting partnerships across universities, industry and international collaborators. However, the report highlights areas requiring urgent attention such as persistent funding constraints, delayed projects and slow implementation of innovation-led programmes that are essential for economic growth, job creation and technological sovereignty.

Reduced investment in research threatens our long-term development goals and undermines emerging sectors, such as

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renewable energy, digital technology, biotech and advanced manufacturing.

Al Jama-ah supports the committee's recommendations. We emphasise the need for stable funding, improved co-ordination across government, and stronger support for young researchers and innovators. A capable and well-resourced DSTI sector is not a luxury; it is a national necessity. Let us commit to building a knowledge-driven economy that benefits all South Africans.

IsiZulu:

Malibongwe!

Mr V A NKOSI: Hon House Chairperson, hon members, the ANC commend the comprehensive and diligent work reflected in this Budgetary Review and Recommendation Report of the Department of Science, Technology and Innovation for the 2024-2025 financial year. It recognises the department's significant achievements in advancing South Africa's scientific and technological capabilities, notably its progress in key research projects, innovation, communalisation, and strengthened partnerships with industry and international allies. This aligns with the ANC's

commitment to promoting inclusive growth, industrialisation and building a knowledge-based economy that benefits all citizens.

Achieving a 96% spend rate and maintaining a clean audit status is a testament to sound governance and prudence in resource utilisation. Despite budget constraints and systematic challenges, the department's efforts to foster innovation, human capital development and infrastructure expansion demonstrates its dedication to national development priorities.

The ANC affirms the importance of continuous support to research and innovation, as a driver of socioeconomic upliftment, particularly in creating employment opportunities and addressing inequality. The ANC emphasises the need to address identified challenges such as internal control deficiencies and slow progress on transformative targets related to gender and racial representation.

The committee's recommendation to accelerate resource allocation, improve oversight and strengthen intergovernmental and industry collaboration are aligned with the ANC's vision of a responsive, capable and inclusive science and innovation sector.

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The ANC remains committed to supporting a robust, transparent and accountable DSTI that leverages science and technology.

[Time expired.] the ANC supports this report. Thank you.

Motion agreed to (uMkhonto weSizwe Party and Economic Freedom Fighters dissenting).

Report accordingly adopted.

CONSIDERATION OF SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT OF PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON
COMMUNICATIONS AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES ON BUDGETARY REVIEW AND
RECOMMENDATIONS REPORT.

CONSIDERATION OF BUDGETARY REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATION REPORT OF
PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON COMMUNICATIONS AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES
ON DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES,
SENTECH, STATE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AGENCY, BROADBAND INFRACO,
THE UNIVERSAL SERVICE AND ACCESS AGENCY OF SOUTH
AFRICA/UNIVERSAL SERVICE FUND, THE SOUTH AFRICAN BROADCASTING
CORPORATION SOC LIMITED.

CONSIDERATION OF BUDGETARY REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATION REPORT OF
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ON GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION SYSTEM AND MEDIA
DEVELOPMENT AND DIVERSITY AGENCY.

Mr G J SKOSANA: Moved that the Reports be adopted.

Declarations of vote:

Ms T K BODLANI: House Chairperson, this BRRR carries the aspirations of South Africans whose future rely on the DCDT's commitment to deliver connectivity by spearheading South Africa's digital transformation. As the DA, we emphasise the urgent need to review dated legislation, especially the Electronic Communications Act of 2005. Delays in amending legislation and policies have hindered DCDT's ability to keep pace with developments in the sector.

In this spirit, House Chairperson, we want to welcome the work done on the White Paper on Audio and Audiovisual Media Services and Online Safety, which has been submitted to Cabinet. We further welcome the appointment of a service provider to review the SA Broadcasting Corporation Funding Model. The need for a new funding framework for the public broadcaster is critical, given the SA Broadcasting Corporation's challenging financial situation.

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We also welcome the announcement by Minister Solly Malatsi that the proposed model will be ready in February 2026. Indeed, this will be a move in the needle in the amendment of the SA Broadcasting Corporation Bill, which remains in front. We remain concerned about the SA Broadcasting Corporation's Sentech debt, which has accumulated over a billion rand through the years. The urgent resolution of the SA Broadcasting Corporation's Sentech issue is imperative. Currently, Sentech is sustaining SA Broadcasting Corporation's operations by depleting its own reserves, which is unsustainable.

If Sentech fails as a broadcasting infrastructure company of our country, the broadcasting services remain at risk. In today's world, where misinformation and disinformation are widespread, access to information is a cornerstone of a democracy that we all endure, particularly as we head into the local government election.

On the South African Post Office, the residue of the historic mismanagement, political interference and failures to invest in the business continue to haunt us. We understand the need to support efforts for ... [Time expired.] Thank you, House Chair.

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IsiZulu:

Mnu A NCHABELENG: Gwaza Mkhonto, gwaza!

English:

Speaker, as MKP, we rise to reject the 2024-25 BRR Report of the Department of Communications and Digital Technologies. This report does not reflect on progress. They expose a portfolio of deep crisis characterised by systematic collapse, governance failures and staggering inability to execute its mission.

Despite the departments boasting about a clean audit, the DCDT failed to meet 24% of its target, and this failure has condemned millions, especially the poor, to digital exclusion. The BRR Report is described as a catalogue of incompetency and chronicles of collapse. The department is accused of failing its mandate and betraying public trust. On departmental failure, despite a clean audit, service delivery regressed from 82% to 76%.

On policy paralysis, critical Bills and plans, the Audiovisual Content Service Bill, the Digital Economy Master Plan were not implemented. On financial mismanagement, R1,1 billion was underspent. On SA Connect, broadcast broadband project

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underspent by R1 billion. On social inclusion failure, targets for women, youth, persons with disability and GBV victims were missed.

The MKP recommends: The filling of critical vacancies; fast-tracking legislative amendments, Electronic Communications Act and SA Broadcasting Corporation Bill; pronouncing on analog switch off; establishing a digital transformation task team; also developing a finance model for struggling entities, such as the SA Broadcasting Corporation, SA Post Bank; as well as resolving the current funding for Sentech debt by 2026; and scaling up AI for the use of FBP. [Time expired. Thank you so much. The MKP rejects these reports.

Ms S GCILISHE: House Chairperson, the EFF has taken note of the BRRR, which all signalled the department's decline. Beyond governance challenges, the emergence of characteristics of corruption and fraud, which are best identified at Sita, are a cause for concern. It was the EFF which raised the alarm regarding the irregularities in the awarding of a tender that is worth R1,2 billion to provide IT-related services for schools in the Western Cape, as a result of collusion between officials in the DA-led Western Cape Government and board members at Sita.

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To date, this tender has not been reviewed, and Sita is still led by those fingered in this scandal. During the fifth and the sixth administration, we warned the portfolio committee consistently that business rescue plan for the SA Post Office does not possess the traits of rescue, but rather those of destruction for purposes of advertising the market. As things stand now, 4 000 jobs have been lost, and 366 SA Post Office branches have been closed.

The Icasa ought to be declared as an inefficient regulator, and this relates to its kicking to touch whenever confronted about the cost of data and expiration of prepaid airtime data, which harms consumers. As things stand, MTN, Vodacom, Cell-C, and others are currently in violation of Section 63 of the Consumer Protection Act.

We have warned that handing over this department to the DA is going to degenerate the sector as a whole, and the primary takeout in this year of GNU is that the department has committed itself to undermining transformation and surrendering us to imperialists, like Elon Musk, as a policy priority.

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The EFF wants again that soon we will not have the SA Broadcasting Corporation; we will not have the SA Post Office; and will not have enough money to purchase [Inaudible.] ... [Time expired.] ... continue to withdraw from democracy because people cannot not access information. The EFF rejects this report.

Mr A K NGOBESE: House Chair, the IFP notes that the communication sector is too vital to our democracy. We commend Sentech for achieving a clean audit outcome, underscoring strengthened governance and effective internal controls. However, we remain concerned about the material impediment relating to the trade receivables, the ongoing concern and uncertainty linked to its over-reliance on a single major customer. This risk must be addressed with urgency.

On the SA Broadcasting Corporation, the IFP acknowledges meaningful progress, particularly in audience reaching a digital innovation. We note with appreciation that the SA Broadcasting Corporation improved its license fee collection by over 10%, reflecting better compliance and stronger recovery efforts. However, the decline of nearly 2% in advertising revenue and

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almost 8% in in sponsorship underscores ongoing financial pressure that threatens a long-term sustainability.

Lastly, hon Chair, we note the department's performance having achieved 76% of its annual targets. While we acknowledge this progress, we remain mindful of the portfolio's critical role in driving digital transformation and strengthening communication services. We, therefore, urge the department to address areas of underperformance and improve implementation to ensure the achievement of this in future. In light of the issues above, Chair, the IFP accept the reports.

Ms M P KOBE: House Chairperson, the Budgetary Review and Recommendation Reports, BRRRs, of the Portfolio Committee on Communications and Digital Technologies once again highlights both the opportunities and the deep structural challenges facing the sector.

The reports tabled reflect a recurring pattern. While the department and its entities demonstrate pockets of progress, service delivery remains inconsistent, infrastructure rollout faces persistent delays and governance weaknesses continue to undermine impact. The committee's findings show underspending in

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critical programmes such as SA Connect, incomplete legislative processes and inadequate monitoring of inclusion measures meant to benefit women, youth and persons with disabilities.

Chairperson, the digital economy is a prerequisite for a capable state, economic competitiveness and public service modernisation. Yet, the BRRRs confirm that key entities from State Information Technology Agency, Sita, to SA Post Office, Sapo, to Broadband Infraco, BBI, are still plagued by operational instability, weak internal controls and financial strain. This threatens progress towards universal digital access, digital skills development and the transformation of our ICT landscape.

We welcome the clean audit outcomes for the department, but clean administration must translate into clean, effective service delivery. Parliament must insist that the department accelerates oversight of state-owned enterprises, SOEs, strengthens project management and ensures accountability for delays in digital migration and broadband expansion.

Chairperson, these reports make one thing very clear. South Africa cannot afford complacency in its digital transformation.

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We support the recommendations and call for firm, results-driven implementation. I thank you.

Mr I ISMAIL-MOOSA: Hon speakers, hon members, hon family of beloved South Africans, as Al Jama-ah, we consider the three reports that reflect a sector facing both immense opportunity and significant strain.

The digital economy is central to South Africa's growth. Yet, the department and several entities continue to struggle with financial instability. We need to implement critical modernisation programmes, otherwise these challenges shall directly impact service delivery, broadband expansion, digital migration and the transformation of our ICT landscape.

We note the committee's findings and welcome its firm recommendations, particularly those aimed at strengthening oversight of SOEs, improving financial management and accelerating programmes that expand connectivity, especially for rural and underserved communities. Digital inclusion is not optional. It is fundamental to education, economic participation and social equality. The portfolio remains central to South Africa's digital transformation.

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There are, at the same time, challenges for our ability to expand broadband access, strengthen cybersecurity, modernise public services and ensure an inclusive digital economy. Sentech and BBI continue to provide crucial backbone services. We require stronger financial management and strategic alignment.

The SA Broadcasting Corporation, SABC, continues to struggle with revenue mandate pressures and the urgent need for a sustainable turnaround strategy. The Government Communication and Information System, GCIS, plays a crucial role in ensuring that government communicates clearly, consistently and excessively with the public. We acknowledge progress in strengthening strategic communication and improving transparency, but challenges remain. Thank you.

Mr S I SUBRATHIE: House Chair, as the ANC, we stand before this House to support the BRRR for both the GCIS and the Department of Communications and Digital Technologies, DCDT. These reports capture a period of both achievement and challenge in South Africa's communication and digital transformation landscape.

On the report presented by the GCIS, we commend the department on securing its fifth consecutive clean audit. The 89%

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achievement of the performance target, while slightly down from the previous year, demonstrates a continued commitment to government communication and remains above the National Treasury benchmark. The GCIS maintains a strategic constitutional mandate to ensure that citizens are informed about government policies, programmes and projects in a manner that enables informed decision-making and improves the quality of life of our citizens.

Regarding the DCDT, we welcome the 76% performance against 25 predetermined targets. As the ANC, we are deeply concerned about the persistent delays in critical policy development, including the full amendments to the audio and audiovisual content services, and the Electronic Communications Act. House Chairperson, we call upon the department and the Minister to assume a far more assertive and hands-on role in bridging South Africa's persistent digital divide and dismantling the structural barriers that continue to marginalise historically disadvantaged communities.

We look forward to the alternative funding model of the SABC and the introduction of the SABC Bill. We look forward to the exit of the business rescue practitioners and the revitalisation of

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the post office. We look forward to the licensing of Postbank and the establishment of our state bank. We look forward to the impasse between the SABC and Sentech being resolved. The digital ... [Time expired.] ... is not a privilege, it is a human right. Thank you so much.

Question put.

Reports are all three accordingly agreed to.

CASTING ASPERSIONS ON THE CHARACTER OF THE HON V G REDDY

(Ruling)

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr W Horn): Hon members, on Tuesday the 6th of May this year during the debate on Workers' Day, the hon Reddy rose on a point of order wanting to know whether the Deputy Minister of Transport, the Hon Hlengwa, was speaking as, and I quote,

the Deputy Minister or speaking on behalf of his party. End of quote.

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I immediately ruled that Deputy Ministers are allowed to take part in political debates and that the Deputy Minister was to continue. The Deputy Minister then proceeded to make some remarks. At this point, the hon Manyi rose on a point of order, objecting to the remarks of the Deputy Minister, alleging that in his remarks, the Deputy Minister had imputed improper motives on the part of Mr Reddy for raising his point of order.

At the time, I undertook to study the Hansard and to return to the House with a ruling. Having had the opportunity to do so now, I confirm that the following remarks can be ascribed to the Deputy Minister, and I quote,

Part of the empowerment that we need to do as workers in Parliament, as Members of Parliament, will obviously be the introduction of Rules so that we can be disabused from the frivolous points of order that we have been subjected to for this past year in this House by the hon Reddy. It undermines the work that we do because his interruptions are not about work, but about the limelight of the camera. End of quote.

This was clearly in response to the point of order raised by the hon Reddy. Hon members, in terms of Rule 92 of our Rules, a

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member may raise a point of order at any time during the proceedings of the House, in terms of the procedure prescribed in Rule 66, by stating that he or she is rising on a point of order. A point of order must be confined only to a matter of parliamentary procedure or practice, or a matter relating to unparliamentary conduct, as defined, and must be raised immediately when the alleged breach of order occurs.

In terms of the above-mentioned Rules, Mr Reddy indeed has a right to raise a point of order after being so recognised by the presiding officer. I ruled on his point of order and that is where the matter should have ended.

To the point of order by Mr Manyi, members are reminded that the National Assembly Rule 85 states that no member may impute improper motives to any other member or cast personal reflections upon a member's integrity or dignity, or verbally abuse a member in any other way. In this regard, the subsequent remarks by the Deputy Minister stating that, and I quote,

His, that's Mr Reddy's, interruptions are not about work, but about the limelight of the camera, unquote,

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...were unwarranted and directly attached improper motives to another member's reason for raising a point of order.

Accordingly, in terms of Rule 85, which prohibits reflections upon members in this manner, I rule that the remarks by the Deputy Minister were a clear contravention of the Rule. I request the Deputy Minister to now withdraw the remarks.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF TRANSPORT: House Chairperson, I withdraw. Thank you.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr W Horn): Thank you, Deputy Minister.

Then I would request the hon Mogale of the EFF on the virtual platform to also unmute and just confirm his presence. Hon Mogale?

Okay, for now I'm going to move on. May I request the Whips of the EFF to possibly contact the hon Mogale and just alert him to the fact that we still need to finalise a matter on which I've already ruled in respect of him. I have been informed that he is present. Maybe he was just distracted for the moment.

The Secretary will now read the 11th and 12th Orders together.

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CONSIDERATION OF POSITIVE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATION REPORT OF
PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON PLANNING, MONITORING AND EVALUATION ON
VOTE 14 OF STATISTICS SOUTH AFRICA AND BRAND SOUTH AFRICA ANNUAL
REPORTS FOR 2024-2025 FINANCIAL YEAR.

CONSIDERATION OF BUDGETARY REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATION REPORT OF
PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON PLANNING, MONITORING AND EVALUATION ON
VOTE 9 OF DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING, MONITORING AND EVALUATION.

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP OF THE LARGEST MINORITY PARTY: Hon House
Chairperson, I move that the Reports be adopted.

Declaration(s) of vote:

Mr D BERGMAN: Chair, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation has a
crucial mandate in ensuring government departments are powered
by the GNU's commitment to growing our economy and delivering
jobs.

While the department faces constraints in resources with what it
has, it has left much to be desired in its performance. While
the department on paper has achieved 80% of its targets, the DA
has uncovered a smokescreen. We uncovered that many of the
reports evaluating government work do not make it to the

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relevant departments, nor are the accountability mechanisms in ensuring recommendations followed. This has left the department toothless, and the DI has recommended that these reports be tabled to our committee.

Second is the Presidential Hotline. This service is meant to cater to all South Africans in flagging service delivery concerns. When we conducted an oversight as the committee, we found only two staff members and considerably outdated computers manning the office. It is deeply concerning as more South Africans feel disengaged from government work.

Next is Statistics SA, which produces the data that informs our economic performance and planning. Despite numerous calls for Statistics SA to be urgently attended to, it is being left to continue to deteriorate. Statistics SA remains without a permanent chief director or deputy director-general. As a committed partner to the GNU, we want this department to work. If PME works, it means the urgent work of building our country is underway. Thank you very much.

Dr K LITCHFIELD-TSHABALALA: Hon Chair, the Auditor-General's own findings have caused MK to reject this report and vehemently so.

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Statistics SA is sitting with an unqualified audit with assets worth R133 million under investigation. They sit with unauthorised expenditure of R83 million. As for the PME, it was hurriedly launched without any founding legislation. That's why to date there is no Integrated Planning Bill, and this department has no real retributive authority to punish underperformance or non-performance.

As for the third one, Brand South Africa, they are tasked with the impossible. Even though they've achieved a clean audit to sell a GNU government to a people that never voted for the GNU, and to a continent that knows very well that in the last six years the African in the African national confusion, sorry the African in the African National Congress has been under attack and last year, May it went under full-blown life support and that African shall stay there until uMkhonto Wesizwe takes power in 2029 and wrestle this continent back from Western Europe and bring it back to Africa where it belongs. Therefore, uMkhonto Wesizwe rejects this report, and we call if in any way this GNU is serious, we call that the PME is properly founded and given the necessary retributive powers to perform its job.

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Gwaza, Mkhonto, kuyehlela la kwi-Government of National Unity, GNU.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr W Horn): Order, hon members! let's listen to this member.

IsiXhosa:

Mnu. C MATIWANE: Sihlalo weNdlu, ndivumele ndithi, ngqanga neentsiba zayo. Singumbutho we-EFF siphakamela ukukhaba uhlehlengiso lolwabiwomali kwiSebe ...

English:

... of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation on Vote 14 of Statistics South Africa and Brand South Africa.

IsiXhosa:

Sifuna ukugxininisa ukuba asiyiboni indima edlalwa leli sebe ngaphandle kokuchitha imali yerhafu ekuhlawuleni uMphathiswa, uSekela Mphathiswa nabasebenzi abangenanto yokwenza ngaphandle kokuhla besenyuka apha esithubeni. Siyayibethelela kwakhona into yokuba eli sebe alikwazi ukwenza umsebenzi walo ngaphandle komgaqonkqubo walo. Kunzima ukuba amanye amasebe amamele

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iingcebiso nemiyalelo esuka kweli sebe ngaphandle kwalo
mgaqonkqubo.

Iyaxhalabisa ingxelo ephuma kuMphicothi-Jikelele yokuba eli sebe
nee-arhente zalo zibonakala ziselela ngasemva. Kubonakala kukho
izenzo ezixhalabisayo ngokungqamelani kwezicwangciso nezinto
ezenzeka ngezantsi. Oku kubonakaliswe ngeshlo esithe senzeka
...

English:

... from the Department of Public Enterprises ...

IsiXhosa:

... nalapho kuthe kwatyeshelwa ...

English:

... the Sector Education and Training Authorities Act ...

IsiXhosa:

... ekuthengeni izinto nokufumana iinkonzo zobuchwephesha.

Eyona nto ingamandla nexhalabisayo kukulahleka kwezinto
zokusebenza ...

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English:

... at Statistics SA which are worth millions of rands.

IsiXhosa:

Ukuza kuthi ga ngoku, urhulumente uchithe ngaphaya kwekhulu lezigidi zeerandi ngaphandle kokugunyaziswa ngenkcithomali. Asivumelani ke ngezo zizathu sisithi le Ndlu ayikwazi ukuba inyuse imali ...

English:

... for the Statistics SA ...

IsiXhosa:

... ukuze bakwazi ukwenza umsebenzi wabo. Loo nto ithetha ukuba sakuba sisengela ethungeni elivuzayo. Singumbutho we-EFF siphakamisa ukuba kuqiniswe iindlela zokulawula inkcithomali zeli sebe nakwii-arhente zalo. Siyalukhaba olu hlengahlengiso lolwabiwomali ngezi zizathu esithe sazidakanca apha ngasentla. Enkosi.

English:

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Mr N M HADEBE: House Chairperson, effective planning, credible data, and strong oversight are fundamental to building a capable and accountable state.

These reports indicate that progress is underway, but it remains far too slow to match the scale and urgency of the challenges facing our country. On Statistics South Africa, we remain encouraged by the institution's professionalism and its ability to maintain credibility despite financial and capacity constraints. Statistics SA continues to deliver the critical data on which the country relies. However, continued underfunding and high vacancy rates cannot become permanent features.

Regarding Brand South Africa we welcome improvements in audit outcomes and governance. South Africa's international reputation is a key driver of investment and tourism, and brand SA must be positioned to strengthen that image with clarity and consistency. Yet leadership instability and organisational weaknesses continue to limit its impact.

On the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, we note efforts to improve alignment across government and

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strengthen performance monitoring. However, delays in evaluations underperformance in key indicators remain concerning. The department must ensure that poor performance is confronted and not normalised. Despite challenges, we remain optimistic with disciplined leadership and follow through these entities can reinforce accountability and improve service delivery. The IFP supports. I thank you.

Ms S PETERS: House Chair, hon members, as a partner in the Government of National Unity, the PA rises to affirm our commitment to oversight accountability and equity in considering the budget review recommendation report for 2024-25 of the Portfolio Committee on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation for Vote 14. We recognise the department's vital role in strengthening performance ensuring accountability and driving systemic reform across government. We declare our support for this report as it is a necessary instrument to sharpen parliamentary oversight and ensure that Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation deliver real improvements in the lives of our people. Progress has been made in building monitoring frameworks, but outcomes must reach the ground. Small-scale farmers, rural households, workers in local trust cannot remain in visible data. Their voices must be integrated so that benefit sharing

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frameworks are not only reported but enforced. Planning and evaluation must be instruments of justice transparency and accountability.

We commend Brand SA for achieving a clean audit outcome. This reflects sound financial management in accountability, and it is a positive signal of institutional integrity. Yet we must also raise concern about the vacancies in senior management. These gaps weaken delivery capacity and undermine transformation. We call for urgent attention regarding this issue but the particular emphasis on ensuring our fair representation of coloured people and other marginalised communities in leadership positions. Representation matters is not only for equity but for the credibility of our institutions.

This is our pledge that Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation will not remain in the corridors of bureaucracy but will reach the streets the farms and the homes of our people. In supporting this report, we affirm that the ...

Mr R A P TROLLIP: Chairperson, ActionSA supports this report, but we must confront a central truth. South Africa cannot manage what it cannot measure, and Statistics SA is being starved of

the resources it needs to generate the data that underpins policy decisions. With the vacancy rate above 20% and key surveys delayed or scaled down, the credibility of our entire planning system is compromised.

The committee's own report confirms that Statistics SA core indicators are under pressure due to chronic underfunding, threatening long-term trend data, population updates and the statistical frames used for sampling. When the national statistical system weakens, our department feels the knock-on effect. Poverty lines, unemployment data, education outcomes, policy statistics all become harder to track, manage and improve.

Similarly, the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation is operating with a shrinking budget and rising responsibilities, including new functions after absorbing Public Enterprises. A capable state begins with a capable centre of government, yet the reports show persistent structural issues, high vacancy rates in both institutions, outdated information and communications technology, ICT, systems at Statistics SA and delays in key planning and evaluation frameworks at the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation. ActionSA

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therefore calls for a fundamental rethink on how government funds the and planning institutions that keep the state informed and honest. If we expect outcome-based planning, evidence-based budgeting and real accountability then the institutions that produce this evidence must be protected and properly funded. Thank you, Chair.

Dr M A MAIMANE: House Chairperson, I stand to welcome the reports that are tabled before us. Hon members, a very famous line has been used to say: At times governments can have actors without a script. The Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation provides a script. Our history is such that when you look at the targets that were established for the National Development Plan and the subsequent actions that speak to annual performance plans it is easy to identify the fact that it was clear that many of the targets were not being reached.

In this year's state of the nation address, a reliance was still brought back to the idea of the National Development Plan and then the Medium-Term Development Plan was then tabled post facto. That indicated 31 priorities that the Government of National Unity outlined. Now the question remains: How are those translated into annual performance plans so that this House,

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this Parliament, is able to hold its respective Ministers to account? It is going to be critical that when we look at these particular departments that we are clear what the script is, what the objectives are and how we can measure them. It is fundamental to the working of this Parliament.

The second issue speaks to the question of Statistics SA. When the SA Local Government Association, Salga, came to present to the appropriations committee they made it quite clear that their data that they relied on was on the 2011 Census. You cannot rely on data that is outdated, particularly when you apply the local government equitable formula or the provincial equitable formula. It simply means that for planning purposes, you are unable to determine where populations are located, how to fund them, and how to adequately do the job of appropriations. I want to urge us again here, whilst I welcome Statistics SA and the work that they are doing - that we need to fund them better, otherwise a populist will arise and tell us all is rosy and we will have no other data points to disprove that point. I urge that we fund Statistics SA better. Thank you.

Mr I ISMAIL-MOOSA: Hon Speaker, hon members, respected fellow beloved family of South African citizens. Al Jama-ah considered

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a Budgetary Review and Recommendations Report, BRRR, of the Portfolio Committee on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation on Vote No 14 covering Statistics SA and Brand SA's 2024-25 annual reports. Statistics SA plays a vital role in providing accurate, timely and reliable data to inform evidence-based policy and support national planning.

While progress has been made in data collection, modernisation of systems and statistical reporting, the report highlights ongoing challenges, resource constraints, delays in key surveys and capacity gaps that risk undermining the integrity and the reliability of official statistics. Al Jama-ah welcomes Brand SA to promote the country globally and strengthen nation-building. At the same time, Al Jama-ah is concerned about whether the statistics are in fact complete to reflect true numbers. Al Jama-ah supports the committee's recommendations and urges strengthened capacity, improved financial oversight and accelerated implementation of programmes to ensure that both institutions fulfil their mandates. Accurate statistics and a strong national brand are essential for informed decision-making, economic growth and fostering pride in our nation.

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Malibongwe!

Ms M J APHIRI: Thanks very much, House Chair.

House Chair, the ANC supports the BRRR reports of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, Statistics SA and Brand SA. The Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation has played a critical role in the year under review as it supported the development of a Medium-Term Development Plan, MTDP, for the seventh administration of Government of National Unity. This is a key task to ensure that all provincial and national departments and their entities implement the three priorities of government: To strengthen the mandate of the department, we have recommended that the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation fast-track the integrated planning framework Bill, to provide a legislative framework to co-ordinate planning, budgeting and performance monitoring across government and to realise the MTDP plan, the alignment of the plans and the budget is fundamental.

We recommended that the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation should deepen collaboration with the National Treasury to ensure that resource allocation frameworks are

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directly aligned with national planning priorities as articulated in the Budget Prioritisation Framework. The role of the private sector is also important, and we believe that the department must enhance its format to ensure more effective alignment of public and private investment. We also recommended that the department develop an indicator to monitor the level of private investment, enhancing co-ordination of private participation and planning to meet national objectives. The ANC supports the report.

Question put.

Report agreed to.

**CONSIDERATION OF BUDGETARY REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATION REPORT OF
PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT**

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP OF THE LARGEST MINORITY: Hon House Chairperson, I move that the report be adopted.

Mr A NCHABELEN: Hon House Chair, just a point of exigency on indulgence. This aircon is on DA levels. Can it be reduced? It is very cold, House Chair.

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The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr W Horn): If it is on DA's level it would mean it is very hot - blistering. [Laughter.] ... Hon member, please continue with your declaration.

Ms H O MKHALIPHI: House Chair, your comment suggest that you are bias. Are you DA or a chair there?

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr W Horn): Hon Mkhaliphi, I just wanted to engage you a bit.

Declarations of vote:

Dr C H H HUNSINGER: House Chair, this year's Budgetary Review and Recommendation Report, BRRR, signals the possibility of better times ahead for South Africa transport. For the first time, an ANC Minister has routinely attended and interacted with the portfolio committee. After six transport Ministers in just eight years, we now have someone who shares information and is interested in entities.

Instead of covering up and looking the other way, Minister Creasy has taken bold action. We welcome steps taken to clean the Road Accident Fund, but there is much yet to be done. She won respect for actions aimed at addressing long-standing

concerns such as infrastructure deterioration, inefficiency, and the lack for private sector participation. The DA supports measures like the recent medium-term budget adjustment interventions, which reprioritised financing for critical infrastructure projects.

Increased budget allocations for transport infrastructure must come with improved fiscal discipline of transport projects and programmes that demonstrate benefits and provide value to the transportation and mobility experience. Too many key performance indicators, KPIs, and too many key performance areas, KPAs, remain focused on performance bonuses rather than service delivery and user value. Money must go where it is required, unlike Prasa's R4 billion proposal to overhaul trains. The DA supports the report, and we look forward to more improvements.

IsiXhosa:

Ndiyabulela ngexesha enindiphe lona.

Afrikaans:

Ek dank u.

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Mr T T S KUBHEKA: House Chair, I rise on behalf of MKP to reject this Budgetary Review and Recommendation Report of the Department of Transport. This report exposes a transport system that is not recovering but deteriorating. Despite the department receiving a clean audit, the portfolio it oversees remains in serious trouble.

Major entities, including Transnet and the Road Accident Fund continue to show poor performance, poor performance targets, repeat audit findings, irregular expenditure, weak internal controls, and a collapse in service delivery. A clean audit at the centre means nothing if it's failing the commuters.

The continued insistence by the department's leadership to privatise strategic national assets poses a huge risk to the department and to the country. The department spent almost all its budget, yet it's still underspent by over R1,3 billion, including more than R1,1 billion in the public transport alone. These funds were meant for trains, buses, safer infrastructure, yet they did not reach the ground.

Municipal non-compliance delayed procurement, too many vacancies, and weak project management have directly harmed the

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people who depend on these services. The report shows poor alignment between planning, budgeting, and implementation, while the department claims 80% of targets achieved. The committee found weak verification of evidence and little proof that these targets improved the actual transport services. The harbours are failing and systems throughout the departments are failing. Furthermore, delays in key legislation and slow to zero consequence management ... [Time expired.] ... We reject.

Ms B K DIALE: House Chair, the EFF rejects the BRRR for the Department of Transport because it fails to confront the deep and structural crisis in South Africa's transport system and a crisis manufactured through years of ANC incompetence, corruption, and deliberate corruption of state capacity. South Africa's roads are collapsing. Provinces such as KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape and Limpopo remain trapped in potholes, sinkholes, and endless maintenance backlogs. Yet the department continues to underspend on infrastructure while overspending on consultants. The BRRR ignores this mismatch and rubberstamps mediocrity.

Our rail system, once a backbone of cheap, safe and efficient mobility for the poor has been vandalized under the watch of

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this government. The Passenger Rail Agency of South Africa, Prasa, has repeatedly failed to meet performance targets. Trains remain unsafe or unavailable, and billions are lost to corruption and fruitless expenditure. Instead of decisive consequences, the BRRR offers gentle recommendations and excuses. The EFF rejects this whitewashing of failures.

On road safety, the carnage continues. The Road Traffic Management Corporation and provincial authorities fail to reduce fatalities because enforcement is inconsistent, fragmented and riddled with bribery. The department cannot even finalise a functional national traffic information system. Once again, the BRRR refuses to hold anyone accountable.

The taxi industry, the largest mover of our people, still operates without comprehensive regulation, without proper subsidies, and without long-term national integration plan. Government continues to treat taxi operators as an afterthought, despite them carrying more than 60% of commuters. The BRRR fails to address these injustices.

On aviation, state-owned airports and air traffic entities face government failures and financial instability. Instead of

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strengthening the state, the ANC continues to flirt with privatisation and outsourcing without EFF ... [Time expired.] ... we reject with the contempt it deserves.

Mr A K NGOBESE: Hon House Chair, the transport industry serves as a backbone of South Africa's trade activities and therefore acts as a key point connecting the country to global markets. The efficient movement of goods, both domestically and internationally, is essential for sustaining economic activities. Well-developed infrastructure is vitally important for supporting a seamless flow of goods and distribution to competitiveness of the global stage.

We commend the department for receiving a clean audit. This is a clear indication that the department is under a leadership characterised by credibility and trust, and we welcome the revelation that repeat findings decrease at Airports Company SA, ACSA, Prasa and the SA National Roads Agency, SANRAL, indicating better internal controls, improved compliance and enhanced financial management practices.

We are, however, concerned that internal irregularities were noted at Prasa, including Prasa's ghost employees under the

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Special Investigating Unit, SIU, investigation and underutilised of a few blue trains. These material irregularities must be eliminated through a combination of robust preventative controls, strict consequences management, and transport oversight.

The IFP once more urges the fast tracking of transformation in transport industry to enhance efficiency by establishing a public partnership. The IFP supports the reporter. I Thank you.

Afrikaans:

Mnr E HENDRICKS: Agb Huisvoorsitter en agb lede van die Huis ...

English:

... we the PA support this report. However, we do not agree with the organogram reflected in this document. The employment equity status presented is as follows. African males, 42,2%, African females, 51,8%, white male, 1%, white females, 1,9%, coloured, 0,7% and coloured females, 1%. Where is the equity in these figures? The representation of white and Indian and coloured employees is not sufficient.

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Employment equity is not simply about numbers. It's about meaningful inclusion and equal opportunities for all demographics. That's all that we are asking for.

We must ensure that every individual, regardless of their race or background, is treated fairly, included and equitably and given same opportunities to grow and contribute. These percentages are unacceptable and require urgent intervention to align with a true equity and inclusivity.

Afrikaans:

Ons baiza nie.

English:

Thank you.

Afrikaans:

Mnr P A VAN STADEN: Agb Voorsitter, hierdie verslag lig die probleme uit by die menslike hulpbronne afdeling van die departement wat verskeie uitdagings in die gesig staar met betrekking tot die implementering, opleidings- en ontwikkelingsinisiatiewe.

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Die portefeuljekomitee het vroër vanjaar 'n werkswinkel gehou waar ons kritiese sake in die departement geïdentifiseer het wat dringend aandag moet geniet.

Die Padongelukkefonds, die agterstand in die druk van bestuurslisensies, die aankoop van 'n nuwe drukker vir bestuurslisensies, padveiligheid, padinstandhouding, Transnet, die Passasierspooragentskap van SA, Prasa, lugveiligheid, bemanningsprobleme by die SA Lugdiens, SAL, probleme rondom die lugnavigasiestelsels en die onvoltooing van munisipaliteite se snelbusvervoerstelsels is van die kritiese probleme wat deur die komitee dopgehou sal moet word.

Provinsies sal ook voor die komitee moet verskyn en kom verslag doen oor hul finansies, pligte en die besteding van hul begrotings.

Munisipaliteite sal ook moet begin verduidelik oor die nie-besteding van hul munisipale infrastruktuurtoelaes.

Die VF Plus ondersteun die verslag. Ek dank u, Voorsitter.

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Ms M P KOBE: House Chair, ActionSA does acknowledge the small green shoots of rail recovery that are taking shape. But let us be absolutely clear.

These are merely the first steps in restoring what was destroyed under the architects of state capture. Even the department admits it could take up to a decade just to return to pre-2014 rail service levels. During that entire decade, not a single rail line has been built.

The network is not being expanded to communities who cry daily for rail services that is safe, reliable and efficient. This is not progress. It is slow motion rehabilitation of a system that was once systematically looted.

We must also place this within the wider crisis of governance in the transport portfolio. The total rot at the Road Accident Fund, which the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, Scopa, has diligently uncovering is deeply alarming. The funds undisclosed liabilities of around R500 billion posed a fiscal risk to the country's balance sheet. This is not mere mismanagement; it is a direct threat to the financial stability

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of South Africa. This portfolio is one of the most critical in the Republic and it cannot be allowed to fail.

As ActionSA, we will continue to monitor it closely. We will insist on accountability, and we will fight to fix the rot so that South Africans finally can receive the transport system that they deserve. I thank you, House Chair.

Mr W M THRING: House Chairperson, the ACDP in noting this report of the Portfolio Committee on Transport, acknowledges progress in certain infrastructure projects.

However, simultaneously, the committee records serious concerns about underspending and irregular expenditure, with some R1,3 billion flagged by the Auditor-General. The department's reliance on acting officials in key leadership roles has undermined stability and accountability, as highlighted in the Standing Committee on Appropriations Engagement earlier this year. Recently, debate has focused on deteriorating passenger rail services and delays in the Vala Zonke Pothole Patching Programme.

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The department's own media statements confirm that road safety initiatives remain underfunded, despite October Transport Month showcasing ambitious plans. Furthermore, commuters have voiced frustrations at unreliable rail services and unsafe taxi operations, underscoring the urgent need for reform. We further note the Budgetary Review and Recommendation Report, BRRR, concerns regarding aviation safety oversight.

Air traffic control skill shortages, jet fuel shortages, equipment failures, limited radar coverage and outdated procedures have caused delays and safety risks. Clearly, earlier warnings that outdated laws and refinery shutdowns could trigger fuel emergencies were ignored, leaving an appallingly unacceptable situation. The ACDP asserts that working transport systems are vital for trade, tourism and indeed our national reputation.

As kingdom builders, we call for fulfilling staff complements, investment in compliance, monitoring and international cooperation. South Africans deserve a transport system that operates. I thank you.

Xitsonga:

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Ttn S M GANA: Mutshamaxitulu wa Yindlu ...

English:

... as Rise Mzansi we support the BRRR and the reason we do so is because of the work that we also put in during the committee deliberations, where we highlighted a number of issues as it relates to the urgencies of the department and the governance of these entities.

As we discuss this report now, there's an ongoing Scopa inquiry into Road Accident Fund, RAF. The situation at RAF, it's so dire that now the interim board was looking for a chief executive officer to act in place of that one that was acting and got suspended. It's so difficult to find a senior manager of a requisite skill to lead RAF at the moment.

We believe that it will be prudent on the department and the Minister to actually send a team of administrators to hold the further draft. So, agency oversight is key to the success of this department because as we discuss now, there are issues at the Road Traffic Management Corporation, RTMC, there are issues at the Air Traffic and Navigation Services, ATNS, which speaks

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to the need for some strengthened agency oversight on the side of the department itself.

But we are happy with the progress that we are noticing from both Transnet and the Passenger Rail Agency of South Africa, Prasa. You know, they've taken a bit of time for it to get to this level. So, we'll be working very closely.

You know, over 50% of our time, this is one of the recommendations that we've made, that over 50% of the time of the portfolio committee should be spent focusing going a lot deeper into the affairs of Transnet, Prasa, SA Air Ways, SAA. But we do support the report itself.

Xitsonga:

Ndzi khensile swinene. [Nkarhi wu herile.]

Mrs N L HLAZO-WEBSTER: No declaration from BOSA, Chair.

Ms T L MARAWU: House Chair, the report raises several issues that require strong and urgent action. It reveals gaps that must be corrected, systems that must be strengthened, and commitments

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that must be honoured if you are to provide a state that truly serves its people.

The first issue that emerges is that of weak or inconsistent oversight. If committees raise concerns but there is no follow through, then oversight becomes symbolic rather than impactful. Every finding, every recommendation, and every resolution must lead to a concrete and measurable intervention.

Anything less undermines public trust. As we all know, this is a very strategic department composed of the road infrastructure, your RTMC, ATNS, and other process, a lot of them. But look at the performance of the department itself and the spending, which is unacceptable, irregular expenditure, which is unacceptable, vacancies or strategic positioning, which is also unacceptable.

Therefore, as the ATM we are saying, a structured follow up mechanism must be put in place to ensure every recommendation in the report is implemented and brought back to Parliament. Part of the allocation for essential programs, especially those affecting vulnerable and rural communities must be protected to prevent further erosion of service delivery. The departments and entities flagged in the report should undergo regular

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performance assessment to ensure that shortcomings do not repeat themselves.

Communication with affected communities must be strengthened so that the public is fully aware of the intervention being made. The government must commit to stricter reforms that strengthen accountability and show that oversight findings lead to real improvement. The ATM is committed to ensuring that this report leads to action.

We will continue to use every parliamentary mechanism available to hold the executive accountable and to ensure that concerns raised do not remain on paper but are translated into meaningful change for our communities. I thank you, Chair.

Mr I ISMAIL-MOOSA: Hon House Chair, hon members, respected family of beloved South Africans, as the year almost ends, may the Almighty grant strength, unity to this august House and to our beloved nation. May the Almighty grant us the ability to make the right choices and decisions in the best interests of our beloved family of South African citizens.

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As Al Jama-ah we consider a Budgetary Review and Recommendation Report, BRRR, of the Portfolio Committee on Transport.

The transport sector is a cornerstone of South Africa's economy connecting people, goods and services across our nation.

While progress has been made in infrastructure development, public transport improvements and regulatory oversight, the report highlights persistent challenges, ageing infrastructure, safety concerns, project delays and budgetary constraints that impact service delivery and commuters' safety.

Al Jama-ah with all its best blessings support the committee's recommendations. We call for improved governance, targeted investment in both public and freight transport, and accelerated maintenance programmes to ensure safe, reliable and affordable transport for all South Africans. A modern and efficient transport system is essential for economic growth, job creation and social mobility.

May the Almighty accept our decisions to be those that our South Africans will be contented and grateful for.

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I also want to place on record and take the opportunity to thank every single hon Member of Parliament, MP, for your passion and dedication to serve our beloved nation. Your efforts are noted with high appreciation as well as all the executive committee, the Speaker, the President, the Deputy President, all the Ministers, and all the hon members, enjoy the coming year. Thank you.

IsiZulu:

Malibongwe!

Mr C N MALEMATJA: House Chair, hon members, fellow South Africans, as the ANC leading the Government of National Unity, GNU, in the transport sector we applaud the department's advancement demonstrated by the findings of the Auditor-General's report for 2024-25 fiscal year and the portfolio committee's BRRR endorsement of the ANC.

We want to categorically put it this way that we, too, have some concerns, especially on the issue of underspending. Our understanding is that every budget that's sent has got life and it means life to our masses. We, therefore, regard underspending as the enemy of transformation.

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With this, we are very much pleased that the department has taken a turn dealing with what ... with what ... of yesterday that the good news has reached all of us that ...

Sepedi:

... ba bangwe ba a sepela. Re kwele ditaba tše dibotse.

English:

The Passenger Rail Agency of South Africa, Prasa, will have good news. We urge the department to put necessary steps to ensure, especially when dealing with the performance of the report, consequence management strategies and the failure to meet crucial service goals.

In order to avoid recurring unfavourable findings, we dedicate the monitoring oversight when it comes to action plans while simultaneously boosting internal control.

Investigations into irregular, fruitless and wasteful spending will continue and disciplinary measures must be implemented, especially to those that affect service delivery.

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House Chair, clean audit means good performance. It will be very wrong that we don't appreciate the good work ... [Time expired.] ... as the ANC we support this ... [Inaudible.]

Question put.

Report agreed to.

**CONSIDERATION OF BUDGETARY REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATION REPORT OF
PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON CO-OPERATIVE GOVERNANCE AND TRADITIONAL
AFFAIRS**

There was no debate.

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP OF THE LARGEST MINORITY PARTY: House Chairperson, I move that the report be adopted.

Declarations of vote:

Ms A M VAN ZYL: Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs 2025 Budgetary Review and Recommendation Report, BRRR, once again paints the picture of a department that has spent billions while service delivery deteriorates.

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A total of R171 million has been lost to the Community Work Programme's, CWP's, unauthorised expenditure, R775 million to irregular expenditure and R79 million has disappeared in Sekhukhune. That is not good governance. It is waste, negligence and a clear culture of lawlessness. That money could've changed the lives of people.

The R171 million could've built 670 Reconstruction and Development Programme, RDP, homes, tarred 49 kilometres of roads and fixed 155 455 potholes. Instead, it has been swallowed up by cadre-driven supply chain processes that lead to irregular expenditure, without any consequences from this department.

The DA is clear. Every cent must show a real impact to improve the lives of South Africans, not in glossy reports but through water in taps and communities free from sewerage spillages.

The municipal infrastructure grant, Mig, fund is still measured by how quickly the money gets spent, rather than the quality of the project. Too many Mig projects fail or take years and millions of rand to complete.

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Disaster management and response remains very slow.

Municipalities wait months for assistance when families have lost everything. We propose a technical team within Cogta to assist municipalities to prepare for the compliant applications within two weeks.

The Municipal Demarcation Board has a clean audit but has overspent by R3,5 million, while demarcation issues like in JB Marks and Maluti-a-Phofung remain unresolved.

The SA Local Government Association, Salga, remains a problem. They should be assessed by the improvements in municipalities, not in the many conferences that are seen as mini holidays for Speakers, mayors and councillors.

South Africans live in the reality of towns and cities in decay. The budget of Cogta must lead to real service delivery, and if Cogta is serious about making every municipality work, the culture of accountability and consequence management should be top down. Thank you.

Mr J B MTOLO: Hon Chairperson, the MK Party wishes to firmly record its opposition to the adopted BRRR of Cogta. While we

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recognise the committee's effort, the BRRR fails to match the urgency of the crisis unfolding in our municipalities, and therefore cannot be supported.

Local government in South Africa is in a state of systemic collapse. Municipalities are bankrupt. Audit outcomes continue to deteriorate. Service-delivery failures are worsening and interventions such as section 139 have become routine but ineffective. Yet, the BRRRs present recycled recommendations with no real accountability or enforcement for executive and administrative failures.

The report does not confront leadership paralysis, persistent noncompliance, rising wasteful expenditure or the collapse of basic infrastructure that leaves communities without water, electricity and sanitation. I thank you.

Ms H O MKHALIPHI: House Chair, there is no way that the EFF can support this report. All of you sitting here belong to a ward that is not serviced by any municipality. The department is failing to provide guidance in terms of intervention on a daily basis.

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We risk going on like scratched records in this House as far as matters of local government are concerned. This is so because year after year the Auditor-General, AG, highlights the very same issues with local government in this country, and year after year this House and the executive fails to properly root out the problems hindering proper management at local government.

We know these problems to be inadequate oversight and monitoring of compliance with key legislation to prevent the recurrence of material noncompliant findings on expenditure management and assets management, inadequate institutional capacity resulting in slow progress in the implementation of municipal interventions at local level, and inadequate review and an absence of quality assurance controls over the financial statements compilation process impacting on the credibility of the financial statements.

Furthermore, the AG ... we know that key targets are not achieved across municipalities, particularly those that relate to service delivery on infrastructural projects.

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Municipalities lack leadership. At a political level, there is infighting ... instability. It does not matter if the political leadership belongs to the same political party.

IsiZulu:

Kubheda kakhulu laphaya kwagogo. Hamba eQwaqwa uzofica iMeya ilwa ...

English:

... playing with the Speaker. They don't even hide.

Municipalities are engulfed by corruption which cripple communities, and it's becoming worse on a daily basis. Skosana, you know now. You were a mayor at some point. That's why you are here. You ran away from those things.

The role of the department is to intervene ... [Time expired.]

Inkosi R N CEBEKHULU: House Chair, the report shows that local government remains under severe strain, with many municipalities financially distressed, communities still lacking reliable services and limited consequences for ongoing failures. These challenges are serious and cannot be ignored.

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However, we face this moment with determination, recognising that we are not just observers, but active partners in driving solutions.

The progress reflected in the report demonstrates that improvements are possible when leadership is focused, disciplined and accountable.

We appreciate the work done by the hon Minister VF Hlabisa to integrate traditional and Khoi and San leadership into local planning and co-operative governance as their inclusion contributes meaningfully to many communities.

We are encouraged by the foundations that are being laid and remain committed to strengthening oversight, accelerating reform and ensuring municipalities receive the support required to not only function but strive ... but thrive, I'm sorry.

We support the report with the confidence that strong leadership will help close the gap between what communities are promised and what they receive.

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Mr S H M VAN WYK: Greetings, Chairperson and hon members. It won't help me at all to come and speak about the lack of service delivery in municipalities. So ...

Afrikaans:

... laat ek sommer straight [reguit] na die point [punt] toe gaan. Die issue [kwessie] wat ons hier het is die Commission on Khoi-San Matters. [Kommissie oor Khoi-San Aangeleenthede.] Daar is nie 'n budget [begroting] vir dit nie. Die Nhlapo Commission [Kommissie] wat in 2002 begin het om traditional leaders [tradisionele leiers] in Suid-Afrika erkenning te gee, het 'n volle budget [begroting] gekry. Wat is die rede dat die Commission on Khoi-San Matters [Kommissie oor Khoi-San Aangeleenthede] in Suid-Afrika nie 'n budget [begroting] het nie? So die departement moet honestly [eerlik] 'n bietjie in daardie ding inkyk.

Chairperson [Voorsitter] ek wil ook onder u aandag bring dat by die quarry [steengroef] in Heidedal het 49 kleurling mense nou al gesterf.

Daar het 'n budget [begroting] van R198 miljoen van Mangaung Metro uitgekom, sodat al die quarries [steengroewe] in Mangaung

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Metro toegemaak kon word, maar wat hulle gedoen het was dat daar nie 'n budget [begroting] vir die Heidedal quarry [steengroef] was nie.

Nou, elke keer as ons hier oor die lives van coloureds [lewe van kleurlinge] praat, dan sien ek die klompie hier aan my linkerkant, die rooietjies, wat bly lag ... so ... lyk asof ons 'n joke [grap] hier is. Ons as coloureds [kleurlinge] is nie 'n joke [grap] nie.

As ons ook na local drug action committees [plaaslike dwelmaksie-komitees] in elke municipality [munisipaliteit] gaan kyk, is hulle nie functional [funksioneel] nie want hulle het nie 'n budget [begroting] nie, especially [veral] hier in die Western Cape. [Wes-Kaap.]

Die DA is hier in charge [beheer] van municipalities [munisipaliteite] maar daar is nie local drug action committees [plaaslike dwelmaksie-komitees] nie.

English:

So, coloured lives matter ...

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Afrikaans:

... en as dit nie vir jou pla nie ... [Onhoorbaar.] ...

Die HUISVOORSITTER (Mnr W Horn): Dankie, agb Van Wyk.

Mnr S H M VAN WYK: Jy kan maar lag soos jy wil, my broer.

[Onhoorbaar.]

Die HUISVOORSITTER (Mnr W Horn): Orde! Dankie.

Mnr S H M VAN WYK: Julle worry [bekommer julle] nie oor ons nie.

Saluut!

Afrikaans:

Me H DENNER: Voorsitter, geen verklaring. Ons ondersteun die verslag.

Dr T K S LETLAPE: Hon Chair, hon members, the challenge that we have in this country is that ...

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr W Horn): Order, hon members. Let us listen to hon Letlape.

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Dr T K S LETLAPE: The challenge that we have is that we have a pandemic of lawlessness and irresponsibility. We are not upholding the rule of law. We have people that settle in riverbeds, and we no longer call it squatting, we call it informal settlement. We don't uphold the rule of law and we are not able to provide services to them.

We have a culture of nonpayment of services. Even government departments don't pay their services and we expect municipalities to work, when nobody pays for services that are rendered, including governments.

Everything is failing. We have sewage in the streets, including in Acacia Village, where I stay. So, even MPs are not exempt. It has been oozing for months. And we wonder why we are in the state that we are in.

There is a talk of professionalisation. We support it, but for you to get professionalisation, you have to employ professionals. If you cannot do that, you are not going to get professionalisation. We need to ensure that we, as parties, appoint competent councillors that understand what governance is about.

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We need to clearly separate governance from operations and tenders should be controlled by the employed professionals. If we do not uphold the rule of law, if you don't pay, services must be cut. If you interfere with infrastructure, you must go to jail.

If we cannot do that, there is no way services will be provided. Eskom is bankrupt ... [Time expired.] ... not because it is inefficient.

Mr W M THRING: Hon House Chairperson, the ACDP notes this report of the Cogta Portfolio Committee for the 2024-25 financial year. The Audit-General laments that, of the 257 municipalities across the country, only 41 received a clean audit in the 2023-24 financial year, representing just 16% of all municipalities. The Audit-General highlighted that the Free State is the worst-run province in the country, with most municipalities in the province being bankrupt, as a result of failures in governance, financial accountability, and service delivery.

Sixty-eight percent of municipalities incurred unauthorised expenditure of some R31,79 billion. Fruitless and wasteful expenditure increased to R17,65 billion over the last three

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years, with most councils adopting unfunded budgets, despite warnings from the Audit-General not to do so.

The ACDP supports the committee's recommendations for a thorough skills audit on senior local government personnel and the urgent professionalisation of the municipal workforce.

As Kingdom builders, the ACDP calls for increased oversight, increased investigation and consequence management with professional support and recovery plan interventions, including public advocacy, because a failure to do so at a municipal level will lead to continued weak financial management, a shortage of skilled personnel and government failures with unfunded budgets. The ACDP supports the report. I thank you.

Mr S M GANA: No declaration.

Mrs N L HLAZO-WEBSTER: Chair, if you want to know how South Africans judge government, if you want to know what South Africans think of the state, you simply need to look at their streets, because this is where government meets citizens. This is where government meets residents. If you look at the burst pipes, at the potholes, at the taps that are running dry for

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days, then that is the experience of South Africans, and that is what they think of government - that government is incompetent, that government does not deliver and that government ultimately does not care about them.

The Cogta BRRR confirms what communities have been saying for years, and that is the fact that local government is collapsing. The report shows that municipalities are falling apart. There is financial distress, there is political instability, and there is failing service delivery systems.

Municipalities such as Mfuleni, Mangaung, City of Johannesburg have become symbols of state failure, where the sewage that the hon Doctor was talking about flows into the streets. Now, these failures are not isolated; they are systemic and they are an indictment on Cogta, whose core mandate is actually to support municipalities before they collapse, not after communities have actually suffered irreversible harm.

We support the BRRR's recommendation from the portfolio committee that the department must urgently report on turnaround plans. We support the recommendation of the audit. And what we

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want to say about the proposed collaboration with the City of Johannesburg is that is a lifeline that is needed.

Without decisive intervention, municipalities and the people living in them will not survive the next decade. And I want to repeat, that is an indictment on Cogta. It is an indictment on government. It is an indictment on the Government of National Unity. Thank you.

IsiXhosa:

Nksk. T L MARAWU: Sihlalo weNdlu, sijongene nengxubakaxaka apha yoomasipala ...

English:

It starts with the provincial Cogtas, which are supposed to give support, in terms of section 154 of the Constitution, to municipalities, but the support is not there. Coming to section 139 for intervention, you will find, sometimes the officials that are deployed to assist municipalities do not have the capacity to assist municipalities.

If you look throughout South Africa, towns have been failed to be ghost towns. Towns that used to be tourist towns to affect

the local economic development are now ghost towns, because bylaws are not monitored and implemented by municipalities.

The credit control policy, which can assist in terms of the financial viability of municipality is not there. The indigent policy, which can assist ...

IsiXhosa:

... abantu abahluphekileyo ...

English:

... is not implemented by municipalities.

So, we are in that situation and local government is where the tire touches the tar. So, everything is upside down.

IsiXhosa:

Akukho zindlela naziblorho zokuwela abantwana xa besiya ezikolweni.

English:

As ATM, we wish that all the recommendations by the committee can be implemented and monitored, as such. Thank you.

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Mr I ISMAIL-MOOSA: House Chairperson, don't count those seconds, hey, just now the Chair is going to tell me my time is up. Hon Chair, hon members, respected family of beloved fellow South Africans, As Al-Jama-ah, we consider the Budgetary Review and Recommendation Report of the Portfolio Committee on Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs on behalf of Al-Jama-ah's leader, the hon Deputy Minister, Ganief Hendricks, who is our energetic and wise Solomononic leader.

Al-Jama-ah finds that this department plays a pivotal role in strengthening local government, promoting service delivery and supporting traditional leadership structures. Whilst progress has been made in enhancing municipal oversight and capacity-building, the report highlights ongoing challenges, financial mismanagement, underperforming municipalities and delays in critical service delivery that continue to impact communities.

So, what is the best governance? I think God consciousness is the best governance.

IsiZulu:

Malibongwe!

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English:

And when we see all these challenges, we realise that God consciousness is the way we can find solutions for responsible and ethical governance. Hon Chair, Al-Jama-ah supports the committee's recommendations. Al-Jama-ah calls for strengthened accountability, improved capacity at the municipal level and decisive action to ensure that local government functions effectively.

Strong, well-governed municipalities and traditional structures are essential to delivering services, fostering social cohesion and empowering communities across South Africa. Let us move forward with solutions, hope and confidence for the future of our nation. It takes us all year in this august House to work with our nation in unison to make that special difference, to work together. United we stand, divided we fall.

IsiZulu:

Malibongwe!

Dr Z L MKHIZE: House Chairperson, the ANC supports this Budgetary Review and Recommendation Report for the Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs and all its

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entities. The joint committee oversight visits that we have conducted as the three portfolios committees demonstrated that this House has a lot more to do, and needs to do more to ensure that the municipalities are able to improve on financial systems, financial controls to achieve improved audit outcomes in these municipalities, and ensure that there's early detection and prevention of maladministration and corruption.

It is the only way to ensure accountability and consequence management. We recognise that there are challenges that must be addressed related to local government, which impact the ability of municipalities to effectively deliver services to our people. We noted, for instance, the disconnect between the achievement of the SA Local Government Association, Salga, and the reality of our municipalities, but we believe these issues related to Salga require clear legislation, which will empower the organisation and define its role clearly in the ecosystem of local government. We note the challenges and the implications of the work of the demarcation board relating to splitting settled communities. And these matters are important because of their bearing on the elections and social cohesion. We also note the issues raised on the CRL Rights Commission, which is starting some reforms, but it's important to address issues of instances

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of abuse of human rights of congregants, whilst ensuring that the freedom of religion is protected.

The Portfolio Committee on Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs is engaging the CRL and various leaders, religious leaders to ensure that there's an amicable solution to the areas of disagreement. The ANC will continue to monitor the work of the department, continue to find innovative ways to solve these problems of our people and improve their standard of living. Thank you very much.

Motion agreed to (uMkhonto weSizwe Party and Economic Freedom Fighters dissenting).

Report accordingly adopted.

CALL FOR AMENDING OF GRADE 12 MINIMUM PASS RATE

(Draft Resolution)

Decision of question on draft resolution by Dr M A Maimane:

That the House—

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- (1) notes that the Department of Basic Education continues to maintain a minimum pass requirement of 30% in certain Grade 12 subjects, despite public concern that this low threshold entrenches mediocrity and fails to prepare learners for higher education or the job market;
- (2) further notes that in response to a written question by Build One South Africa in 2024, the Minister of Basic Education indicated that the newly established National Education and Training Council would advise on whether and to what extent the Grade 12 pass requirements should be revised;
- (3) acknowledges that as of 28 August 2025, the Council has been formally constituted and operational, yet no public progress update has been provided on its review of the 30% pass mark policy;
- (4) recognises that South Africa's education system is in crisis, with a real matric pass rate of just over 55% when accounting for the high dropout rate, meaning nearly half of learners who start Grade 1 never reach Grade 12;

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- (5) further recognises that only 47% of learners achieve a Bachelor's pass, and fewer than 15% of these learners progress to university, whilst South Africa ranks 107th out of 141 countries in global skills readiness;
- (6) observes with concern that systemic barriers contribute to poor educational outcomes, including:
- (a) 12 700 unemployed qualified teachers currently seeking work;
 - (b) only 5 863 of South Africa's 22 511 public schools, 26%, having libraries, meaning 74% of schools have none;
 - (c) more than 500 schools not offering mathematics at all; and
 - (d) 10 938 schools without flushing toilets and 383 without running water;
- (7) believes that maintaining a 30% pass mark sends the wrong message to learners and educators alike, undermining a

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culture of excellence and lowering expectations for achievement, particularly in underresourced schools;

- (8) further believes that the low pass benchmark, combined with widespread infrastructure deficits and teacher underutilisation, perpetuates inequality between affluent and poor schools, especially in Quintile 1 to 3 communities;
- (9) acknowledges that Parliament has a constitutional obligation to ensure that education policy promotes quality learning outcomes and prepares young South Africans for the demands of the modern economy;
- (10) calls on the Minister of Basic Education to table before Parliament, within six months, a comprehensive progress report on the work of the National Education and Training Council regarding the review of minimum pass requirements for the National Senior Certificate;
- (11) further calls on the Minister of Basic Education to ensure that the department provides timelines and consultation processes for any proposed reforms to the

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pass mark policy, including how such reforms will benchmark South Africa's learner performance standards against international best practice and evidence-based global norms; and

- (12) mandates the Portfolio Committee on Basic Education to convene follow-up hearings with education experts, teacher unions, and civil society to assess the impact of the current 30% pass threshold on learner outcomes and postschool readiness, and to evaluate whether the proposed reforms align with international competency and skills benchmarks.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr W Horn): Hon members, the next item on the Order Paper is a decision of question on the draft resolution in the name of the hon Dr Maimane. I wish to remind you that this draft resolution was debated in a virtual mini-plenary on Friday, 28 November 2025, but that, in terms of the Rules, a decision thereon can only be taken in a full plenary.

Question put: That the motion in the name of Dr M A Maimane be agreed to.

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The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr W Horn): I think the Noes have it.

Mr V G REDDY: Chairperson, are we supposed to say that online as well – “aye” and “nay” and “no”?

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr W Horn): Thank you, hon Reddy. It is not necessary. We know that those in the House carry your voices as well. Thank you.

Mr V G REDDY: Baie dankie. Baie dankie. [Thank you very much. Thank you very much.]

Mrs N L HLAZO-WEBSTER: We call for a division, Chair.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr W Horn): Thank you, hon Hlazo-Webster. In terms of Rule 111(1), I unfortunately have to satisfy myself that at least four members support the demand for a division. May I enquire from other members whether there is support for the division to be called? I see the hands of the hon Trollip and the hon ... Yes, alright. A division having been called, the bells will be rung for five minutes.

The House divided.

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The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr W Horn): Order, hon members. Please take up your seats. Hon members, the Speaker has determined that, in accordance with the Rules, a manual voting procedure will be used for this division. Firstly, in order to establish a quorum, I will request the Table to confirm that we have the requisite number of members physically present and on the virtual platform to be able to take this decision. That has been confirmed.

Party Whips will now be given an opportunity to confirm the number of their members present and indicate if they vote for or against the question. A member that wishes to abstain or vote against the party vote may do so by informing the Chair. Hon members, having confirmed that we have this quorum, we will now proceed. The question before the House is whether to agree to the motion on the Order Paper in the name of the hon Dr Maimane or not. Voting will now commence. The doors to the Chamber will be locked, and members will not be allowed to enter the virtual platform until voting is concluded.

Mr V G REDDY: Hon Chairperson ...

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The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr W Horn): Hon Reddy, during division, we can only entertain points of order regarding the division.

Mr V G REDDY: Yes, hon Chairperson, I didn't hear the DA. Are they supporting the 30% pass rate? I just want to be clear. I didn't hear.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr W Horn): No, hon Reddy. That is not a point of order. If you didn't hear, you must just pay better attention next time.

AYES - 87: (MK - 43; EFF - 21; IFP - 10; ActionSA - 6; ACDP - 2; Rise Mzansi - 1; BOSA - 2; ATM - 2).

NOES - 190: (ANC - 101; DA - 75; PA - 8; FF Plus - 5; Al Jamaa - 1)

Question not agreed to.

Motion accordingly negatived.

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**CALL FOR REVIEW OF CURRENT VISA EXEMPTION LISTS AND ADOPTION OF
POLICY OF RECIPROCITY FOR NATIONS IMPOSING VISA RESTRICTIONS ON
SOUTH AFRICANS**

(Draft Resolution)

Decision of question on draft resolution by Dr K Litchfield-Tshabalala:

That the House—

- (1) notes the discriminatory visa practices imposed on South African citizens by Western nations, including but not limited to the United States, the United Kingdom, the European Union member states, Canada, and Australia;
- (2) calls on the Department of Home Affairs and the Department of International Relations and Co-operation to review current visa exemption lists and adopt a policy of reciprocity for all nations imposing visa restrictions on South Africans;

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- (3) encourages Southern African Development Community and African Union member states to collectively develop an Africa-wide policy on reciprocal visa arrangements with Western states; and
- (4) affirms South Africa's sovereignty and dignity in its foreign policy posture by treating other nations as equals and demanding the same in return.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr W Horn): Hon members, the last item on the Order Paper is a decision of question on the draft resolution in the name of the hon Dr Litchfield-Tshabalala. I wish to remind you that this draft resolution also was debated in a virtual mini-plenary on Friday, 28 November 2025, but, once again, that a decision thereon can only be taken in a full plenary.

Question put: That the motion in the name of Dr K Litchfield-Tshabalala be agreed to.

Question not agreed to.

Motion accordingly negatived.

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The House adjourned at 20:36.

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