

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

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PROCEEDINGS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

The House met at 14:00.

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

The SPEAKER: May we be seated? Order, hon members. Those of us who are coming in, can we take our seats? Hon Ntlangwini, you are going away when you are supposed to be taking your seats. Hon Ntlangwini, this session is in order. I thought you were going out. Thank you very much. Okay, hon Ntlangwini.

Mrs E N NTLANGWINI: No, Speaker, I am doing my duties as a Whip to check all of my members.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon members, and welcome to those who are online in the sitting. Hon members, the first item

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on the order paper is Members' Statements. Can I now ask the ANC if they wish to make a statement? Yes, hon member.

**SOUTH AFRICA OFFICIALLY REMOVED FROM THE FINANCIAL ACTION TASK
FORCE, FATF, GREY LIST**

(Member's Statement)

Ms N GCALEKA-MAZIBUKO (ANC): The ANC welcomes the announcement that South Africa has officially been removed from the Financial Action Task Force, FATF, grey list. This removal from the global anti-money laundering and terror financing watchdog, confirmed on Friday, 25 October, provides a boost for increased foreign investment in the country. It also serves as motivation for institutional strength that may lift sentiment, lower bond yields, and ease debt-servicing costs. This removal is a direct outcome of decisive and co-ordinated action taken across the Government of Unity, GNU, law enforcement, regulatory bodies, and the financial sector. Over the past two years, the country has implemented comprehensive reforms to address the deficiencies identified by the Financial Task Team Force, FATF. We congratulate all relevant government departments and government agencies on the success of their individual and

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collective efforts and acknowledges their commitment to ensuring that the country exits the FATF grey list. We commend the leadership of the South African government, under President Cyril Ramaphosa, for driving this turnaround and for demonstrating that South Africa is serious about restoring confidence in its institutions and financial systems.

I so move.

**THE GREAT GRAFT AND IMPROPER RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE ANC AND
ACTION SA AND TSHWANE**

(Member's Statement)

Mr K H WAKELIN (DA): Hon Speaker. I rise on behalf of the DA to notify the House of the great graft and improper relationship between the ANC and Action SA and Tshwane. The Action SA executive mayor, Dr Nasiphi Moya, is protecting the ANC Deputy Mayor and the Member of the Mayoral Committee, MMC, of Finance, from not releasing a forensic report implicating the ANC Deputy Mayor from financially benefiting from a security tender and not declaring his interest. The city has declared \$170 million on this tender to investigate. Another question that needs answers

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is, why is the EFF not taking its coalition partner to task? The City of Tshwane residents needs to get the truth and the executive mayor must come clean and should have fired the deputy already. It is clear who is ruling Tshwane, it is not the Action SA. The DA has called for the dismissal of Modise as Finance MMC and to pursue his removal as deputy mayor via a note.

The SPEAKER: Order, hon members. You may proceed.

Mr K H WAKELIN (DA): The DA also laid a complaint with the Public Protector to get the truth. We urge the Minister of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs, the Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs Committee, and all oversight bodies like the Auditor-General to act with urgency to interrogate this matter, to check if any decisive action will be taken by the Action SA mayor.

The SPEAKER: You can proceed, hon member. Order, hon member, can you proceed?

Mr K H WAKELIN (DA): I'm trying to speak very hard. To the residents of Tshwane, the DA will ensure that concrete action and accountability is implemented to restore confidence and

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governance and how taxpaying monies are spent. [Interjections.]

[Time expired.]

**A JUDGE IS ALLEGED TO HAVE ACCEPTED A R2,5 MILLION BRIBE TO
CONCEAL THE DETAILS OF THE CR17 FUNDERS**

(Member's Statement)

Mr T I GAMEDE (MKP): Hon Speaker, today I rise on behalf of uMkhonto weSizwe Party to address a matter of significant public concern. As highlighted in the recent media reports, there are disturbing allegations of bribery involving certain members of our judiciary, specifically, a judge is alleged to have accepted a R2,5 million bribe to conceal the details of the CR17 funders from the public scrutiny. In light of these concerns, we unequivocally support the call by our President, the only commander of uMkhonto weSizwe military, President Zuma, for comprehensive lifestyle audit of judges, magistrates and prosecutors. Such measures are vital for maintaining the integrity of our justice system and ensuring the impartial upholding of the rule of law.

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Let us reaffirm that no individual is beyond accountability. By endorsing these measures, we pledge our commitment to a transparent and trustworthy judiciary that faithfully serve the people of South Africa. By implementing this rigorous and non-negotiable audit, we will send an unambiguous message that in the Republic of South Africa, no one, and I mean no one, regardless of the title, rope, or political affiliation, is above scrutiny or the law. This is a step towards rebuilding a truly trustworthy and transparent system that serves the people of South Africa faithfully. I thank you, hon Speaker.

**THE ANC CONDEMNS SHOCKING BULLYING INCIDENT AT THE MILNERTON
HIGH SCHOOL**

(Member's Statement)

Mr S T D LOUW (ANC): The ANC condemns in the strongest possible terms the incident of bullying at Milnerton High School where a learner was assaulted by a group of fellow students in what appears to be a co-ordinated attack. A disturbing video of the incident that was circulated on social media depicts the learner being physically and verbally attacked by a group of boys while others stand by some even cheering on the perpetrators. The

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incident is reportedly occurred on 16 October 2025, shortly after classes ended, and involved learners, allegedly including members of the school's first-team rugby squad.

This type of behaviour has no place in society and should never be tolerated. There must be zero tolerance for bullying and violence in schools. Schools must be safe spaces for learning and growth, not fear and humiliation. We welcome the decision by the officials to precautionarily suspend the eight learners, who also appeared at the Cape Town Magistrates' Court on Thursday, 23 October 2025. We encourage our learners to be disciplined, stay focused at the task at hand, to learn and study for their examinations. I thank you.

CALL FOR JUSTICE FOR DLAMINI TWINS WHO FELL FROM A LIFT

(Member's Statement)

IsiZulu:

Mnu M B BLOSE (EFF): Somlomo sithi asiveze la le nto eyenzeke lapha eThekwini emafulethini akaHomii ... [inaudible.] Street lapho kulime khona izingane zamawela akwaDlamini ayisiphethe neze kahle. Ubhuti Khaya Dlamini ulinyalelwe yizingane zakhe

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zamawele eziwe elifithini eyodwa ingane yase idlula emhlabeni enye esesesibhedlela. Sithi Somlomo akakho umzali okufanele alinyalelwe izingane zakhe ngesihluku esinje. Kakhulukazi okubonakalayo ukuthi into eyenziwe ngamabomu.

Angithi phela abaphathi bezindawo zokuhlala ikakhulukazi laphe kuhlala khona abantu abamnyama abanandaba nempilo yomuntu omnyama kodwa kuhanjiswa phambili indaba yemali yerenti ngaphandle kokubheka ukuphepha kwabantu abahlala kuleyo ndawo. Yingakho nalawo malifithi alapha kaHomii abenganakiwe futhi engalungiswa.

Sithi ke Somlomo sikusho lokhu singananazi ukuthi alikho izinyane elivube ladlwa zingwenya kwacweba isiziba. Abaphathi bakwaHomii abalethe ividiyo ezoveza ukuthi izingane zilimale kanjani. Kungenjalo bayokubona okwabonwa uSawule. Sithi ke le mashi ebiseThekwini izolo ibincane kakhulu kunento ezoza. Kungekudala sizothi wonke amabhilidi akwaHomii awavalwe sicele nabantu abahlala khona ukuthi baphume baphele kuze kube kuba nobulungiswa kuzingane zakwaDlamini.

Sengiphetha ngithi du kumfowethu uKhaya Dlamini ame njalo aqine sizoba naye njalo kule mpi sizobanaye kuzekube ekugcineni

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angapheli amandla nomntwana osesibhedlela simfisela ukuphola ngokushesha. Ngiyabonga.

SOUTH AFRICA ON BECOMING ONE OF THE LARGEST MARKETS FOR CRYSTAL METH IN THE WORLD

(Member's Statement)

Ms B E MACHI (IFP): Hon Speaker, the IFP is deeply alarmed by the recent revelations that South Africa has become one of the largest markets for crystal meth in the world, and that the Mexican drug cartels are now establishing local franchises within our borders. This discovery confirms that South Africa has become one of the largest consumer markets for crystal meth in the world. Foreign drugs cartels are now franchising their operations within our borders.

Hon Speaker, perhaps we need to ask ourselves, how has a country that pride itself on upholding the rule of law become a conducive environment for crystals to thrive? This is not just a policing issue, it is a national security threat. This exposes glaring weaknesses in our borders' control, intelligence co-ordinations, and policing capacity. Additionally, it is

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devastating families, fuelling unemployment and destroying the social fabric of our nation. The IFP stands firm in calling for co-ordinated and uncompromising action to protect our people from the growing crisis, I thank you.

STATEMENT ON THE INTEGRATED RESOURCE PLAN, IRP, 2025

(Member's Statement)

Ms F HASSAN (ANC): Hon Speaker, as the ANC, we welcome Cabinet's approval of the Integrated Resource Plan, IRP, 2025, our country's long-term roadmap for secure, affordable and cleaner energy. This IRP moves South Africa from crisis response to planned execution, underpinned by major investments amounting to R2,23 trillion, a Just Energy Transition, JET, and a credible path to net zero by 2050.

The IRP sets out approximately 105 GW of new capacity by 2039. It provides a balanced mix to keep the lights on permanently while lowering costs over time, through large-scale wind and solar, battery storage, distributed generation and flexible capacity, as well as an allocation for gas-to-power to navigate the looming gas cliff, and a 5 200 MW nuclear and allocation.

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All of these are positioned to build South African skills, localisation and quality jobs.

As the ANC, we support three priorities and will exercise robust parliamentary oversight to realise them: Firstly, energy security at the lowest cost. Secondly, industrialisation and jobs. This IRP must translate into South African factories working, steel, cables, transformers, components and skills pipelines for young people. When nuclear proceeds, it must do so under the highest standards of transparency, safety and value-for-money, while rebuilding responsible local capabilities. Thirdly, Speaker, it is about transmission, which is our new baseload. No public or private megawatt will flow without new lines and substations. We call for fast-tracked servitudes, standardised designs, and ring-fenced funding ...

[Interjections.] [Time expired.] I thank you.

**PUBLIC SCHOOLS PRIORITISING CHILDREN OF UNDOCUMENTED FOREIGN
NATIONALS OVER SOUTH AFRICAN CHILDREN**

(Member's Statement)

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Ms J S PETERSEN: Hon Speaker, on behalf of the PA I rise today to address a matter of grave concern affecting South African learners and their right to access basic education.

It has come to our attention that while undocumented children of foreign national parents are being registered in public schools with relative ease, many South African-born children are struggling to secure placements due to alleged administrative barriers, overcrowding and systematic inefficiencies.

We want to place on record that this statement is being made without xenophobic undertones. We are focusing on systematic failures rather than targeting foreign nationals unfairly.

This disparity raises serious questions about the fairness and implementation of the Department of Basic Education's admission policies.

Why are South African parents being subjected to excessive bureaucratic hurdles when registering their children, while alternative measures seem to be in place for undocumented foreign nationals?

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Education is a fundamental right protected in section 29 of our Constitution, and no South African child should be denied this right due to administrative failures or misprioritisation. Thank you.

**THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT'S PROPOSED DRAFT CHILDREN'S
AMENDMENT BILL 2025 WILL ENDANGER BABIES' LIVES**

(Member's Statement)

Ms A L A ABRAHAMS: Hon Speaker, I rise on behalf of the DA to call on the Minister of Social Development to reconsider the inhumane inclusion of child relinquished or placed in a baby box into the definition of abandoned child into Department of Social Development's Draft Children's Amendment Bill 2025.

This proposed amendment will criminalize the act of safe relinquishment as well as registered child protection organizations that operate baby savers, which have saved at least 600 babies.

In contrast, the DA has been working on a Private Member's Bill to legalize safe relinquishment, baby savers and baby safe

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havens. The notice of intention to introduce has been presented and open for public comment.

The DA's proposed Bill will save lives, unlike the Department of Social Development's Bill, which will endanger them.

South Africa faces a heartbreaking crisis of unsafe infant abandonment, often as the result of poverty, gender-based violence, GBV, or lack of support. We cannot turn away from this reality. We must respond with empathy, humanity and practical solutions.

Minister Tolashe, should this inhumane amendment definition stay in Department of Social Development's Bill, the preventable death of these babies will be on your conscience.

As members of Parliament, MPs, we have a duty to stand up against creating laws that punish innocent babies as they take their first breath as well as desperate mothers in crisis, choosing love in the only way they know how at the time. I thank you.

POVERTY AND UNEMPLOYMENT SHOULD BE DECLARED A NATIONAL DISASTER

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(Member's Statement)

Mr V ZUNGULA: Hon Speaker, on behalf of ATM I rise to call for poverty and unemployment to be declared a national disaster. Over 12 million South Africans are unemployed. That's more than a quarter of our working age population, 55% live below the poverty line, two in three children grow up in households where basic needs are not met. These are not statistics, they are stories of daily suffering and lost dignity.

The Constitution guarantees the right to dignity, education, housing, healthcare and freedom from hunger. When poverty and unemployment strip away these rights, the state has got a constitutional duty to act with urgency. Declaring this crisis a national disaster is not symbolic. It would enable a coordinated national action, reprioritize budgets, fast-track job creation and infrastructure programmes, and hold government accountable under a measurable framework.

Just as we mobilized extraordinary measures during COVID-19, we must now do the same to confront this pandemic of poverty and joblessness that is destroying more lives each day.

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The ATM calls for decisive action. Let us treat unemployment and poverty with the urgency they demand. I so move. Thank you.

**DA-LED STELLENBOSCH MUNICIPALITY PUNISHED BY COURT OVER A RACIAL
EXCLUSIVITY PRACTICE**

(Member's Statement)

Mr P NDAMASE: Hon Speaker, the ANC of Oliver Reginald Tambo ...

IsiXhosa:

... .. uMaci, uGoba, uMbusi ...

English:

... stands today to say the DA-led Stellenbosch Municipality was recently punished by the courts for their racial exclusivity practice. Following an October 18, 2025 court ruling, the DA-led Stellenbosch Municipality was ordered to pay a qualified coloured job applicant R750 000 for overlooking her in favour of a less qualified white candidate.

This follows an earlier separate finding of racial discrimination in 2018 for a similar case.

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The latest ruling against the municipality involves an incident that occurred six years ago. This has highlighted a pattern of racial discrimination and employment equity issues in the DA-led municipality.

In September 2025 a video surfaced of former Acting Corporate Services Director, Alexander Kannemeyer, expressing concerns about the dominance of white males in senior management and allegedly discussed making life difficult for non-white employees to encourage them to resign. Following the leak, the DA initiated a motion to suspend Kannemeyer and the Mayor called for an investigation.

We believe that ... [Time expired.] ... thank you.

ANC IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ORGANIZED CRIME BOSSES

(Member's Statement)

Mr S W MKHIZE: Hon Speaker, I rise on behalf of MKP to state that South Africa faces a terrifying reality. Organized crime is no longer fighting the ANC, it is financing the ANC.

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We now hear allegations that the suspended Minister Senzo Mchunu has been meeting criminals and tender syndicates not to combat crime, but to fund his ANC presidential ambitions.

Cyril Ramaphosa opened this ... this is not new ... Cyril Ramaphosa opened the floodgates when his CR17 campaign was bankrolled by millions in secret. Phalaphala exposed dirty dollars protecting a President.

The ANC corruption shows us how money replaces democracy.

Now, drug lords bankroll the ANC events, crime bosses choose the ANC ... [Interjections.] [Inaudible.] ...

The SPEAKER: Hon member of the MKP, I think we need to be careful in our statements so that we do not veer on matters that require substantive motion. So, can you please make sure that in your statement you do not create that problem for yourself!

Mr S W MKHIZE: Now, the drug laws bankroll ANC events, crime bosses choose ANC leaders. The highest bidding gangster can buy the Presidency.

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Speaker, that is not leadership, that is mafia in Luthuli House.

How can police fight crime when criminals fund their bosses? How can democracy exist when votes are replaced by bribes?

MKP demands a transparent investigation into Cele's revelations, a ban on secret political financing, accountability for captured criminals ... [Time expired.]

**AVIATION INDUSTRY IN CRISIS FOLLOWING RECENT ACCIDENTS AND
DETERIORATING AVIATION STANDARDS**

(Member's Statement)

Mr C G NIEHAUS: Hon Speaker, I rise in order to raise a serious issue about the aviation industry. There are growing reports of small aircrafts involved in accidents. In just the past three months, two crashes were reported in Durban. These are not isolated incidents. Several similar accidents have been reported elsewhere. This pattern points to a deeper crisis in South Africa's aviation industry.

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Anyone who regularly passes through our airports can sense that things are deteriorating. Flights are delayed more frequently, technical faults are becoming common and there is a general sense of disorder.

Must we wait for lives to be lost before decisive action is taken?

The warning signs are all around us. The aviation sector is showing cracks that can no longer be ignored. We cannot look away while these dangerous incidents pile up, threatening public confidence and human lives.

The SA Civil Aviation Authority, SACAA, has a duty to ensure strict oversight and compliance with safety standards.

Is the authority paying sufficient attention, or are we now witnessing yet another institution that has lost its capacity to enforce accountability? Thank you.

**THE ANC DISMISSES THE DA'S BID TO SCRAP BROAD-BASED BLACK
ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT, BBBEE**

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(Member's Statement)

Mr S M MAECO: Madam Speaker, as the ANC we dismiss the DA's bid to scrap Black Economic Empowerment, BEE, policies, which are rooted in the country's Constitution.

Whilst the DA aims to eliminate race as a factor in public procurement, we believe Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment, BBBEE, is vital in addressing historical inequalities.

Introduced in 2003, BBEE is a tool for redress to correct apartheid-era economic imbalances. The policy requires companies to meet targets in ownership, management, skills development, enterprise support and socioeconomic contribution to qualify for state contracts. And we believe that these policies are essential for reconciliation and inclusive growth.

Madam Speaker, BBEE policies have created black industrialists and changed management control and patterns of ownership in companies.

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We have seen real changes in ownership patterns, including more business owned by women. We have seen changes in management control, enterprise development and skills development.

But we have a long way to go in redressing the vast disparities of the past and balance in redress with inclusive growth in a country still grappling with high unemployment and poverty rates. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

PUBLIC SERVICE PAYMENT SYSTEM HIJACKED BY GHOST WORKERS

(Member's Statement)

Mr J N DE VILLIERS: Hon Speaker, the South African government is our nation's largest employer, with over 1,2 million employees. This workforce should be the backbone of stability and growth, but instead, our public service payment system has been hijacked by ghost workers who simply don't exist.

Almost R4 billion is lost to these ghost workers every year. This R4 billion is money that is nearly impossible to recover even when the fraud is detected.

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What is deeply troubling is that these ghost employees don't just appear by accident. It takes at least three government officials working together to create one ghost worker; pointing to organized criminal syndicates operating within departments. These fraudulent payrolls continue running for employees who have died, retired or resigned. There are even minors receiving salaries and individuals drawing allowances from multiple departments simultaneously.

The DA has long advocated for biometric verification systems and regular data matching with Home Affairs to prevent this exact fraud. These technologies exist and are used successfully in the private sector.

Every rand stolen through ghost workers is a rand that could be spent on healthcare, education and other vital services our people need desperately.

We need to not only find the ghost workers, we need to investigate and prosecute the criminals behind them. I thank you.

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(Member's Statement)

Mr G D KGABO: Hon Speaker, the ANC celebrates one year of good governance by the ANC-led coalition government at Greater Tshwane Region. For the first time in years Tshwane has tabled a fully funded budget.

The ANC-led coalition reached and maintained a payment agreement with Eskom, reducing the debt from R9 billion to R5,6 billion.

The inaugural Tshwane Investment Summit secured R86 billion worth of investment pledges. These pledges will help create jobs, unlock catalytic projects and grow city economy.

[Interjections.] The DA must listen now.

The SA Cities Network recently named Tshwane as South Africa's most improved metro.

The Development Bank of Southern Africa, DBSA, support upgrade of Rooiwal wastewater treatment plant is ahead of schedule.

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Over the past year the city reduced its Eskom debt by R3,4 billion, with the current Eskom account fully paid and up to date.

When the ANC-led coalition took office the city faced 13 areas of non-compliance under the DA leadership.

In this financial record keeping, consequence management and the targeted audits, are issues that the ANC-led coalition has resolved. I so move. Thank you very much, Speaker.

**INCORRECT RECORDED NUMBER OF SOUTH AFRICAN MUSLIMS IS MAKING
THEM MISS OUT ON HAJJ VISAS QUOTAS**

(Member's Statement)

Mr I ISMAIL-MOOSA: Madam Speaker, in the name of Almighty, the most Gracious, the most Merciful. For Muslims, Hajj is the fifth pillar of Islam and every Muslim who is physically and financially, by the means, must undertake this holy journey to Mecca in Saudi Arabia, at least once in a lifetime.

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Hajj is extremely sacred in terms of fulfilling Muslims' rights. The pilgrimage is a deeply spiritual journey and some Muslims save money for many years to be able to go on Hajj.

Every country receives a Hajj visa of 0,1% for Muslims in this country to get a Hajj visa to perform this pilgrimage. However, the South African statistics have recorded, incorrectly, 1,2 million Muslims in the country, and based on this number, only 1 140 visas by the Hajj Ministry is issued to the South African Muslims.

This limited quota for visas is causing a huge discomfort and a lot of heartbreak as many who have taken years to save for this holy journey and now ready to undertake it are denied the opportunity because of the limited quota on Hajj visas to the South African Muslims.

There are older persons who have died of a broken heart because they did not make it for the limited quota.

Al-Jamaa believes that the total of South African Muslim citizens could be as high as 3,5 million, approximately, and this would then entitle 3 500 visas per year ... [Time expired.]

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The SPEAKER: This concludes the Members' Statements. Are there any Ministerial Responses ... [Interjections.]

Mr F ADAMS: Speaker, the NCC has not been given an opportunity to deliver a statement.

The SPEAKER: Hon Adams, today you are not on the list. As you know that smaller parties and their caucus will decide on a rotation basis who will come on what day. So, today I'm so sorry, you are not on the list. Thank you.

**ANC DISMISSES DA'S BID TO SCRAP BROAD-BASED BLACK ECONOMIC
EMPOWERMENT**

(MINISTER'S RESPONSES)

The MINISTER OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND ENVIRONMENT: Hon Speaker, on the statement on Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment, we all agree that we need economic growth and that we need to have an inclusive economy. We also all agree that past injustices in South Africa have left a legacy which with many South Africans left in poverty. The existing framework for Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment is not working and has

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resulted in a few becoming extremely rich under the guise of empowerment when the vast majority of our people have been left behind. We must review the current legislation on BEE with the view to ensure that we can tackle inequality on the basis of actual need and that need is to focus on people who are currently battling with poverty. It is possible for us with the right policy to actually get a broad-based improvement in our country for everyone. Thank you.

**AVIATION INDUSTRY IN CRISIS FOLLOWING RECENT ACCIDENTS AND
DETERIORATING AVIATION STANDARDS**

(Minister's Response.)

The MINISTER OF TRANSPORT: Hon Speaker, allow me to thank hon Niehaus for raising concerns with regard to air traffic safety, particularly in the light of the large number of civil aviation accidents that have occurred in the recent past. Hon Niehaus, I want to show you some pictures of the civil aviation authority.

The SPEAKER: Hon Minister, if you can find a better position, you will be audible.

The MINISTER OF TRANSPORT: Hon Speaker, is this better?

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The SPEAKER: That is better.

The MINISTER OF TRANSPORT: I am sorry, there is a lot of background noise. Hon Speaker, I am saying that I want to thank hon Niehaus for raising concerns with regard to recent air traffic accidents and to assure him that the SA Civil Aviation Authority is regularly audited by International Civil Aviation Organization, Icao, the international body, both in terms of compliance and capacity. I want to also further assure him that all of these air traffic accidents will be investigated by the relevant authorities, and where there are significant learnings, we would obviously want to ensure that we implement these in future policy initiatives.

Let me also request the civil aviation sector to take account of the fact that we are currently experiencing the onset of summer rain and bad weather, and to request that those piloting light aircraft consider climatic conditions before they take off but also ensure that all of their craft have undergone necessary safety and maintenance checks. Thank you very much, hon Speaker.

**SOUTH AFRICA OFFICIALLY REMOVED FROM THE FINANCIAL ACTION TASK
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(Minister's Response)

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT (Mr A C Nel): Speaker, I wish to thank and welcome the statement that South Africa has exited from the Financial Action Task Force, grey list more formally called the List of Jurisdictions Under Increased Monitoring. I think this is really a demonstration of how a capable ethical developmental state can and should work, bringing together the whole of government and working in a dynamic way also with the private sector and society as a whole.

However, while exiting the grey list is an important milestone and a demonstration of South Africa's commitment to rebuilding the rule of law, it is only the start of a broader process to continue strengthening key institutions, improve enforcement and governance processes, and ensure that such improvements are sustainable and that our systems become increasingly effective in combating money laundering, terrorism financing, and the proliferation of illicit financial flows. Neither government agencies nor regulated entities in the private sector and Parliament for that matter, can afford to become complacent and stop improving. Instead, through public-private collaboration,

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we must continue to strengthen South Africa's anti-money laundering and combating the financing of terrorism systems. I thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon members, I have not received any other requests for Ministerial Responses. This now ends the section on Member Statements, but I also want to just caution members. In our statements and requests to raise issues, either from the party or our constituencies, we should be careful, particularly where processes are still in place, not to actually make certain comments that might actually affect those processes.

There were issues that were raised earlier where I made a similar comment. As we know, the Madlanga Commission and the ad hoc committee is still in process. So, we need to really find a way in which we do not impact negatively, maybe with our statements on the processes that are still going to come before this House, for us to make decisions. I just thought it was important for me to raise that matter.

Hon members, today we are going to have an important debate that deals with a matter of healthcare, but also of human health

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generally, where we will be reflecting on the issues of tuberculosis. As you know, our country has been in the forefront of leading the fight against this, and at a parliamentary level, since we became part of this move. We had had a TB caucus in Parliament, led by the Portfolio Committee on Health and Select Committee on Health, but also it allows other members who have an interest on the matter to be part of that caucus. This is not only a caucus here in South Africa, but it really involves a movement of a number of MPs globally, in our continent, in our region, SADC, but also in the entire globe.

I just want to welcome, before we start, the members who are here with us from non-government organisations, but also from SA National AIDS Council, Sanac, as well as our Chairpersons of Portfolio Committee on Health from Lesotho, hon Makhalanyane, who is in the House, and hon Munsanje from Zambia, who is also the chair of the health committee. Hon Makhalanyane, please stand up so that other members can see you. I think hon Makhalanyane ... you can take your seat, Sir. He did not stand up in the beginning because he was here in the first term, just visiting our Parliament and meeting with our then chairperson, hon Dhlomo, at the time, who was our chairperson.

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Order, hon members. Parties make decisions about their members, how they redeploy them. You can ask the Chief Whip or the Deputy Chief Whip of the ANC. Hon members, I also want to announce that at the end of the debate on TB collaboration, which we will be debating, we will sign as Parliament the Barcelona Declaration, which aims to revitalise the South African TB Parliamentary Caucus, to press for a more effective response to the tuberculosis epidemic.

The signing ceremony is scheduled to take place at the Imbizo Centre in 120 Plain Street at 4 in the late afternoon. Not all of you will be able to go because the House is in session, so few of you will go and witness that signing and will come back to the House. Yes, will come back because the business of the House continues. So, you are not exempted, Members of the Portfolio Committee of Health. I will now ask hon Minister of Health, hon Motsoaledi to lead the debate.

**STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER OF HEALTH ON COLLABORATION IN THE
FIGHT AGAINST TUBERCULOSIS, INCLUDING THROUGH THE RELAUNCH OF
PARLIAMENT'S TB CAUCUS**

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The MINISTER OF HEALTH: Hon Speaker, hon members, our guests from the Southern African Development Community, SADC, region, Chairperson and members of the Portfolio Committee on Health, members of the South African National AIDS Council, good afternoon. Tuberculosis, TB, remains one of the most pressing public health challenges in South Africa. Our country is among just ten countries worldwide with a high burden of TB, a high incidence of TB among people living with HIV and Aids and a high rate of drug-resistant TB.

In the years leading to 2009, TB incidences and mortality began to rise sharply, driven by the HIV epidemic. The expansion of antiretroviral therapy has since helped to reverse this trend, saving countless of South Africans lives. The question is why TB is still such a scourge? A century and a half after Robert Koch identified the bacteria that causes it.

It was on the 24th of March 1882, that Robert Koch announced to the world the organism that causes what was then already a centuries-old disease. Signs of TB were identified in Egyptian mummies, which were buried centuries ago. But hon members, TB has been treatable for the longest of time.

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So why is this identifiable and treatable disease still causing immeasurable damage to individuals, families, communities, and indeed nations? Many other pandemics for which no treatment was ever found came and went, but TB, which is treatable, remains with us. Many in this house may not believe it when we mention that TB killed more people than all the known pandemics, past and present, all added together. Yes, it is a fact that TB killed more people than bubonic plague that devastated Europe in the 18th century.

And even before that, you can add to that toll smallpox, malaria, Ebola, yellow fever, haemorrhagic fevers, cholera, monkeypox, mpox, HIV and Aids itself, COVID-19, and influenza. Yes, TB killed more people than all of those I have mentioned, not individually, but added together. Why then do nations not show any agency in dealing with this biggest world killer of all infectious diseases? Why is there no sign of fear of TB like we fear other pandemics? The simple answer I can find is that TB is not a drama queen. It makes no noise. It does not announce its intentions. It causes no global leaders to close borders. It causes no heads of state to address family meetings. It grounds no aeroplanes. It closes no businesses, schools, or churches,

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but it kills, and it kills very effectively. Unfortunately, very slowly, and most of the time, very silently.

This morning, we launched a parliamentary TB caucus for Members of Parliament to join the war against TB. It is the second time that we launched this TB caucus in this Parliament, but it just faded, faded away, because as I said, we do not really fear TB despite all the evidence being there, that it is a problem.

Having said this, hon members, you must take heart of the fact that since 2015, we have achieved measurable progress. New cases of TB have declined by 57%, meaning that the estimated number of people contracting TB annually has decreased, from approximately 600 000 in 2015 to 270 000 in 2023.

Of the 270 000 individuals living with TB in 2023, 13 000 had multidrug-resistant TB, and people living with HIV and Aids accounted for 54% of the global TB population. While the reduction in new cases is encouraging, the 2024 report serves as a reminder that TB still affects hundreds of thousands of South Africans each year. Between 2015 and 2023, over half a million South Africans died of TB. And in 2023 alone, one in five people succumbed. That is a case fatality rate of 22%, amounting to 56

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000 deaths of the 270 000 infections. TB-related deaths among people living with HIV have declined by 31%, but regrettably, TB deaths among those without HIV increased by 25% over the same period.

The human cost extends beyond lives. As more than half of households affected by TB face catastrophic costs, demonstrating that TB continues to exacerbate poverty as well as illness. TB treatment coverage is improving with 79% of the 270 000 people which we have mentioned with TB in the country identified and treated as of 2023. We continue to intensify our efforts to detect new cases and close this gap.

To end TB, we must identify all individuals living with the disease, treat them, and most importantly, cure them. This will help break the chain of transmission in our communities.

Treatment success for a standard drug-resistant TB now stands at 83%, while success rate for the six-month regime for multi-drug-resistant TB ranges between 75 and 80%. Loss to follow-up remains a challenge with 8% of patients with drug-sensitive TB and 9% of those with drug-resistant TB discontinued treatment. Children and young adolescents are of particular concern. They

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are significantly underrepresented in the TB notifications, accounting only for 10% of all cases.

We are implementing the South African National AIDS Council, SANAC, and World Health Organisation TB multisectoral accountability framework, ensuring that all partners, including the Department of Education, deliver clear outcomes ...

[Interjections.] ...

The SPEAKER: Hon Mbele, please mute your mic. Minister, you can continue.

The MINISTER OF HEALTH: ... clear outcomes to improve TB situation for children. Failing children in this regard will be a grave indictment on all of us.

Hon members, despite the challenges we have outlined, we are also making significant progress. The national TB programme, through the TB strategic plan, annual TB recovery plan, and targeted universal testing for TB approach, continues to focus on TB to ensure we do not falter. We have established a multisectoral TB technical task team, co-ordinated by SANAC, which leads the work of TB technical working groups comprising

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all government departments, civil society, the private sector, and development partners such as the World Health Organisation.

To accelerate progress, in February 2025, the National Department of Health launched the #EndTB campaign, which aims to screen and evaluate five million people for TB annually. The campaign integrates TB screening into routine monitoring and evaluation meetings across provinces and ensures co-ordination with the national HIV response.

Hon members, to track progress, last week on Friday, we launched what we call a public-facing NTB campaign dashboard. This dashboard enables provinces, partners, civil society, and the public to monitor testing, treatment, and outcomes in near real time. It serves as a tool for transparency, accountability, and action. Civil society can use the data to promote testing, reduce stigma, and hold local service accountable for delivering TB care.

We are not just going to announce to you that we are looking for five million people every year to evaluate. You will be able to trace it. If you want to know in which village have we been, who has been found to be having TB, what age are they, what is the

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agenda, all that information you will get from this data that we have launched last week.

We have also strengthened our diagnostic and treatment services. New rapid molecular tests enable us to detect TB within hours than days. You remember we are the first to initiate the expert technology whereby TB diagnosis was now within two hours than the six weeks it was taking previously.

We continue to collaborate with the National Institute For Communicable Diseases Of South Africa and National Health Laboratory Services to deliver testing methods, particularly in multidrug-resistant TB. This is essential for fast detection and treatment. Newer, shorter, and more effective treatment regimes, especially for multidrug-resistant TB, are now saving South African lives and alleviating the burden of the pandemic. Looking ahead, South Africa is preparing for the introduction of a new TB vaccine.

Hon members, as I said, TB has been known from 1882. Since that period, we have had a vaccine called the Bacillus Calmette-Guérin, BCG, vaccine, bacilliocal medicare for children. We discovered after many decades that that vaccine does not cover

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adults. It covers you in infancy, in childhood, but once you become an adult, you are no longer covered. Since that time, the world has been looking for a vaccine.

I am happy to announce to you that there is a vaccine that is very promising called M72. It has been evaluated in seven countries rather, around the world, but the biggest testing centre is here in South Africa. The people who sacrificed to be evaluated for this vaccine are South Africans, and we are looking forward to this vaccine. When it comes, and we believe by 2028, the trials will be over, and we will start rolling it out. That is our hope. Only then can we safely say we are bringing an end to TB.

In the same way that we are hopeful about the new injectable HIV medication called Lenacapavir, I am sure you are aware that yesterday the South African Health Products Regulatory Authority, SAHPRA, completed the registration of Lenacapavir. This injection will be administered to individuals who are HIV negative every six months, and it is guaranteed to provide 100% protection against contracting HIV.

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We have met and developed plans to begin rolling out Lenacapavir in the country early next year. If the TB vaccines also become available and we implement both interventions, we are hopeful that TB, along with HIV and Aids, will no longer pose the same public health threat. We are taking the fight against TB to the G20 Johannesburg Summit next month, as five G20 member states - Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa - collectively account for half of global TB cases. This is why we will discuss this issue with G20 members.

Hon members, you have a role to play, because, as we have said, TB is not just a medical condition, it is also a social and economic issue. It requires all of us to participate to bring it to an end. Thank you very much.

Mr M P MOTUBATSE: Hon Speaker, hon members, I rise today on behalf of the MK party to respond to the Minister's statement on the fight against tuberculosis and the relaunch of the parliamentary TB caucus. We welcome this initiative. But we must be honest, this relaunch is long overdue. For more than two decades, South Africa has declared war on tuberculosis, TB, yet we remain one of the hardest hit countries in the world.

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According to World Health Organization, in 2023, South Africa recorded 468 TB cases per 100 000 people, and over 54 000 people, South Africans lost their lives to this preventable and curable disease. TB is still the leading cause of death in our country, killing more of our people than HIV, diabetes, and cancer. The MK party demands transparency and accountability. We cannot afford another public health campaign that begins with ribbon cutting ceremonies and ends in silence.

Hon members, the problem in South Africa is not lack of plans, strategies, or summits. The problem is lack of implementation. The Government of National Unity, GNU, government has mastered the art of replicating programs without co-ordination of building bureaucratic empires instead of functioning hospitals. This is not government, but it is bureaucratic theft from the poor. Our clinics are overcrowded. Our health workers are underpaid. Our laboratories are collapsing under the weight of backlogs.

The Minister speaks of fighting TB, yet we still do not have dedicated TB centres in all our hospitals. How do you win a war without weapons? The MK party calls for the immediate establishment of specialized TB centres in every hospital and

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community health facility. These centres must not only provide treatment, they must drive education, prevention, and early diagnosis, especially in rural areas and mining communities where TB spreads fastest.

TB is not just a medical condition. It is a disease of inequality, of poverty, overcrowding and neglect. It is a social justice issue. Our people deserve access to quality care, not fragmented services and false promises. During the recent visit to London, the MK party called upon the Westminster Parliament to hold London-based mining companies accountable. The evidence is clear. Mining activities across Southern Africa contribute over 760 000 TB cases every year, especially amongst mine workers and surrounding communities. These companies have profited from the lands and lives of our workers and our people. It is time for them to pay their debt. We therefore demand the creation of special reparations fund to which these mining companies must contribute ... [Inaudible.] ... of their annual profits as a TB justice levy, as a form of reparative justice for communities they have poisoned and abandoned.

President Cyril Ramaphosa must also take responsibility. As a stakeholder in several mining interests, he cannot continue to

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speak about public health while profiting from an industry that has caused one of the largest epidemics on our continent. We further highlight that the private medical aids still do not provide adequate coverage for TB, even though it is listed as a prescribed minimum benefit under South African law. Yet the Minister has failed to enforce compliance or amend the necessary regulations.

Meanwhile, the DA on the other hand, continue to fight in cause to block broader public access to health care to our people. We say enough is enough. Let this new parliamentary TB caucus not become another talking shop, another symbolic gesture. Let it become a platform for radical action where Members of Parliament fight for the lives - not headlines, for the people - not political convenience.

The MK party commits to monitoring this caucus closely. We will hold the Minister accountable for every promise made, every target missed, and every life lost. We will fight for the establishment of TB centres, for justice from mining corporations, and for laws that protect our people instead of enriching the powerful.

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Let us not only talk about ending TB, let us act. Let us act for mine worker coughing in the shaft. Let us act for the mother waiting in the clinic queue, for the child who never saw a doctor on time. The fight against TB must be a fight for health sovereignty, social justice, and restoration for dignity to every South African and for our people.

IsiZulu:

Amandla!

English:

The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon member. I thought you were going to say the MK party is going to join the TB caucus. Now you say the MK party will monitor. How? This is a parliamentary caucus. Thank you very much.

Dr K W D LE ROUX: Hon Speaker, today's topic of debate - tuberculosis - is an extremely important one. It is important because tuberculosis has consistently, year on year, been the biggest killer of South Africans. And though cardiovascular diseases such as heart attacks and strokes are now at the top of the list, TB still kills 56 000 South Africans every year, a number that has remained largely unchanged since 2015. It is

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important because TB disproportionately affects the poor and the vulnerable. It spreads most easily to people who are malnourished and immunocompromised and find themselves in overcrowded living conditions. It is important because we actually have the tools to beat TB. In most cases, it is completely curable with a six-month course of antibiotics.

So, what is going on? Why are we struggling to get on top of the TB epidemic despite making significant progress with this nasty sibling, HIV? Why do so many people still die from TB, and what can we do to improve things? As a rural doctor, TB was my bread and butter, and I've literally treated hundreds of patients with TB, many of them HIV positive. When patients presented at a hospital emaciated on the brink of death, I was always relieved when a patient was diagnosed with TB and HIV rather than cancer, because with antiretrovirals, ARVs, and TB treatment, I knew that we could get the patient better. With cancer, the prognosis was much worse.

But TB isn't always easy to diagnose definitively, and a combination of x-rays, sputum tests, and an experienced clinician is often required. Furthermore, the TB bacillus is hardy, requiring patients to consistently take treatment for at

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least six months. Without good follow-up systems and well-functioning healthcare facilities, patients often fall out of treatment, may not be cured, and even develop drug-resistant TB.

At the peak of the HIV pandemic in about 2009/2010, more than 200 000 people were dying from TB or a combination of TB and HIV every year. The massive scale-up of antiretroviral treatment has meant that the HIV positive population in South Africa has developed much better immunity, and as a result, TB incidence has gone down significantly since that peak. During the 16 years that I worked in the rural Eastern Cape, there were some notable improvements in the TB programme itself. The rollout of the much more sensitive GeneXpert testing made diagnosing patients easier and allowed for early detection of drug-resistant TB. New drugs have been developed and were added to the shortened six-months treatment regimen for people with multidrug-resistant TB, which has been life-changing for many.

Despite these improvements, until recently, the focus of Department of Health appears to have been more on the ARV programme than fighting the TB epidemic, and the data reflects this. Treatment completion rates for patients with drug-sensitive TB have remained poor at about 78%, well below the

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World Health Organisation, WHO, recommended target of 90%, and it is even worse at 58% for people with multidrug-resistant TB.

Mortality rates have remained stubbornly high, and though new TB cases have fallen, South Africa will not reach a sustainable development goals for TB by 2030. For South Africa to win the battle against TB, we will need to treat it as the emergency it is, find funding, do the basics well, and also start doing things differently.

The DA believe that the comprehensive approach, espoused by the Stop TB Partnership and the Zero TB Initiatives, will be critical to beating TB in South Africa. The comprehensive approach involves three arms: searching for TB, treating TB, and preventing TB. In the South African context, we do a reasonable job of treating patients who are diagnosed with TB, though we still have to improve our treatment success rate to 90%, as mentioned earlier. In terms of searching for TB, however, our current TB programme is extremely passive. Healthcare workers simply wait at hospitals and clinics for patients who present with TB symptoms, which delays diagnosis and puts communities at risk.

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Furthermore, the painstaking work of tracing household contacts and testing them for TB is an aspect of TB management which has been woefully neglected in South Africa. We therefore urge the Department of Health to do more to actively search for TB by firstly making widespread x-ray screening using mobile x-ray tracks available to all South Africans, especially those in high TB burden communities. The Department of Health's planning to perform 5 million TB tests this year is a laudable one, but it has to be accompanied with easily accessible and widespread x-ray testing.

Secondly, the Department of Health needs to train and use community health workers and clinic nurses to do active contact tracing of every single person diagnosed with TB. Every household contact should either have a mobile x-ray or a sputum scent, or both, so we can identify contacts with TB disease early before they have infected others. This will also assist with a third pillar of the comprehensive approach, namely prevention.

Household contacts without active TB disease should be given TB preventative treatment to eliminate latent TB infection, which could reactivate at a later stage. The widespread use of TB

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preventative treatment was shown to be extremely successful in Alaska in the 1960s and is worth emulating in South Africa.

It has been positive to see the renewed energy from the Department of Health to fight against TB through the launch of the End TB Campaign on World TB Day on 24 March this year and the Minister's announcements today. The political will and focus shown is welcome, but our TB response has to involve more than slogans and promises.

The DA believes that adopting a comprehensive strategy that invests -not only in treatment - but in active case finding and in prevention is the only approach that will drastically improve TB outcomes countrywide. TB is a national emergency. We should all start behaving as such. I thank you.

IsiZulu:

Nk N N CHIRWA-MPUNGOSE: Mabandla kaMjubane kaNdaba ...

English:

The Minister stands here today to relaunch a very progressive campaign targeting multistakeholder efforts to combat tuberculosis, which is our country's leading cause of death to

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date and often linked with HIV/Aids. It is intended to identify tuberculosis cases early through widespread testing to offer immediate treatment for those testing positive and building on HIV/Aids treatment successes to curb tuberculosis transmission and drug resistance. We hope National Treasury will provide the necessary resources to see through a success in this programme of action.

However, our concerns arise from the following, Minister. A progressive intervention in the early 2000s aimed at combatting mother-to-child transmission of HIV has sadly been reversed over the years due to government failure to maintain its successes when it comes to fighting new HIV infections today. It is a concern for us that the children who were saved from the HIV infection in 2007 are the very cohort today that dominates HIV infections in South Africa. The government of today must recognise this unfortunate regression. What was the point of preventing mother-to-child infections only for HIV/Aids to find them in their teen years and in their twenties? Why has government failed to defend these gains despite interventions available to do so?

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We truly hope that you will not compromise on access for long-acting injectable lenacapavir, like you did for post-exposure prophylaxis and pre-exposure prophylaxis, particularly for black girls in townships and rural areas. Furthermore, there is a persistent case detection failure of fully 50% of tuberculosis cases that remain undiagnosed, and this is not due to patient avoidance.

No, it is due to health system missed opportunities during clinic visits. Outdated smear microscopy that is still used in many facilities detects only 50% to 70% of cases compared to other tools of detection systems, some noted by the World Health Organisation and the Minister today. It is unrealistic to target 5 million tests annually when you rely on inconsistent diagnostics, more so in rural areas and township clinics. This leads to missed cases. It fuels transmission, especially of drug-resistant tuberculosis. These diagnostic system breakdowns affect us in high-burden provinces, like in KwaZulu-Natal. Poverty continues to be a barrier for many.

This programme of action lacks a multisectoral action plan that is inclusive of nutritional programmes. Our people do not take medication because they are hungry, literally. Poverty continues

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to be a barrier for many. This programme of action in endemic areas like Cape Town continues to fail in reducing infections as per 2025 reports. We propose the following as the EFF to ensure that this programme results in a success and not another good-on-paper but intangible programme of action of the Government of national Unity.

Enhance case detection through advanced diagnostics, replace all outdated smear microscopy, and integrate tuberculosis screening in all clinics by 2027. Invest R500 million from the 2026–27 health budget to procure relevant diagnostic systems for rural and township clinics. There is scientific evidence that modern diagnostic tools double detection rates for tuberculosis. Train 5 000 health care workers by the middle of 2026 on integrated HIV/Aids and tuberculosis protocols.

Diversify funding by increasing domestic tuberculosis budgets and engage private sector partners. Establish a R2 billion national emergency fund to offset the R8 billion US President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, PEPFAR, loss and streamline drug procurement via a centralised digital system linked to the tuberculosis dashboard. Propose a 5% increase in the health budget for 2026 that will target drugs and community programmes.

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Partner with mining companies that remain a high tuberculosis risk for R200 million annual contributions. Deploy the National Health Laboratory Service to monitor supply chains and ensure drug availability of 95% by 2027. Provide adherence support via community health care workers or even offer incentives like transport vouchers to reduce dropout rates.

Train 10 000 community health care workers by 2026 to deliver tuberculosis preventative treatment and to monitor adherence. Launch a R100 million national anti-stigma campaign that will target men who currently make up only 30% of testers. Male testing should be increased to no less than 50% for this programme to have the desired impact. Include medical geographers in this campaign who have the necessary academic tools to answer the questions of geographic domination of certain illnesses. Give our people the necessary nutrition. Not only does nutritional support assist with adherence and completion of medical treatment, but it also aids in lowering stigma.

We also call on this Parliament to ensure that this project is a cross-sectoral and cross-ministerial programme. Social Development, Basic and Higher Education, and provincial

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departments must all have their hands on deck. All provinces must consistently report on a monthly basis to a central task force that must be established by 2026 and led by the Minister of Health.

Lastly, concede to the proposal by the EFF and open our clinics seven days a week and 24 hours a day. Tuberculosis does not operate within working hours. Once you divorce yourselves from undermining our proposals, our country will progress, and our health justice will be a reality that is guaranteed in this lifetime.

Ms N H MHLONGO: Hon Deputy Speaker, tuberculosis remains one of the leading causes of death in South Africa. This remains a great concern for the IFP, given that millions lose their lives, and many more suffer daily from this preventable and curable disease. The IFP notes the current unfavourable economic climate, which may limit the financial capacity to combat this disease.

However, given the magnitude and the highly contentious nature of the disease, it is in the interest of everyone to contribute to the fight against tuberculosis. Without targeted

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interventions, we are fighting a losing battle. Townships, public transport spaces, workplaces, and schools are high-risk spaces for the spread of this disease. These areas must be prioritised for comprehensive awareness campaigns and health drives that include mobile clinics for testing and early diagnosis.

Furthermore, to strengthen the fight against tuberculosis, collaboration between the government, traditional leaders, the private sector, and civil society is crucial. Employers, transport operators, and educational institutions should partner with the Department of Health to integrate regular tuberculosis screening and educational initiatives in their daily operations. For example, workplace wellness programmes, school health campaigns, and taxi rank partnerships could ensure consistent outreach, early detection, and community ownership of tuberculosis-prevention efforts. The IFP believes that medication alone will not win this war. We must re-evaluate our strategies that we have used previously or have employed in the battle against tuberculosis.

Moreover, a disease as fatal as tuberculosis, despite being curable, cannot be addressed only during the commemoration of

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World Tuberculosis Day. What is needed is a relentless daily campaign across multiple platforms to remind people of the symptoms to watch for, the importance of early detection, and the risk posed to both the individual and the community when treatment is delayed.

The IFP further notes with concern the high treatment dropout rate among tuberculosis patients. If we are to tell a true good story about collaboration in the fight against tuberculosis, one of the key measures of success must be ensuring that every patient completes their full course of treatment to achieve full recovery. Therefore, we support the relaunch of Parliament's tuberculosis caucus conditionally.

In conclusion, the fight against tuberculosis demands more than medical solutions. It requires unity of purpose, innovation, and community-driven action. I thank you.

Ms S M PETERS: Deputy Speaker and hon members, tuberculosis is not a disease of the past. It is killing more people today than ever before, yet it is curable. What it demands is not only new science but renewed solidarity.

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The relaunch of Parliament's tuberculosis caucus is more than symbolic. It is a call to action – a call for every one of us to use our voice, our influence, and our power to ensure no one dies from a disease we already know how to defeat. This fight cannot be won in isolation. It will take collaboration across parties, across ministries, and across nations. Together, we can turn political commitment into concrete change and action, but it demands sustained funding to strengthen health care infrastructure, research, and innovation. At the same time, we need to alleviate poverty, which is the main driver of tuberculosis infections.

Let us make this the Parliament that ends tuberculosis through unity, urgency, and unwavering focus and will. The time for action is now. Thank you, Deputy Speaker.

Mr P A VAN STADEN: Deputy Speaker, in July 2025, during the tuberculosis vaccine preparedness workshop held in Johannesburg, the Minister emphasised the urgent need for innovative solutions to combat tuberculosis. The Minister further announced that the next phase will introduce preventative tuberculosis vaccination measures, which will also strengthen the ongoing fight against HIV/Aids.

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Yet here we are today. Many South Africans remain sceptical about vaccines that are presented as cures for certain diseases – a sentiment that is understandable given how events unfolded during the COVID-19 period. Many also believe that vaccinations should not be made mandatory and that individuals should retain the right to choose whether or not to receive them. This perspective deserves careful consideration, as we are, after all, a democratic state where people are entitled to their constitutional rights.

We take note that the SA Tuberculosis Caucus is not an official parliamentary body but rather a network of politicians from across all political parties. Its purpose is to raise awareness among constituencies, engage with the media, monitor health funding and programme performance, advocate for legislation that supports health care, and hold government accountable for fulfilling its tuberculosis-related commitments.

The FF Plus raised an important issue during the Portfolio Committee on Health's five-year strategic planning workshop held in September earlier this year. The party emphasised that the Ministry should provide the committee with regular updates on international meetings and treaties. It is essential that

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members receive adequate information on these engagements, as well as on developments related to international health regulations. We also need to be kept informed about the international health agenda and the discussions taking place. This is essential for us to update our constituencies and the public on international programmes and deliberations, ensuring that misunderstandings are avoided and that public input on these matters is heard and considered.

It is equally important that South Africa's sovereignty is safeguarded in the signing of any such treaties.

Afrikaans:

Ons is een van 30 lande in die wêreld met 'n hoë tuberkulose-koers. Slegs 2,7 miljoen mense is gedurende 2023 getoets in hierdie land. Die Wêreldgesondheidsorganisasie se hoofdoel is om tuberkulose toetse te vermeder na ongeveer 5 miljoen mense en, deur dit te bereik, kan dit 'n afname van tot 29% in die verskyning van tuberkulose en 'n vermindering van 41% in sterftes teen 2035 tot gevolg hê.

Ons moet egter daarteen waak om slegs staat te maak op internasionale befondsing, ongeag watter instansie of regering

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hierdie projekte befonds. Ek neem kennis dat die Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation ook hierby betrokke is. Ons kan nie weer onkant gevang word soos met die onttrekking van Pepfar-fondse vroeër vanjaar nie. Baie dankie, Adjunkspeaker.

Mr A D BEESLEY: Deputy Speaker, South Africa still faces one of the highest tuberculosis burdens globally, with around 270 000 new cases and over 50 000 deaths each year from a disease that is both preventable and curable. Tuberculosis remains our leading infectious killer driven by poverty, poor living conditions and HIV.

Action SA welcomes the launch of Parliament's TB Caucus and the Minister's focus on collaboration, data and accountability. However, treatment alone will not free us from this crisis. Prevention must be at the heart of our TB response. We cannot treat our way how to, we must stop the disease before it starts. That means addressing the environment that allows TB to thrive. As long as millions live in overcrowded informal settlements with poor ventilation and sanitation, we will not overcome this epidemic. These are not mere realities, they are policy failures.

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We commend the dedication of health workers and officials but remain concerned about the silence structural and policy issues that weaken our health system and entrench inequality. Ending TB requires more than medicine. It demands housing, nutrition, education and economic opportunity – the foundations of human dignity.

The relaunch of the TB caucus must not a ceremonial. It must drive real leadership, oversight and measurable action. Tuberculosis is beatable, but only through prevention, collaboration, accountability and a relentless focus on improving living conditions for all South Africans. I thank you.

Mr W M THRING: Deputy Speaker, the ACDP notes that South Africa's TB response reflects collaboration between the Department of Health, the National Institute for Communicable Diseases and the National Health Laboratory Service, aiming to reduce TB incidence and mortality by 2035, with a target of testing some five million people annually. This ambition is technologically bold yet institutionally fragile. Clearly, the relaunch of Parliament's TB Caucus must confront entrenched failures in oversight, funding, transparency and rural health equity.

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The ACDP welcomes the Minister's recent launch of the real time TB Dashboard to track provincial testing and mortality data. However, we note that it mirrors the electronic vaccination data system from which relevant departments failed to extract lessons on data integrity and rural service gaps.

The ACDP is aware that Parliament's TB Caucus aligned with the Global TB Caucus seeks to mobilise Members of Parliament's, MPs', in advocacy, yet its voluntary nature and lack of implementation teeth risk rendering it symbolic. The ACDP agrees that regrettably there has not been an adequate delegation of provincial disparities in TB outcomes especially in underresourced districts. Critics continue to call for performance linked funding, auditable health metrics and enforceable provincial accountability. None of which are embedded in the caucus's relaunch.

Additionally, public commentary has questioned the silence on TB related corruption and the absence of whistle-blower protection in health oversight legislation. As kingdom builders, the ACDP commits to fight the spread of tuberculosis but cautions against government overreach like we saw with the irrational, and some would say, illegal COVID mandates. We must ensure that medical

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interventions to fight TB like the promising M72 vaccine must continue to go through the vigorous scientific medical and peer review processes, unlike the interventions used under emergency authorisation during COVID. I thank you.

Mr N L S KWANKWA: Hon Deputy Speaker, we have on numerous occasions deliberated upon strategies to combat TB in South Africa. We have set up numerous TB prevention task teams and also had countless promises and plans in the House to cure this disease, yet it remains prevalent in many of our communities and continues to be the largest killer of South Africans.

The UDM is of the view that if we are not careful this caucus is likely to produce the same rhetoric and is likely to do little to solve the issue unless basic foundations of health care delivery in South Africa are addressed. For example, the situation in the Eastern Cape is very dire. According to the human rights organisation section 27 in communities such as Ngqeleni, Tshezi, Folokwe and Mgojweni in the former Transkei areas, residents walk long distances across Kouga River and navigate thick bushes to reach the nearest clinic in Kanya Village, which is about 15 km from them. For over a decade they have petitioned for a clinic of their own, but to no avail.

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Across the province and many parts of the country hospitals and clinics remain under resourced, ambulances are scarce and health care workers cars are overstretched. Therefore, it is no surprise that the province, in particular, carries one of the highest TB burdens in the country. The problem facing the country in this regard is largely one of implementation and integrity rather than a policy one.

The National Strategic Plan for HIV, TB, and STIs 2023-2028, for example, provides a framework but will probably never see it go from ideation to full implementation as billions meant for health care are siphoned away through corruption. Recently, we had all heard about the R2 billion that was stolen from Tembisa Hospital and the multimillion rand fraud that occurred at the Inkosi Albert Luthuli Central Hospital in Durban regarding the supply of medical equipment. While these crimes unfolded precious lives that could have been saved were lost due to greed.

Even though the approach will obviously need to be evaluated due to evolving times, educational health promotions like the Soul Buddyz must return. They must deliver targeted messages on prevention, adherence and early detection. The Wide Ward-Based

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Primary Health Care Outreach Team programme must also be strengthened and expanded. This programme could mirror the community health worker model rolled out in countries such as Ethiopia in the early 2000s. Such models would help us in areas such as the Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality, BCM, and many other municipalities in the country that are struggling with these problems.

Digital health care systems should also be implemented across facilities. They will improve record keeping ... [Time expired.]

IsiXhosa:

Enkosi, mama.

Xitsonga:

Tat S M GANA: Mutshamaxitulu na Holobye Motsoaledi...

English:

... as Rise Mzansi we commend you for shining the light on the public health crisis, that is TB, in South Africa. Through the End TB campaign, you have refocused the energy on this crisis. We also support the recent launch of the TB testing dashboard which represents a significant step in ensuring that policy-

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makers and health care workers have real time data to base their decisions on.

Over the last year, as you know, I have worked tirelessly to raise awareness of the public health crisis that we face in gambling addictions. Today, I join you in putting the spotlight on the TB public health crisis in South Africa. As Rise Mzansi we support the relaunch of the Parliament's TB Caucus.

Similar to how poverty, unemployment and lack of regulatory controls have left South Africans exposed to the gambling crisis, HIV, diabetes, stigma and lack of awareness have resulted in South Africans being particularly vulnerable to the risk of TB. The impact has been devastating. Tuberculosis has left young children often, families without their breadwinners and lives cut short before they properly began.

Every year over 270 000 people develop TB in South Africa. Every year TB claims the lives of 56 000 children, mothers, fathers, brothers and sisters. This is a crisis, and one that exacerbated further by the prevalence of people living with HIV and diabetes in our country. Despite this we know that about half of people with active TB are never officially diagnosed because they show

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no symptoms. Lack of awareness and prevailing stigma mean that people who show no symptoms are never screened, and they unknowingly continue to spread the diseases to others.

We also recognise the incredible work that is done by researchers in South Africa to better understand TB in all its forms, to develop better treatments and develop vaccines for all. South Africa leads the world TB research, and we must continue to support and celebrate the strides made through their research. Let our fight against TB showcase what we as South Africans are capable of. Let us channel that same energy, care and resources into the fight against gambling in South Africa. Let us join hands in ensuring that every public health crisis receives the attention it deserves.

Xitsonga:

Ndza khensa, Mutshamaxitulu.

Dr M A MAIMANE: Hon Deputy Speaker, hon members, Minister and fellow Soth Africans ...

Setswana:

... багаetsho dumelang.

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English:

As BOSA, I want to affirm, Minister, we welcome your statement and initiatives to prevent and limit TB in our country. What is absolutely true is that in one year, 56 000 citizens are being killed by TB. More than half of the deaths are people living with HIV, showing how TB and HIV are intertwined and central to any conversation about public health care. However, hon members, I think we can announce as many initiatives as possible and have as many programmes as possible, but I really genuinely want to speak about the things that undermine our ability to deliver on those programmes. The first is, it is clear and common cause in South Africa we live with a two-tiered health system. One where the majority of citizens are heavily dependent on the state, and a few and a minority are dependent on the private sector. Ultimately, if we are going to achieve a sense upon which we collectively fight, is it not about time that we become more urgent about delivering on universal health care for all?

Secondly, it is common cause the fact that we are never going to win until the evil of corruption that is ravaging our hospitals is not dealt with. It should shame every single one of us as to what took place in Tembisa, and we cannot afford it to continue under our watch. Also, the same could potentially be happening

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at other hospitals, and therefore, hon members, those who are driving around in Maseratis, those who have looted through tenders, are the ones equally so who should be held responsible for every life we lose in Tembisa through TB. Thirdly, and most crucially, hon members, I genuinely believe that the sooner we deal with this issue of how we digitise our tender system, we can then begin to adequately deal with prevention, ensuring that every tender is digitally accounted for, so that we do not have the levels of corruption that we are seeing at hospitals, even such as in Tembisa.

Fellow South Africans, the fourth intervention I want to highlight is the notion of how we deal with primary health care. Our clinics need to be the focus of funding. We need to ensure that every South African is within a walking distance to a healthcare facility where they can get thorough diagnosis, and as the Minister speaks about a vaccine, we can have that administered right there closer to the people. Often, when I have been on site to hospitals, we discover quite quickly that the fault lines lie often in primary health care. So, Minister, I want to assure you that the fight for higher funding into the public health care is one that I join, so that we can ensure that the patient-to-doctor ratios and the nurses-to-patients

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ratio is continually declining. Let us do more than talk. Let s act to protect the poor, certainly in a time such as this one.

Setswana:

Ke a leboga, bagolo.

English:

Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Let me just make sure whether there is an ATM speaker, ATM.

IsiXhosa:

Nksk T MARAWU: Sekela Somlomo, siyiATM siyalwamkela olu nyawo lunenkqubela engaka oluza noMphathiswa, phofu ingelilo elokuqala. Akukhonto ibuhlungu apha ebomini njengokusweleka kwabantu bebulawa sisifo esinako ukunyangeka. Kungoko ke thina siyiATM sisithi ...

English:

... this move is a very progressive one, but it needs enough budget from the Treasury; it needs integrated approach with

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social development in terms of poverty alleviation programmes, because ...

IsiXhosa:

... ngelinye ixesha aba bantu baswelekiswa kungaseli iipilisi kuba belambile. Kungoko ke sisithi ...

English:

... the integrated approach ...

IsiXhosa:

... iiklinikhi ezilalini ezineziseko ezaneleyo zokuvavanya sona esi sifo sephepha zibalulekile. Umgama ohanjwa ngabantu ukuya kufumana iinkonzo zempilo kufuneka uqwalaselwe. Loo nto iya kwenza ukuba yonke le nkqubo yoMphathiswa iphumelele. Kungoko ke sisithi, masibambisane sonke ukuqinisekisa ukuba ezi zinto ziyenzeka ukuze kunciphe inani labantu abasutywa kukufa ngenxa yesifo esikwaziyo ukuba sinyangeke. Enkosi, ndiyabulela.

Mr I ISMAIL-MOOSA: Hon Deputy Speaker, Al Jama-Ah commends government for having made significant progress in controlling tuberculosis for the past 10 years. We have further seen a commendable increase in treatment coverage. However, TB remains

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a huge health challenge for South Africa with a slow decline rate in TB-related deaths. The fact that many households still face challenges in accessing care and still living in abject poverty, a major contributor to the high TB rate. Al Jama-Ah congratulate government on the relaunch of Parliament's TB caucus, bearing the severity of the 56 000 deaths caused by TB every year. We challenge Parliament to highlight TB at more parliamentary sittings. We must stop people from dying of TB and those co-infected with HIV. It is a disease which is curable, but yet of those infected, very few are successfully treated every year.

The department's National Tuberculosis, NTB, campaign, must be intensified. On this point, I must applaud the department's campaign as it is active and as seen at the recently held Paarl Muslim Jamaah's, PMJ, annual Boland Festival, which drew more than 30 000 people over a weekend. It had a TB awareness programme and festival goers were from other Boland towns and the Mother City. Al Jama-Ah calls on the department to invest more in such awareness campaigns. This shows that TB does not only affect the disadvantaged communities, but everyone is susceptible to contracting the disease. The public must be made aware that they too play a crucial role in prevention of TB.

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They must be aware to recognise symptoms, be encouraged to do testing, to complete treatment and not to see it as a stigma. Along with government and its entities, we all have a collective responsibility to stop TB infections and spread thereof.

To effectively ensure a successive rate in controlling the spread of TB, Al-Jama-Ah calls on government to implement the following: Stronger social protection programmes to strengthen the resilience of families affected by TB; TB patients must be provided with nutritious food without burdening the household income; social protection be extended to the household and not only the TB patient. Should the TB patient be eligible for a grant, that the situation of the household be taken into consideration in addition to that of the patient. Al Jama-Ah supports the department's call to encourage Members of Parliament to include awareness to stop the TB epidemic in their political campaigns. We must all, at all times, be building a caring society together. Malibongwe! [Praise!] Thank you.

Ms S T XEGO: Hon Deputy Speaker, Ministers and Deputy Ministers, Members of Parliament, our guests, fellow South Africans, good afternoon. Today marks a significant milestone in our ongoing fight against tuberculosis.

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As we relaunched Parliament's tuberculosis, TB Caucus, this initiative is not just a parliamentary event, it is a renewed commitment to the health and well-being of every South African. Tuberculosis is more than a medical condition. It is a mirror reflecting our country's history, our social and economic realities, and the persistent inequalities that continue to shape our society.

The story of TB in South Africa is deeply intertwined with our past. In the late 1800s, as South Africa's mining industry grew, TB became known as a miner's disease. Poor working conditions, inadequate ventilation, and overcrowding made miners vulnerable.

These conditions were not accidental. They were the result of a system that valued profit over people. And that legacy continues to affect us today. Tuberculosis is not just a health issue. It is a social, economic, and moral issue. It thrives in poverty and overcrowding, and its impact extends far beyond the clinic.

Historically, South Africa has contributed significantly to the regional TB burden, especially through migrant labour in the mining sector. Tuberculosis spreads easily, affecting families and communities, and it cannot be defeated by medical

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intervention alone. As we relaunched Parliament's TB Caucus, we must remember the words of President Nelson Mandela spoken on World TB Day.

The key to controlling TB is to raise awareness about its symptoms and encourage sufferers to seek treatment. It is to ensure that patients follow the full course of medication for the prescribed period. Tuberculosis patients who are taking their treatment can live and work safely in the community. They need and deserve our support as they journey towards recovery.

Tuberculosis, like other epidemics, knows no boundaries. All nations and communities need to join hands to fight the disease. This is our challenge and our opportunity as parliamentarians. As public representatives, we must bridge gaps in TB prevention and care, raise awareness, strengthen the link from diagnosis to treatment, and ensure no patient is left behind.

Our mission is to mobilise the entire society towards a TB-free South Africa. Let us be clear, TB must be treated as a societal matter. The fight against TB requires a coordinated action across government, civil society, and the private sector.

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It demands ongoing commitment to programmes that reach the most vulnerable, and it calls for innovation in research, including development of a new vaccine and medical advances.

Parliamentarians have a vital role to play. We must be ambassadors, educating our communities, coordinating efforts, and fighting the stigma that still surrounds TB.

We must support government and researchers who are working tirelessly to find new solutions. We must ensure that the needs of the most affected guide our policies and programmes. Let us also recognise the importance of international corroboration. Tuberculosis knows no borders, and our efforts must be part of a global movement to end the disease. By working together, sharing knowledge, supporting research, we can accelerate progress and bring hope to millions.

In closing, I call on every member of this House and every South African to join hands in the fight against TB. Let us honour the legacy of those who have suffered, let us build a future where TB is no longer a threat to our people. Together, we can achieve a TB-free South Africa, a TB-free Africa, and a TB-free world. I thank you very much.

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The MINISTER OF HEALTH: Chairperson, I was definitely around; it was just a call of nature. Hon members, I think it shows why it was important for us to launch this campaign so that members can be abreast with events because I realise that there's a lot of knowledge gap.

Hon Motubatse, from the MK party, you spoke with a lot of courage, and it shows that you want TB to come to an end.

But I think you have got a lot of gaps. Firstly, you say the MK party won't stop fighting for special TB centres, etc. Where are you going to get them? Nobody in the world is still doing that, man. We stopped that 30 years ago. We are no longer using TB hospitals. They are not used anywhere in the world. We discourage them because we want to treat people in communities.

Yes, part of the reason is because two most important things is that we're diagnosing TB early. I've just told you when I was standing here that it used to take six weeks to diagnose TB. It takes two hours now because of the advances in technology and we're the first country to introduce GeneXpert.

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Secondly, the modern treatments ensure that within a few days you are no longer infective. Tuberculosis hospitals were because we wanted to take people away from communities because they were infecting them. It's no longer like that because the world has got very advanced treatment. So, we're not going to open any TB hospital. Please stop that campaign and direct it somewhere. It's not worth it. And the world will be very surprised to hear you saying that. It's not worth it.

Then the issue regarding reparation, hon Motubatse, I don't know how you missed this, but reparation I like because, yes, in 1980, around the 80s, 80% of the world's gold came from South Africa, but we paid the price with TB because it's mostly gold mines that produce TB because of silica dust. But this thing did not stop.

You would remember that there was a class action to litigate all the mine owners, especially those who produce gold, to reparate and pay mine workers starting from 1960 and not only for South Africa, but for the whole of South African Development Community, SADC.

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We called the mining companies. We called them. I facilitated that meeting and asked them that they must negotiate this issue and not go to court because they were not going to win. And together, they put up what we call a Tshiamiso Trust, this fund called a reparation fund has been in existence for a long time. We started a long time ago in 2015.

We even called in a meeting facilitated by Mr Kgalema Motlanthe when he was still Deputy President. We called Ministers of mining, finance, and around SADC. We met in Braamfontein, and we told them about this. And the mining companies agreed. It might not be enough, but they put together R5 billion as a reparation fund.

We now have a job to find all the people who came to work in South Africa from 1960 and contracted TB. We are looking for them in Botswana, Mozambique. We even opened special centres in Mozambique to look for those people. Our problem now is finding them.

Out of the R5 billion that was put together, we said the lawyers must stand aside because otherwise they were going to take all the money. We gave them R300 million for their administrative

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work. Now, our struggle is to find people. There is still R2 billion left in Tshiamiso Fund waiting for people who are going to claim that money. And unfortunately, we can't find them because 1960 is too far.

Hon Chirwa, we no longer diagnose TB with microscopy. It was happening when I was still a medical student. We are using GeneXpert and molecular. Long ago, yes, I used to peep in a microscope. We don't do that anymore because we have advanced.

And the issue of prevention of mother-to-child transmission, PMTCT, in 2004, there were 70 000 children born with human immunodeficiency virus, HIV positive. We have brought that number down to 7 000 because of the successful mother-to-child transmission. So please, hon members, let's fight this TB together and forget about which party we belong to.

Thank you.

**CONSIDERATION OF RECOMMENDATION OF PERSONS TO FILL THREE
VACANCIES ON ELECTORAL COMMISSION**

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Mr M S CHABANE: Hon Deputy Speaker and hon members, last week this House reflected on the 2024 national and provincial elections tabled by the Portfolio Committee on Home Affairs. This provided an opportunity to assess the performance of the Independent Electoral Commission and its leadership under the guidance of the collective of commissioners. We, in this House, identified both the success achieved and the challenges encountered. This House has provided clear recommendations for the way forward.

Parliament has deliberately chosen to stagger the tenure of the Independent Electoral Commission, IEC, commissioners to avoid the wholesale changes that could result in the loss of valuable institutional knowledge. This staggered approach ensure the retention of leadership experience and institutional memory within the commission and instituting task with determining policy and overseeing difficult effectiveness or implementation of operational and logistical functions as outlined by the Electoral Commission Act.

As guided by the Act, the panel chaired by the Chief Justice of South Africa, comprising of the Chairperson of the Human Rights Commission, the Commission for Gender Equality and the Public

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Protector, initiated the process to fill the three vacancies arising in November 2025. The public nominated candidates who were interviewed by this panel was constituted in terms of section 6(3) of the Electoral Commissions Act of 1996. Following the interviews, the Chief Justice submitted a shortlist of eight candidates together with their curriculum vitae and recommendation to the Speaker of the National Assembly for consideration.

The Portfolio Committee of Home Affairs upon receiving this request resolved to nominate the three candidates to fill the IEC vacancies. In his deliberations, the committee applied clear set of criteria which included amongst others; the experience of individual candidates, leadership abilities, technical competency, the stability on the cohesion of the commission, gender representative and racial diversity. The committee accepted all eight recommended names and expressed confidence in their suitability to occupy these critical positions.

In the process of identifying the three candidates as required, members held different views during the deliberations, acknowledging that the commission required capable and experienced individuals who can safeguard and advance our

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democracy. The committee took note of the Chief Justice panel recommendation to each candidate. However, consensus was reached on Ms Joyce Pitso as a first nominee and voting was conducted for the remaining two position after deliberation, resulting in the selection of Judge Dhaya Pillay and Mr Mosotho Moepya as the additional nominees.

During the deliberations, the committee noted with concern of under representation of the youth and persons living with disability in the selection process undertaken by the panel. Accordingly, the portfolio committee recommends that section 6(3) of the Electoral Commission Act be amended to include the National Youth Development Agency in the interview panel for IEC commissions appointments in future. Ms Joyce Pitso is deeply rooted in civil society and has extensive experience in observing elections internationally. Her role in the Southern African Development Community, SADC, and the United Nations, UN, will bring valuable perspective in The SA electoral system.

Judge Pillay has wide experience in the electoral spheres and judicial experience in the Labour Court, High Court and the Constitutional Court. He has served at the commission for seven years. Mr Mosotho Moepya having served the IEC in various

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disciplines over a period of 27 years, his experience was demonstrated at the testing period during the 2021 COVID-19 elections, presiding over the 2024 elections on the new electoral regime, a former president of the well-election body and currently chairperson of the Election-Commission Forum in the SADC.

The two returning commissioners would ensure continuity and retention of critical institutional analogy while the new commissioner will bring fresh perspective and innovation inside to strengthen the commission. The IEC has consistently demonstrated its resilience under the leadership of commissioners. The addition of these recommended commissioners will further consolidate the capacity and enhance election work in the current complex electoral landscape. The portfolio committee hereby, therefore, submit this report for consideration and approval by this House.

Xitsonga:

Ndza khensa.

Declaration(s) of vote:

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Mr A C ROOS: Deputy Speaker, today we are called upon to fill three upcoming vacancies in one of the most vital institutions of our democracy, the Electoral Commission of South Africa. The DA supports the nomination of Judge Dhaya Pillay, Mr Mosotho Moepya and Ms Joyce Pitso to fill the three vacancies.

Before we turn to the merits of these candidates, we must first address the unsubstantiated falsehoods being peddled in this House. We have heard some members claim alleged election rigging of the 2024 elections. Let us be absolutely clear. Those allegations were taken to court and then withdrawn, withdrawn because there was no evidence.

In fact, the Electoral Commission wanted to proceed with the matter to hear the claims and see the evidence to address the matters raised. However, the claims that were made so loudly in the media were not supported by evidence. If those parties truly believed their own accusations they would have pursued them. Instead, they quietly withdrew their case and now seek to mislead Parliament to score political points.

In the committee it was then claimed that Mr Moepya and Judge Pillay should not be reappointed because of alleged failures to

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oversee free and fair elections. It is disgraceful to attack the integrity of the Independent Electoral Commission, IEC, and its commissioners without evidence because when you do that, you don't just harm the individuals and their reputation, you undermine the very institution charged with free and fair elections.

Deputy Speaker, the facts are these; a panel chaired by the Chief Justice including the heads of the Human Rights Commission, the Commission for Gender Equality and the Public Protector, ran a transparent and independent process to find suitable candidates. They received 77 applications, shortlisted and interviewed candidates publicly and recommended eight names to Parliament. Among them were Judge Pillay, Mr Moepya and Ms Pitso, all of whom were found suitable and qualified.

Mr Mosotho Moepya, the outgoing chairperson, has led the IEC through perhaps the most complex election in our democratic history, the 2024 national and provincial elections. He guided the commission through new territory with independent candidates contesting the national and provincial elections for the first time. Those elections were declared by both local and international observers as free, fair and credible. That is the

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real record of his leadership not the baseless claims now being recycled by sole losers.

Judge Dhaya Pillay brings a wealth of judicial experience from the Labour Court, the High Court and the Constitutional Court. She has shown both a strong grasp of law, a passion for dispute resolution and efficiency in the IEC's operations. Her judicial background ensures that the commission remains rooted in fairness and constitutional principle.

Ms Joyce Pitso represents renewal and innovation. With her extensive experience in the IEC, observing elections across Africa and through the United Nations and her experience with electronic voting systems, she will bring international best practice and a deep understanding of voter participation and electoral technologies. The selection panel described her as, and I quote: "An outstanding candidate." Her unanimous support in this committee is well deserved. Her energy and passion for electoral reform will strengthen the Commission's ability to modernise and reconnect with voters, especially the youth.

The IEC faces major challenges: Restoring trust, tackling voter apathy and preparing for the next elections in a coalition era.

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To succeed, it needs continuity, institutional knowledge and fresh ideas not political theatre. That is exactly what Pillay, Moepya and Pitso bring to the table. The judicial integrity of Judge Pillay, the institutional experience of Mr Moepya and the innovation and energy of Ms Pitso. Together, they form a strong and balanced team to contribute to the commission and take it to the next chapter of our democracy. Let us build and strengthen our institutions because when our institutions are run by capable and committed South Africans, our democracy stands with them. I thank you.

Mr J S NGUBANE: Hon House Chairperson, before I get on to my speech, let me emphasize, the election was rigged. The election was rigged! The transparency is being denied.

The MK party rises as an Official Opposition to defend something far bigger than party interest. The integrity of our vote. An election is an only legitimate if citizens trust the referee. In South Africa the referee is the electoral commissions not the independent but the electoral commission because this electoral commission is no longer independent. If the referee is compromised or even seen to be compromised, our democracy bleeds confidence and participation.

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Let us be clear about the stakes. The Independent Electoral Commission, IEC's record is not spotless. In the *Electoral Commission v Mhlophe* in 2016, the Constitutional Court held that the commission failed to obtain and record voters addresses as required, a lapse so serious the court had to craft a remedy to prevent mis disenfranchisement that is not a footnote but a constitutional sensor of the very institution we are told to trust.

When the panel asked Mr Moepya about this, he was a denialist in the interview. It is on the transcript of the panel. Fast-forward to 2021, the new Voter Management Devices, VMD, buckled during a key registration weekend. The IEC itself acknowledged mapping failures on the devices. Those same system failures carried to 2024 with research and election watch bodies warning about device errors and human factor risk when technology that underpins the role and special voting stumbles public confidence takes a heat.

During the 2024 national and provincial election the results portal leader board went dark for roughly two hours in the middle of counting. Before the IEC restored it and insisted that glitches did not affect results, parties lodged hundreds and

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hundreds of objections, the IEC pressed ahead to declare elections on schedule.

You cannot run a democracy on trust us, while the score board blanks out, and objections pile up. Transparency must be earned in real time not explained after hours. The ANC has failed dismally on being transparent with the IEC.

Hon House Chairperson, the MK party's own experience under-course the problem. In 2024 the IEC pushed legal processes that directly shaped the participation of our leadership and candidates. First losing in the Electoral Court then persisting all the way to the Constitutional Court. Whether one agrees with the ultimate Constitutional Court outcome or not the perception is lethal. Too many South Africans now believe the IEC moves in political synchrony with the ANC and pursues that favours the establishment. A referee cannot be prosecutor and a player. And certainly not proxy for any party. This is not personalities it is about the patterns.

There is a lot that the panel said against especial one candidate. We support other candidates. We support Mrs Pitso and we even support Judge Pillay, but we hate people who just sit

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there and being deadwood, denialists no transparency and does not accept faults and the panel said do not offer any solutions.

As the MK party we reject this report because these people are now denialists. They are hogging the political power. [Time expired.]

Mr T P MOGALE: Hon House Chairperson, we want to state from the outset that the EFF supported the name of Mrs Pitso and rejected the names of Mr Mosotho Moepya and Judge Pillay. These two names were supported by the ANC and its Government of National Unity, GNU, partner the DA and the IFP.

Although the EFF has never contested the outcome of any election, we have consistently raised concerns about the Independent Electoral Commission, IEC, glaring failures. From the dysfunctional Voter Management Devices, VMDs, to its inability to register more voters and the consistent discrepancies in the capturing of results slips where votes are swapped to the benefit of the DA and the ANC.

In our postelection audit, we discovered more cases of EFF votes being wrongly captured by the IEC across the country, while the

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DA and the ANC were allocated more votes than they received. When we raised these discrepancies in the capturing process, they are dismissed with arrogance.

If this is not attended to, it has the potential to plunge this country in serious postelection violence. We have never remained silence when the ANC deployed questionable individuals such as Mashinini, Tlakula, Jeanette Love and now Mosotho Moepya and Judge Pillay to the IEC. Our rejection of Mr Moepya and Judge Pillay is based on the findings contained in the Panel Report Chaired by the Chief Justice.

Regarding Mr Moepya, the panel stated that the panel was concerned that he came across as defensive and would not admit any weaknesses when asked about the challenges within the institution. It further observed that Mr Moepya, briskly suggestions made by another candidate on improving the commission system. Appear to lack the willingness to accept the inputs of others and the soft skills of empathy and sensitivity required in a leader.

The panel concluded that it was concerned that Mr Moepya, could not put forward any ideas on how to address institutional

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weaknesses including the well documented voter apathy in the country.

Regarding Judge Pillay, the panel noted that it was rather concerned by her defensiveness and reluctant to admit the challenges within the IEC during her tenure her position relating to the diversity of South Africa and dealing with voter apathy was not entirely satisfactory. The panel was clear that these two candidates would not offer any meaningful solutions to address the growing problem of voter apathy and the high number of unregistered eligible voters.

South Africans must question why the ANC and its GNU partners chose the least recommended individuals and ignore the highly skilled individuals like Mr Abrahams.

Parliament must not ignore or second guess the Chief Justice and her panel as we did not directly interview the candidates ourselves. We reject this report! [Time expired.]

Ms B E MACHI: Hon House Chairperson, when South Africans cast their votes in 2024 national and provincial elections, they were not only entrusting political parties with the responsibility to

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govern but were also expressing their confidence in the Independent Electoral Commission, IEC's processes and the integrity of our electoral systems. Therefore, the appointment of commissioners who are truly fit for purpose is a matter of national importance, one that demands integrity and a firm commitment to impartiality over partisanship. Thus, the issue before us is not just about appointments. It is about safeguarding of our democracy.

The iec stands as a guardian of our people's voices. Any weakness in its structures, strict public distract elections. Voter confidence in the IEC has declined over recent years particularly among the youth. This growing lack of voter apathy must concern us all.

The IFP therefore welcomes the recommendations to include the National Youth Development Agency, NYDA, in the future selection panels. Youth and persons with disabilities must see themselves reflected in the nation's democratic institutions. In light of issues raised, the IFP supports this report. I thank you.

Mr P A VAN STADEN: Hon House Chairperson, in April 2025, the Office of the Chief Justice published a notice calling for

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nominations to fill three vacancies of the Independent Electoral Commission, IEC. The initial deadline for submissions was set for 16 May but was later extended to 6 June. In a statement issued on 18 June the Office of the Chief Justice announced that the selection panel Chaired by the Chief Justice includes the chairperson of the SA Human Rights Commission, the chairperson of the Commission of Gender Equality and the Public Protector.

The panel compound the shortlist of the 12 candidates to be interviewed. Members of the public were invited to submit comments on the suitability of the shortlisted candidates by the ninth of July.

The report before us shows that after the interviews were concluded the Chief Justice submitted the shortlist of eight candidates to Parliament for consideration. The Portfolio Committee on Home Affairs accepted all eight names of these candidates. Although all candidates have met the required standards it is the responsibility of this House to appoint three candidates as commissioners.

The FFPlus agrees with the committee that the responsibility of the commission demand experience and capable individuals.

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Just last Thursday this House debated the serious problems that occurred within the IEC during the 2024 national and provincial elections. Issues that caused great frustration amongst voters. The FFPlus made it clear last week that it cannot and must not allow that the public to lose confidence in our democratic system and that we must do everything in our power to see to it that the IEC perform its duties without any complications and that experienced and capable appointments be made to fulfil these duties. I thank you, House Chairperson.

Ms M P KOBE: Hon House Chair, Action SA welcomes the opportunity to engage the recommendations for the appointment at the Independent Electoral Commission, IEC. We recognise the integrity of the process led by the Chief Justice and the Multi-Institutional Panel, which ensured that merit, experience and ethical fitness remain central to these deliberations. We note the committee's efforts to ensure experienced leadership and technical competence while striving for representativity that mirrors our democracy.

In this spirit, Action SA strongly supports Mrs Joyce Pitso, whose credentials reflect the grounded, capable and ethical leadership that the IEC urgently requires. Mrs Pitso embodies

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administrative discipline, impartiality and a commitment to service that can restore the commission's credibility. She represents the generational and gender renewal that South Africans have long called for. We also acknowledge the experience of other nominees, particularly Judge Pillay, whose judicial insight and principles record are beyond question. Yet, renewal cannot be continuity for its own sake. The moment demands new thinking, independence and a visible break from practises that have eroded public trust.

Ensuring continued faith in the IEC begins with cleansing it of political capture and entrenched ANC cadres. It is in this spirit that we must register our disappointment at the prospect of Mr Mosotho Moepya's return to the commission despite unresolved past misconduct allegations. Our democracy deserves an electoral body that is fiercely independent, inspires confidence across party lines and serves only the people of South Africa. We must also note the lack of youth representation in these appointments. Young people like me must see themselves reflected in these institutions that protect their vote. Action SA supports those who deliver renewal and calls for greater inclusion of younger nominees in the next round of appointments. Thank you very much, House Chair.

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Rev K R J MESHOE: House Chairperson, we all know how important the Electoral Commission is in keeping our democracy fair and functional. That's why the process of filling these three vacancies matters so much. It cannot be just about ticking boxes. It's about protecting public trust. The Portfolio Committee on Home Affairs has put forward three names to replace outgoing commissioners, including the chairperson. The Chief Justice led the selection process as required by law, but it is Parliament's job to make sure that those appointments are solid, independent, credible and above reproach. People are asking why Parliament hasn't spoken up about the IEC's budget problems or the logistical mess in recent by-elections. Unfortunately, there's been real concern that Parliament hasn't done enough to check political ties or past conduct. The process felt rushed. Public input wasn't properly considered.

Over the past year, the ACDP has pushed for clear criteria, merit-based appointments, proper vetting and full transparency. Whilst the committee felt that these candidates have the skills, experience and capacity, they mean nothing if the candidates are not impartial. If we want the commission to stay neutral, Parliament must step up and do more than just rubber-stamping. Oversight isn't optional, it is our constitutional duty.

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Therefore, we must make sure that the IEC remains respectable in the eyes of the public. I thank you.

Ms C T NONTENJA: Hon House Chair, in consideration of the commission's mandate all three candidates: Mrs Pitso, Judge Pillay and Mr Moepya, displayed knowledge for electoral systems and an understanding of the commission's mandate and value to South Africa's democracy. The UDM notes that Judge Pillay and Mr Moepya have wide experience in the electoral sphere and electoral management as outgoing commissioners who served in the last term of office. However, we are concerned about the recycling of leadership in these commissions, even those with the darkest cloud of scandals hanging over their heads.

Appointing the same candidates consecutively when there are qualifying new minds, willing to serve, is not fair. Yes, having experienced candidates is vital, but we need to also create a space for new visionaries with innovative ideas and solutions to resolve the commission's challenges. Also, we are concerned with the issue of age that was totally disregarded in the nomination process.

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There is no youth representation amongst the recommended candidates, and this is concerning given that already we have a crisis of youth voter apathy in the country. One of many reasons young people feel alienated from formal politics is because of the underrepresentation and having an electoral commission that does not represent them might be a bad sign into resolving this alarming youth disengagement in elections. The commission needs a youth representative to implement youth-based strategies and long-term solutions to ... [Inaudible.] ... voter apathy. Thank you. [Time expired.]

Xitsonga:

Ttn S M GANA: Mutshamaxitulu wa Yindlu ...

English:

... we rise to support the committee's report recommending the appointment of Mrs J Pitso, Judge Pillay and Mr Moepya as commissioners of the IEC. As we approach the upcoming local government elections, the work of the IEC has never been more crucial. Our democracy depends not only on the right to vote, but on the assurance that every vote counts freely, fairly and transparently. The commission must therefore ensure thorough preparations from voter registration and logistics to ballot

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security and the training of electoral staff. Equally important is the accessibility of the electoral process to monitors, observers and the media. Transparency builds trust, and trust sustains democracy.

The IEC also carries the responsibility of implementing and enforcing the Political Party Funding Act, a cornerstone of clean and accountable politics. Voters must know who funds those who seek to lead them. In this new chapter, the IEC must remain independent, impartial and fearless in its duty.

Let us support the commission as it safeguards the integrity of our elections, which is the heartbeat of our democratic nation.

Xitsonga:

Ndzi khensile swinene, Mutshamaxitulu wa Yindlu.

Dr M A MAIMANE: Hon members, the oldest president in the world has just been elected. Paul Biya of Cameroon has won his election. It is very clear the fact that that election was not free and fair. It is very clear that the opposition had, in fact, won that election. But the Constitutional Court, as it happens in many instances, bowed to political pressure and declared Mr Biya the President of Cameroon. We can proceed and

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ask the questions in Zimbabwe where we see elections are not free and fair. We will recall the elections in Malawi, where Tippex was being used to change the election results. We can remember the elections in Mozambique and how much violence took place in those elections. I raise these examples to demonstrate that democracy is fragile in the continent.

Therefore, as this House, as we appoint these commissioners, we must recognise that we are not immune to democracy being vulnerable. Therefore, to the three that are being nominated today, I have a few strong messages of encouragement to you. The first is this, stand up to political power, no matter what the cost is. Because the truth of the matter is that we are vulnerable. Secondly, to the judge, make sure that the institution that is the IEC is protected, capacitated and well-funded. Our democracy resides and depends on the IEC. We can underfund it, end up with shambolic elections, which will be questioned and will lead this country down a path we don't want to go.

The third is this, I am concerned that some of the administrators are now becoming commissioners. We must be careful of that practise. It blurs the line between executives

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and accountability. Let us support this report, but let's make sure the integrity of the IEC remains intact, or our democracy will falter. Thank you very much.

IsiZulu:

Mnu I ISMAIL-MOOSA: Malibongwe!

English:

Hon Speaker, Al Jama-ah party welcomes and supports the recommendation of persons to fill the three vacancies on the Electoral Commission, IEC. We take this opportunity to commend a world-class, experienced, strong leadership, chaired by the amazing former chair of IEC, for his unwavering professionalism, integrity, and commitment to strengthening our democracy. Over the years, the commission has proven itself as an independent, credible, and efficient body, ensuring that the voice of every South African is heard and respected at the ballot box. Viva the former IEC chair!

We have full confidence that the recommended commissioners will uphold the principles of transparency, fairness, and accountability that have made the IEC one of the most trusted institutions in our country. As Al Jama-ah, we reaffirm our

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commitment to working with the IEC in safeguarding the democratic process and ensuring that future elections continue to reflect the true will of the people. I thank you.

IsiZulu:

Malibongwe!

Ms S P JAMA: Hon House Chair, and hon members, the ANC arises to firmly support the table reports of the Portfolio Committee on Home Affairs on the filling of vacancies within the IEC. We speak in the month of October, the birth month of Comrade Oliver Tambo, the humble architect of our democratic order, who taught us that freedom must be defended daily in law and in conscience. He reminded us that the strength of the nation lies not in its comfort but in its commitment to justice.

It is also fitting that I write to deliver this contribution in South Africa's Pride Month, a celebration of freedom and diversity, that I do so as a young queer woman of this generation is in itself proof that democracy is alive, that the promise of the Constitution belongs to all of us. This is the South Africa we so struggle for and which we continue to fight. The IEC derives its mandate from our Constitution as one of the

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Chapter Nine institutions that safeguard democracy. It is accountable to this Parliament and, through us, to the people of South Africa. Our duty is not to defend it uncritically but to exercise vigilant oversight, to protect its independence, insist on accountability and ensure it continues to serve the people faithfully.

The IEC is not just an institution, it is an inheritance, it is the thread that holds together the will of the people, the promise of 1994 and the soul of our democracy. It is the ANC, the liberation movement that turned the dream of freedom into a living democracy that continues to defend the institutions that sustain it. The 2024 elections reminded us that strong institutions require constant vigilance. We saw excellence but we also saw strain. We do not deny that the last elections tested the system, but democracy matures through correction and not collapse. We echo the recommendations made by this committee to the IEC that it strengthens the systems, builds stability and enhances capacity for the future. Indeed, the 2024 elections were not without challenges, but our response must be to improve, not to undermine; to reform and not to destroy.

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It would be ironic if it were not tragic that those who swear by their seats in this House are the first to cast doubt on the credibility of the very vote that put them here. Our confidence in the IEC has never depended on how things turn out for us but on how it faithfully reflects the will of the people. Even when the results have been sobering, the ANC has accepted them with discipline because we trust the process, and we trust the people.

We remain comfortable that within a fair and credible system we will recover lost ground not through noise or conspiracy but through work and reconnecting with the people. Defending the IEC is not about defending individuals, it is about defending the sanctity of the vote and the legitimacy of our democracy. We therefore reject with absolute clarity any attempt to undermine, delegitimise or destroy the IEC for short-term political gain.

You do not strengthen democracy by attacking its referee; you do not build trust by spreading cynicism. Those who weaponise doubt against our electoral system must know ...

IsiZulu:

... niyabonwa ...

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English:

... we see you and we will not allow your politics of suspicion to erode what so many sacrificed their lives to build. The process of filling these vacancies is not only administrative, it is about safeguarding institutions that safeguard our freedom. As the ANC we are guided by the principle of continuity and recommitment - continuity to preserve institutional memory and experience, recommitment to bring in new capacity, new ideas and renewed energy for battles ahead. In that spirit we support the nominations of Ms J Pitso, Judge D Pillay and Mr M S Moepya, confident that they possess the necessary skill and commitment to strengthen the IEC for the future.

At the same time, we recognise the call for generational renewal. South Africa has a young democracy and so are the majority of its voters. If we are serious about addressing youth apathy, our institutions must begin to reflect the diversity and energy of this generation. Bringing in younger commissioners and future appointments will inspire confidence among young South Africans, many of whom feel disconnected from the democratic process.

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When young people see themselves represented in the spaces that protect their right to vote, they will be more inclined to protect that right themselves. As the ANC, our support does not end with appointments. Oversight does not end with vote. We expect excellence, transparency and fairness. The credibility of our democracy depends on it. Hon members, around the world democracies are under siege, not from coups or guns but from misinformation, manipulation and mistrust.

The erosion of public confidence begins suddenly with whispers that elections cannot be trusted. South Africa will not follow that path. We must guard the IEC jealously, not because it's flawless but because it is foundational. To weaken it is to weaken democracy itself. The ANC does not defend the IEC against the people, we defend it for the people because when our people enter the voting booth, they must know their voice matters. When results are declared, they must trust the outcome, not because we say so but because the process is credible and the institution is strong. That is the democracy we fought for. That is the democracy we must now protect and that is the democracy we will continue to build - brick by brick, generation by generation. The ANC supports this report as a recommitment and reaffirmation of our collective duty to guard institutions that

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keep the flame of freedom alive. We stand for vigilance. We stand for accountability. We stand for democracy that cannot be bought, bullied or broken. Thank you.

Question put.

Division demanded.

The House divided.

House Chairperson Mr C T Frolick announced that the Speaker had determined that, in accordance with the Rules, a manual voting procedure would be used and that the Whips would conduct a headcount of members in the Chamber and on the virtual platform for the purposes of ascertaining quorum and voting.

A quorum being present in terms of Rule 98(1), voting commenced.

AYES - 249: (ANC - 138; DA - 78; IFP - 12; PA - 8; FF Plus - 4; ActionSA - 3; ACDP - 3; Rise Mzansi - 1; BOSA -1; Al Jama-ah - 1).

NOES - 73: (MK - 41; EFF - 31; NCC - 1).

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ABSTAIN - 2: (UDM - 2) .

Question agreed to.

Nominations accordingly approved in accordance with section 193(5) (b) (ii) of the Constitution, 1996, read with section 6(2) (c) of the Electoral Commission Act, No 51 of 1996.

**CONSIDERATION OF REPORT OF PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON HIGHER
EDUCATION ON APPOINTMENT PROCESS OF CHAIRPERSONS OF SECTOR
EDUCATION AND TRAINING AUTHORITIES (SETAS) ACCOUNTING AUTHORITY**

Mr W T LETSIE: House Chair, hon members, we present to this august House this report with details the committee's oversight on the appointment of Sector Education and Training Authority, SETA's accounting authority, authority chairpersons by the former Minister of High Education and Training, Dr Nobuhle Nkabane, ensuring the process adhered to the principles of transparency, accountability, and good governance.

The oversight was conducted in line with the committee's constitutional mandate under section 55(2) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa and Rule 227 of the National

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Assembly Rules, which requires Parliament to ensure accountability and maintain oversight over the executive.

In executing our mandate, the committee conducted a thorough assessment of the appointment process. Meetings were held with the former Minister, head Deputy Ministers, department officials, and members of the independent selections and evaluation panel on Friday, 30 May, Wednesday, 4 and 18 June, on Friday, 18 and Tuesday, 22 July 2025.

During the initial presentation on Wednesday, 30 May, the former Minister outlined the powers under section 11(1)(a) of the Skills Development Act of 1998 to appoint SETA's Chairpersons after consulting with the National Skills Authority. A notice inviting nomination was published in the Government Gazette and the selection and evaluation panel independently assessed 573 nominations against the National Qualification Framework criteria.

The committee requested disclosure of panel members' names and profiles, their roles, attendance, and correspondence with the Minister. All panel members appearing before the committee took

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an oath or affirmation in accordance with the parliamentary rules, ensuring accountability and transparency.

Despite these measures, the committee identified concerns, including limited panel independence, mismatches between candidates' qualifications and sector requirements, and incomplete transparency regarding some panel members. Subsequent meetings highlighted further challenges, including delayed responses, partial disclosure of panel members' names, and justifications for absences.

Nevertheless, the committee maintained its oversight, obtaining documentation, engaging panel members, and confirming its legal mandate to continue oversight. The committee's work reflects its steadfast commitment to accountability, transparency, and good governance.

Despite these challenges, it examined all relevant documentation, engaged directly with panel members, and rigorously followed due process. We also note and appreciate the former Minister's engagement and her commitment to recalibrating the appointment process to strengthen confidence, integrity, and governance between the ... [Inaudible] ...sector.

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The review identified areas requiring improvement, particularly regarding transparency, panel independence, and alignment of candidate qualifications with sectors they are appointed to serve. These lessons must inform the recalibrated process to ensure credibility, fairness, and accountability.

As we await the announcement of the new SETA accounting authority chairpersons, the committee expects that all applicants will be treated fairly and equitably.

We further trust that the current Minister, Mr Buti Manamela, will ensure that the departmental officials have the necessary space to execute their duties in line with policy and legislative framework.

Hon members, the committee is confident that this report will guide Parliament, the department, the Minister in ensuring a transparent, a fair, accountable appointment process, contributing to a credible, a well-governed post, school education, training sector for all South Africans. And I repeat, hon members, the committee is confident that this report will guide Parliament, the department, and the Minister in ensuring a transparent, a fair, and accountable appointment process,

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contributing to a credible and a well-governed post-school education and training sector for all South Africans. This is a fair report, and we hope that members will take it. Thank you very much.

Declarations of vote:

Ms K L KHAKHAU: House Chairperson, committing fraud and a statutory offense under section 26 of the Powers, Privileges and Immunities of Parliament and Provincial Legislatures Act 4 of 2004, is not only a spit on the graves of the forefathers of this democracy but is a spit in the faces of this and future generations of young people who depend on well-functioning SETAs for skills development.

Skills that are, for most, their only shot at fairly competing for jobs in this constrained economy. A job that, if secured, is their only shot at putting food on the table, clothes on their backs, a roof over their heads and dignity for themselves and their families.

It is a spit in the faces of dedicated the Department of Higher Education and Training, DHET, staff and whistleblowers who wake up every day and go to work to make this republic work. An act

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of service which for those who dare oppose being used as corruption pawns comes at a great risk. The risk of unemployment, poverty and the forced abandonment of their children's future. Dr Nobuhle Nkabane and the ANC sacrificed this staff, young people and the republic of South Africa at the altar of their self-indulgence, the protection of a network of patronage and the revolution's favourite elites, cadres.

The appointment of failed ANC politicians, cadres, their children and spouses as chairpersons of SETA Boards was not a mistake. Dr Nkabane and the ANC orchestrated these appointments deliberately with the sole aim of milking the state dry, which quite frankly is the people of this republic's money. These appointments followed a culture that has become primary nature for the ANC - looting, deceit, fraud and treating the people of this country as fools. Integrity and financial purity are foreign concepts to the once upon a time liberation movement.

So, the DA's fight against these appointments was a declaration of war against anyone and everyone who thinks the criminal and political capture of the state's bureaucracy is normal. It is not normal. It is disgusting. It is anti-democratic and is simply not welcome. Certainly not under my watch.

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We celebrate the firing of Dr Nkabane and look forward to outcome of the Hawks investigation into the case the DA laid against her. But this didn't change much. Instead, her successor, Minister Buti Manamela took right where she left off. At his first opportunity to do and be better, he appointed even more shady and compromised cadres as administrators of the Local Government Sector Education and Training Authority, LGSEETA, Construction SETA, and the Services SETA, the worst performing SETAs in the department.

He appointed, Oupa Nkoane, a former Municipal Manager at the Emfuleni Local Municipality, who is implicated in a Comperio Forensic Report that details the mismanagement of R872 million in this municipality. Mr Lehlohonolo Masoga, a former ANC Limpopo Member of the Executive Council, MEC, and Deputy Speaker who is implicated in a Morar Forensic Report for back dating a communications contract worth R4,4 million as the Chief Executive Officer, CEO of the Musina-Makhado Special Economic Zone. Mr Zukile Mvalo, is a former Deputy Director General, responsible for skills development in the department of Higher Education since 2017. A man who oversaw the destruction and collapse of 21 SETAs for the past eight years. The eight years of damning Auditor General, AG, reports after reports, Special

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Investigating Unit, SIU, investigations and forensic reports that detail acts of corruption, fraud and the mismanagement of public funds.

But the real elephant in the room remains. The current National Skills Authority is the same NSA that approved former Minister Nakane's previous SETA Board Chairperson of ANC cadres. They saw nothing wrong with the appointment of Gwede Mantashe's son, and others as chairperson of SETA Boards which combined oversee R20 billion that belongs to this country's tax payers.

The same NSA now recently approved the appointments of Minister Manamela's new batch of cadres, and all of these red flags are simply over looked.

How can we in all honestly tell the people of this country, that there is nothing wrong with Minister Manamela and Hon Nkabane's NSA? We can't. Cry the beloved country, our democracy is under attack. Thank you.

Mr M P MSEZANE: House Chairperson, I do not know what the chairperson of the portfolio committee was saying before this House, ...

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IsiZulu:

... ngimangele kakhulu kabi.

English:

Let me greet the people of South Africa.

IsiZulu:

Emuva kokuba sibone imihlola eyafika emehlweni ethu ngomhlaka-13 May, ngokuphuthuma sabhalela usihlalo wekomidi elibhekene nomsebenzi sifuna izimpendulo kuNgqongqoshe wangaleso sikhathi uDokotela uNkabane. Sasingafuni izimpendulo kuphela kodwa sasifuna ukucacisa futhi ukuthi asihambisani nensambatheka esasiyibona uma yayikade iyiqiniso ngaleso sikhathi.

English:

Upon our vehemently rejecting the Seta's chairpersons' list, which was filled with ANC-aligned individuals, including the son of Gwede Mantashe. And it must be noted that Minister Dr Nkabane once served as the Deputy Minister for Mr Mantashe, before assuming the position of Minister of Higher Education and Training. Amongst more than 200 qualified candidates, it is no coincidence that ...

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IsiZulu:

... umntwana kaMnumzane u-Mantashe ...

English:

... was selected amongst 20 other questionable individuals, 90% of whom are known failed leaders of the ANC. This reeks of political nepotism and cadre deployment at the expense of deserving young South Africans.

As the MKP, we remain firm that the sector education and training authorities, Setas, are not a playground for the children of Ministers or relatives of the comrades. By the way, these are not ...

IsiZulu:

... amapulazi lana u-Mantashe abadlala kuwo izithuthuthu ezimasondomane nezingane zabo bese bezithembise ukuthi, mntwana wami, ...

English:

... you can be a chairperson. These institutions carry a critical mandate to skill, upskill and transform the lives of the hopeless and unemployed people across this country. Former

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Minister Dr Nkabane deliberately misled and lied to the portfolio committee and, by extension, Parliament. She failed to demonstrate transparency when she refused to explain the process she used to headhunt and assemble the so-called credible panel, which shortlisted and recommended the ANC-aligned individuals, many of whom have corruption clouds hanging over their heads.

Some of those appointed did not even meet the minimum requirements, nor the experience required. Her failure to appoint the Seta board chairpersons has plunged governance into chaos. Out of the 21 Setas, several remain without fully appointed CEOs, despite candidates having passed all the required legislative stages. As if that crisis is not enough, Mr Manamela, the new Minister, on his very first assignment, unprovokedly placed three larger Setas under administration. The legislation he claims to have invoked contradicts the conditions which were presented. Through the portfolio committee, we have formally requested details of the process he followed to put these Setas under administration, including the resolution and recommendation from the National Skills Authority, which is legally mandated to advise the Minister. More than 30 days later, there's still no response from the new Minister. We also requested clarity on the selection process of the appointed

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administrators, two of whom are deeply compromised. One is implicated, as the latter member has indicated, in an almost R900 million financial mismanagement forensic investigation, while the other oversaw all 21 Setas and failed dismally. Yet the new Minister saw it fit to entrust him to even a greater power of overseeing singlehandedly one of the Setas.

The Minister had an alternative and a more responsible option to appoint board chairpersons across all the Setas, restore governance, enforce consequence management, and prioritise appointment of the new CEOs. Instead, as of the end of September, the contracts of 20 Seta CEOs had lapsed, giving the leadership an administrative vacuum. Meanwhile, the department itself is in severe decline. It has failed to meet nearly 70% of its performance targets. It has underspent R5 billion worth of skills development. It has underspent billions more in infrastructure development. It has a director-general who is implicated in fraud and corruption allegations. Since November last year, to date, the former Minister and the current Minister have done nothing about it. Thank you, Chair. [Time expired.]

Mr S LONZI: House Chairperson, allow us to congratulate our queen, Qhawekazi Mazaleni, on being crowned Miss South Africa.

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May she inspire millions of young women and children in her reign and beyond. Ujwarhakazi! [clan name] Chair, a lot has been said about the corruption in the Setas and the Minister's insistence on deploying his friends and comrades into the Seta boards.

The people of South Africa now know that this government has no plan to raise the Skill Development Programme of our nation. Be that as it may, we'll come back to this discussion as we've got two or more reports that await the matter. We are also aware of Minister Buti Manamela's nefarious plan to dissolve the National Student Financial Aid Scheme, NSFAS, board to put his dirty hands on the R50 billion meant to fund higher education in South Africa. His friends must tell him that we're waiting.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr C T Frolick): Hon member, will you just take your seat, please? Hon member, why do you want to be recognised?

Mr G J SKOSANA: Chair, on a point of order: I'm rising on Rule 85.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr C T Frolick): Yes.

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Mr G J SKOSANA: The hon member is casting aspersion on Minister Manamela. He says he's got nefarious plans to dissolve NSFAS and put his hands on the millions that are there.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr C T Frolick): Hon member, I heard that remark, and you must withdraw that remark.

Mr S LONZI: No, we withdraw, but we are waiting ...
[Interjections.] ...

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr C T Frolick): No, hon member. You must withdraw that remark unconditionally.

Mr S LONZI: We withdraw unconditionally. We are waiting for Minister Buti Manamela.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr C T Frolick): Please, proceed.

Mr S LONZI: About two weeks ago, criminals burned the University of Fort Hare and later tried to blame it on students. We are not surprised that the admin building was the first target, because for many years, comrades of the ANC have been buying degrees at the University of Fort Hare. Tomorrow, when we investigate your

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qualifications, which do not exist, you will be telling us that the records were burned down during the student protest. I don't understand why this Minister must wait for a calamity or disaster before he acts. The signs were there, both at the University of Fort Hare and at the University of Free State. Yet, he had to wait for buildings to burn before acting on governance issues and the very genuine concerns which were raised by students.

Those are signs of a reactionary Ministry, not a proactive Ministry. Another silent epidemic, Chair, which is destroying South African families and now students, is gambling. NSFAS allowances meant for food and study materials are being swallowed by slot machines and online betting apps. This government has allowed gambling syndicates to flood our phones, our screens, our sports and even our airports, targeting the most vulnerable with flashy gambling adverts that make poverty look like bad luck, not bad economic policy. Over 63% of gamblers in South Africa gamble with money meant for essential needs like food, rent and even school fees. We are going to explore a Private Member's Bill to regulate and restrict gambling advertising. If we do not act now, then future generations will be swallowed by debt, addiction and

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hopelessness. The Minister of Trade and Industry, Parks Tau, instead of chasing tenders in the lotto, just do something good for once in your life and gazette stricter regulations for gambling advertising. Unless, of course, you are a beneficiary of the gambling syndicates like BOSA, Rise, the DA and many of the other parties, which are funded by gambling tycoons. The EFF rejects this report. Thank you.

Mr S S ZONDO: Hon Chairperson, the IFP welcomes this committee's thorough oversight reflected in this report and acknowledges the productive effort to enhance legislative processes and public involvement in the post-school education and training sector. However, the findings reveal that the National Skills Fund continues to record qualified audit opinions from 2018-19 to 2023-24, primarily due to the inadequate asset management, procurement irregularities and weak consequence management.

The continuing high vacancy rate compounds these challenges, further impacting the operational efficiency and strategic implementation. The misleading of Parliament about the role of the independent panel in the sector appointment processes underscores the urgent need for strengthening project management and enhancing government structures. The IFP calls for

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accelerated implementation of a real-time asset verification system and fully transparent procurement processes, ensuring strict adherence to regulations.

Prioritising the filling of the key vacancies is essential to restore the institution's capacity and strengthen governance. We further urge a culture shift within the department that prioritises compliance, accountability and transparent management and non-negotiable standards. The IFP accepts the report but stresses the necessity for timely follow-ups on recommendations and progress, tackling and periodic updates to Parliament. Only through decisive and ethical action can public trust in our post-school education and training sector be restored and maximised for the benefit of all South Africans. I thank you, Chairperson.

Mr E HENDRICKS: Hon House Chairperson, esteemed colleagues, South African patriots, Minister, you are greeted. As the PA, we note with concern the Irregularities and a lack of transparency that have marred this process. The leaked list of appointees, the refusal to disclose the identities of the independent panel members, and the involvement of department officials and political advisors in what was purported to be an independent

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process raise serious questions about the integrity of the appointments.

The PA stands firm for accountability, meritocracy and public trust. In our institutions, we cannot condone a process that appears to have been politically manipulated, lacks proper vetting and undermines the credibility of the Seta institutions that are vital to skills development and economic empowerment in our country. We commend the committee for its rigorous oversight and for holding the Minister of Higher Education, Dr Nkabane, accountable. The committee's insistence on full disclosure, proper documentation and the appearance of panel members before the Parliament is a testament to the strength of our democratic institution. However, we remain deeply troubled by the following, Minister. The concealment of the panel's members' identity under the guise of privacy, the mismatch between qualifications and sector relevance among some appointed chairpersons, and the involvement of individuals with questionable characters and political affiliations. The ex-Minister Nkabane's misleading statement regarding the independence of the panel. The PA calls for a full parliamentary inquiry into the appointment process. The immediate suspension of any chairpersons whose appointments are found to be

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irregular. And I thank you. Ons baiza nie. [We won't be intimidated by anyone.]

Afrikaans:

Dr W J BOSHOFF: Agb Huisvoorsitter, na die PA se poging om my stil te maak, gaan ek tog maar praat met die druk van 'n knoppie.

Hierdie verslag van die Sektoronderwys- en Opleidingsowerhede, SOOOs, voorsitters, en die SOOO rade se aanstelling is seker van die parlementêre werk wat die meeste aandag in die algemene pers gekry het, omdat dit die eerste keer is in 'n baie lang tyd waar die parlementêre oorsigproses werklik doeltreffend was daarin om die uitvoerende gesag verantwoordbaar te hou. Daar is 'n baie goeie rede hoekom dit gewerk het. Dit is omdat dit 'n komitee is waar daar nie een party is wat die meerderheid het nie en waar die lede van die komitee vasbeslote was om die Minister verantwoordbaar te hou ongeag of hulle aan dieselfde party behoort het of nie. Dit was eintlik 'n voorbeeld wat voor die kameras afgespeel het van hoe parlementêre oorsig en verantwoordbaarheid behoort te werk.

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Wat gebeur het, het natuurlik die Minister haar werk gekos en heeltemaal te reg so. Daar is egter 'n kwessie wat nou nog nie bespreek is nie. Dit help nou nie as jy die sesde spreker is dat jy weer vertel wat staan in die verslag nie. Ek is nou wel die eerste ou wat dit in Afrikaans doen, maar almal weet al wat het in die verslag gestaan.

Die punt is dat ons met 22 S000s sit en geen mens weet waarvoor ons 22 S000s nodig het nie. Die wet skryf nie 22 voor nie. Die wet sê doodgewoon daar moet Sektoronderwys- en Opleidingsowerhede wees. In sulke owerhede ... in so 'n S000 kan daar werksgroepe wees vir verskillende bedrywe.

Nou, hoekom 22? Ek dink dit is om vir 22 rade werk te gee, om vir mense wat jy nêrens anders kan aanwend nie 'n pos te kry waarin hulle ook 'n ietsie kan doen en 'n geldjie kan kry, en ek gebruik spesifiek nie die woord geld verdien nie. Ek hoop dat hierdie hele storie wat nou afgespeel het daartoe sal lei dat die samestelling van die S000s as geheel hersien word. Baie dankie.

Ms M P KOBE: Hon House Chair, Sector Education and Training Authority, Setas, are always on the agenda for the wrong

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reasons. As ActionSA, we have consistently raised the alarm. These bodies are black holes consuming over R20 billion annually with no transparency, no measurable outcomes and no public confidence.

The actions of the now removed Minister of Higher Education in appointing a dodgy panel of friends just shows how deep the rot goes in these institutions. Setas are nothing more than a slush fund for connected comrades. The fact that the former Minister, even after misleading Parliament, still holds a seat as a Member of Parliament demonstrates how unserious the Government of National Unity, GNU, is about accountability.

Hon House Chair, walk onto any street in South Africa and ask any citizen what exactly do Setas do. You will be met with absolute silence. They are fundamentally broken, House Chair, and this House cannot fix that. Processes of selecting new chairpersons also cannot fix that. We must confront this reality. Band-aids will never fix the Setas. It is time to scrap them entirely and go back to the drawing board.

As ActionSA, we advocate for collapsing the Setas completely and redirecting their massive budget into our innovative opportunity

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fund. This will transform the lives of South Africans and not line the pockets of connected elites.

As ActionSA, we will continue to demand accountability, transparency and performance. In the meantime, we must stop the bleeding of billions into these black holes and benefiting a selected few. Thank you very much, House Chair.

Mr W M THRING: Hon House Chairperson, the ACDP asserts that the portfolio committee's report on the appointment processes of chairpersons of the accounting authorities of the Setas clearly raises serious concerns about procedural integrity and governance standards. After the initial round of appointment processes, which was deemed procedurally flawed, the process governed by the Skills Development Act 97 of 1998 led to the reissue of the call for nominations.

The ACDP has consistently called for ethical leadership, sectoral expertise and transparent appointments in public entities. This is especially important here, given the billions of rands of public funds that Setas have to administer. Yet, the committee's report confirms that several Setas have failed to

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meet the minimum criteria, undermining the credibility of the appointment process.

The Department of Higher Education and Training's, DHET, call for nominations required candidates to hold a postgraduate qualification and demonstrate sector-specific experience. However, civil society groups have criticised the lack of published shortlists and the absence of public interviews.

Furthermore, section 195 of the Constitution, which demands public administration be accountable and governed by high standards of professional ethics, has not been enforced. The opacity surrounding the appointments of Seta chairpersons risks politicisation of skills development and weakens institutional independence.

As kingdom builders working to fulfil our constitutional mandate, the ACDP insists on the full disclosure of appointment criteria, stakeholder input and performance-linked accountability frameworks in the appointment processes at Setas and other government entities. I thank you.

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Ms C T NONTENJA: Hon House Chair, the UDM supports this report with strong suggestions that the process of appointing new chairpersons of Setas should be sped up to ensure oversight over the Setas' management and operations.

Hon members, it is quite disappointing that today we are debating the shortcomings and systemic flaws in the appointment processes for chairpersons of Setas. This is more than disappointment, but a concerning affirmation that the cadre employees continue with nepotism and political influence in state institutions. The Seta scandal merely revealed a persistent abuse of power to benefit comrades and if we don't talk about it, our state institutions will become dysfunctional with poor management.

This appointment process did not only undermine the strides and policies that have been put in place to ensure that due process is followed, but it shows us that the current system lacks accountability. The majority of South Africans may have lost interest to even partake in these processes because the picture has been painted that the process is not credible and positions are reserved for the politically connected. Therefore,

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legislative reforms should be implemented to restore confidence in Setas.

We need policies that will guarantee that there is no political influence during the appointment processes, including proper vetting processes to ensure that panellists do not have a conflict of interest.

The UDM commends the people of South Africa for their scrutiny of the processes. Their voices played a vital role in enforcing accountability. I thank you.

Mrs N L HLAZO-WEBSTER: Chairperson, as Build One South Africa, we rise to welcome the good reforms that are being implemented to restore integrity and transparency in the appointment processes of the Setas.

We want to commend the portfolio committee for its oversight and swift corrective action to clean up the calamity that was left behind by the previous Minister. So, we support the report.

The report lays bare, though, a very disturbing picture and member after member has been consistent in articulating this.

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There was political interference, procedural manipulation and a total disregard for due process, and that had become the norm. The revelations that the former Minister misled Parliament, appointed an illegitimate panel and bypassed governance procedures in the appointment of Seta chairpersons represents not only a failure of leadership, but a betrayal of the oath of office. We can't ignore this, that the GNU firing a Minister is not accountability. It's an administrative act, and it's not justice.

True accountability means consequences that are proportionate to the harm that's been done, coupled with reforms that prevent it from happening again. Parliament has to insist on clear performance targets, transparent evaluation systems and regular public reporting to ensure that Setas deliver on their core mandate, which is actually equipping young South Africans with skills for work.

Despite hundreds of high-level referrals flowing from the State Capture Commission, we are today here, mid-2025, only having four of 218 criminal investigation recommendations having resulted in convictions. It's a dismal record which shows that we've had no accountability before. Even now, with the GNU, we

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still do not have accountability. We've got to ensure that never again does a Minister escape consequence while people pay the price. I thank you.

Mr S T D LOUW: House Chair, it shows that we are indeed the epitome of transparency and accountability as the ANC, hence today, we want to reaffirm our persistent commitment to a post-school education and training system that is transparent, accountable, and transformative.

The Sector Education and Training Authorities, Setas, are central to this mission. They are the instruments through which South Africans gain the skills to access meaningful work, contribute to the economy, and participate fully in the development of our nation. The integrity, competency, and ethical leadership of the Sector Education and Training Authorities remain non-negotiable. While delays in appointing accounting authorities have been regrettable, they were necessary to address the weaknesses in the system and ensure that the appointment process upholds the higher standards of governance. It was our collective responsibility - not any other party - to act decisively to restore oversight, to strengthen accountability, and ensure that the Setas fulfil their vital

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role in advancing socioeconomic transformation and equitable opportunity and inclusive growth.

The committee's observation has brought important issues into light. Firstly, the oversight has revealed that procedures were not followed as intended, and then the independence and transparency were compromised in several instances. We would wish to echo that it is through the administrative flaws that were led by the director-general. These challenges must not be viewed as an administrative mistake alone; however, they reflect broader governance shortcomings that must be corrected to safeguard public confidence in our institutions.

As the ANC, we note and support the committee's recommendations, we urge the department to act swiftly and decisively to implement them. The recalibrated appointment process must restore the integrity of the Setas and reaffirm confidence in the leadership. Departmental officials must be empowered to carry out their duties without fear or interference, and proper systems of accountability must be reinforced to prevent future governance lapses.

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House Chair, furthermore, the recommendations around legislative clarity are critical. The roles and responsibilities of accounting officers in appointing the Setas' accounting authorities must be clearly defined to avoid procedural ambiguity, misrepresentation, and conflict. When we are strengthening this framework, we need to ensure that the Setas operate with transparency and efficiency in servicing our national skills agenda. Hon members, we, as the ANC, we continue to remain committed by building a post-school education and training system that is people-centred and people-future orientated. The Setas must not only meet compliance and standards, but they must also be driven by opportunity, transformation, and innovation. Our primary focus must remain on ensuring that every young person, every worker, and every community has access to the skills that will open doors to a better life for all.

In echoing the Chairperson's words, hon Letsie, the ANC joins in calling upon the department and the new Minister of High Education, Ntate Buti Manamela, to continue to prioritize the full and timely implementation of the committee's recommendation. Doing so will not only strengthen governance and oversight but also reaffirm public confidence in the state's

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capacity to deliver with integrity and purpose. The mighty ANC stands ready to support these efforts and to ensure that the lesson learned from this process contribute stronger, more accountable, and more effective institutions in our post-school education and training. Thank you.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Thank you very much, hon member. I now recognise the Chief Whip.

The ACTING CHIEF WHIP OF THE LARGEST MINORITY PARTY (Mr M Nontsele) moved: That the Report be adopted.

Question put: That the Report be adopted.

Division demanded.

The House divided.

The House Chairperson (Ms Z Majozi) announced that, the Speaker had determined that, in accordance with the Rules, a manual voting procedure would be used and that the whips would conduct a headcount of members in the chamber and on the virtual platform for the purposes of ascertaining the quorum and voting.

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A quorum being present in terms of Rule 98(1), voting commenced.

Mr M V DANIELS: Hon House Chair, on a point of order.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Hon Daniels.

Mr M V DANIELS: Thank you for recognising me. Hon House Chair, I just want to set the record straight. I have just been informed that two of our members were kicked out virtually. They were logged in but kicked out when the voting session started. So, I want to place it on record that we are amending our total of eight votes to six votes. I apologise for any inconvenience caused, but we were not aware that the two were kicked out until they informed us. Thank you, House Chair.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Were they kicked out while they were logged in to vote?

Mr M V DANIELS: Everybody was logged in. We confirm ...

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): It is okay, hon Daniels. We will check with IT, but we will record the number that you have given now.

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Mr M V DANIELS: Thank you very much.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Thank you. Hon members, the results are as follow:

[TAKE IN FROM MINUTES]

Motion agreed to.

Report accordingly adopted.

**CONSIDERATION OF BUDGETARY REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATION REPORT OF
PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON HEALTH ON PERFORMANCE OF NATIONAL
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND ENTITIES FOR 2024-21.**

The ACTING CHIEF WHIP OF THE LARGEST MINORITY PARTY (Mr M Nontsele): House Chair, I move that the report be adopted.

Declarations of Vote:

Mrs M O CLARKE: Chairperson, the annual report of the National Department of Health paints a deeply concerning picture. While progress has been made in some areas, the persistent weakness in

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governance, consequence management, and financial accountability remains a serious threat to the integrity of our health system.

The National Health Laboratory Service, a critical pillar of our public health infrastructure, continues to face operational and financial challenges. Audit weaknesses, irregular expenditure, and inefficiencies have undermined service delivery, particularly in diagnostic testing, which is the backbone of disease surveillance and treatment. This is unacceptable in a country still battling with very high burdens of HIV, TB, and non-communicable diseases.

Chairperson, the Department's continued failure to enforce consequence management allows misconduct and negligence to go unpunished. Corruption and maladministration within the health sector divert scarce resources away from patients who need them most. We must send a clear message. Fraud and corruption in health will not be tolerated. Accountability must not be optional. It must be enforced.

Equally alarming is the shortage of health professionals, doctors, nurses and specialists across the provinces. The slow pace of recruitment and weak retention strategies are deepening

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the crisis in service delivery, particularly in rural and undeveloped areas.

Finally, the escalating medical legal claims threaten the financial stability of the health sector. Urgent reforms are needed to strengthen risk management, improve patient safety, and reduce negligence-related claims that drain billions from the health budget every year.

Chairperson, our health system cannot heal if accountability is weak, corruption is tolerated, and our professionals are demoralised. The Department must act decisively to restore trust, strengthen consequence management and ensure that every rand is spent on quality health care to our people. I thank you. The DA supports this report.

Mr T S MJADU: Chairperson, this report before us today does not show progress. It shows that our public health system is struggling, and the Department of Health is falling in board management and accountability.

The department says it spent 99,5% of its budget, yet it did not make over a third of its service delivery target. It shows that

the money is being spent, but the results are not being achieved. Budgets are used up, but the clinics still lack staff, hospitals lack equipment, and the patients wait too long for care.

The focus is on spending money, not on improving services that save lives. The National Health Laboratory's services received a disclaimer of opinion from the Auditor-General. It means that its records could not be trusted. It could not verify its assets, debts, or inventory, and only achieved 36% of its target. This shows a serious management failure when the laboratories cannot manage its own system. It loses the ability to support the country's health system properly.

There was over R306 million in irregular expenditure, violating the Public Finance Management Act. No proper action has been taken, showing that there is no accountability for financial misconduct. Section 27 of the Constitution gives every South African right to health care. When money is misused and services fail, people's health and lives are affected. Each case of irregular spending represents a mistreatment and poor service delivery.

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The problems at NHLS affect disease monitoring, pandemic response, and health research. Without accurate data, it becomes difficult to manage diseases such as HIV and TB or respond to a new threat. The Department's responsibility is for ...

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Hon Member, your time has expired.

Mr T S MJADU: Okay, let me wrap up.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): No, don't wrap up. Your time has expired.

Mr T S MJADU: Thank you, Chairperson. The MK rejects this budget.

IsiZulu:

Nk N N CHIRWA-MPUNGOSE: Sihlalo ...

English:

... the EFF notes the Health Committee's BRRR. We call on the Minister and the department to start working in good faith from now onwards. We share the sentiment with AG that we are very

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suspicious of the reports that they submit. Things always look good on paper, but the reality is that it is not the case on the ground. For example, there's an MP who went to a clinic for three weeks ...

Setswana:

... e yotlhe ba mo raya bare o nale mofikela [flu], kante ngwana wa batho o tshwerwe ke bolwetsi ba mafatlha, TB.

English:

But the Minister comes here and says it takes two hours to detect TB. It is further concerned that of the hospitals that were monitored, only seven are noted as being ideal hospitals. This essentially means that our consistency in calling out the department for the ailing and crippled public health care system was not just an opinion. It was an actual fact, a fact.

NHLS continues to regress and fails to implement AG recommendations. Ombudsmen and CMS are still understaffed and under resourced. Our public purse is still being looted by criminals not facing jail time. Much more must be done for accountability in this regard.

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We raise a grave concern on the targets the department makes for itself. For instance, that the NHI benchmark is still located in the delivery of medicines is a concern. Although the Minister claims the department reaches its NHI milestones, we argue that the current setup isn't sufficient to usher in the NHI expeditiously, which is now law.

It must build state capacity. Tembisa Hospital heist could have been avoided if the EFF's recommendations for building state capacity were taken up by the department. It is not the case because the truth is that the ANC and DA comrades fund their lavish lifestyles with the monies meant to keep our people alive. This is why these two parties fight tooth and nail to protect a tender system that has proven to cripple our public health care and seize the lives of vulnerable people and whistleblowers, ending prematurely.

We reject this report on the basis that it commends the department on its performance in this year. We have nothing to celebrate. We will never affirm this criminal syndicate department until its total overhaul, restructuring and ensuring that public health care and justice occur in our lifetime.

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IsiZulu:

Phansi ngamasela namagintsa e-ANC ne-DA phansi!

English:

Thank you, Chair.

Ms N H MHLONGO: Hon House Chair, in our manifesto, the IFP rightly identified the numerous challenges that have undermined the South African public health system's ability to deliver the adequate services to its citizens. The Tembisa Hospital scandal stands as a reminder of the deep-rooted corruption that continues to plug our public health system. Hon House Chair, it is important to reiterate the IFP's position in terms of the NHI. The IFP supports the universal health access but rejects the NHI in its current form.

The IFP welcomes the clean audits achieved by the Medical Research Council, Office of the Health Standards Compliance and South African Health Products Regulatory Authority, which reflect successful implementation of robust internal controls. Furthermore, we commend the fact that no fruitless or wasteful expenditure was incurred. This stands as a powerful reminder

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that clean governance is not a myth or an abstract ideal. It is both achievable and essential.

The IFP therefore urges the Department to prioritise engagement with the National Treasury to secure additional funding to properly capacitate our hospitals and clinics. In consideration of the issues we have raised, the IFP accepts the report. I thank you.

Ms S M PETERS: House Chair, the Patriotic Alliance has expressed its support for this report. Minister, the Budgetary Review and Recommendations Report is indeed comprehensive, well-compiled and detailed. It also incorporates valuable analysis from the Financial and Fiscal Commission as well as the Auditor-General of South Africa on the health sector's annual performance. Primary health care, the foundation of our system, continues to receive less than 40% of the total budget, leaving rural and underserved communities at a disadvantage. Community-based programmes deliver higher value for money compared to hospital-based care.

However, despite the reports and analysis looking impressive on paper, it's a far cry from the reality on the ground. We must

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confront reality reflected in incidents such as the Tembisa Hospital scandal. The Tembisa Hospital case is not an isolated incident. It raises serious concerns about how many other hospitals may be facing similar issues where public funds are being misused or treated as personal piggy banks. We therefore recommend three key actions. First, increase funding for primary and preventive care to strengthen our health system resilience.

Second, enhance efficiency and transparency through performance-based budgeting and thirdly, build capacity at district and facility levels to ensure timely and effective use of funds and that every rand allocated to health care truly benefits the people it is meant to serve. Thank you.

Mr P A VAN STADEN: House Chairperson, the Tembisa report issued by the Special Investigation Unit, SIU, shows that an amount of R2 billion was looted through officials and cartels at the very same hospital. These looters are now focusing their attention on the North West Department of Health to continue their looting there and they have approached the High Court in Mahikeng in order to be rewarded a tender of R1 billion to supply food to the hospitals in the North West. This also shows us that not everything is well at all provincial departments across the

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country and therefore the VF Plus calls for an intensive audit to be done at all provincial and state hospitals in order to determine if there is also corruption taking place at what scale and to determine if the national department and the nine provincial departments have put precautionary measures in place to combat corruption, mismanagement and maladministration at all of these institutions.

On the National Health Laboratory Services, NHLS, the Auditor-General reports irregular expenditure of R306,8 million that was not included in the consolidated and separate financial statements of this entity.

There is also a concern regarding an increase in provincial debt from R7,8 billion in 2023-24 to R9,2 billion in 2024-25.

Complaints submitted to the Health Ombudsman have increased but they still have not received adequate funding from Treasury to utilize or strengthen their operational capacity. An amount of R10 million was received from Treasury after they requested a fully R30 million increase in funding.

Funding is also a huge concern at the Office of Health Standards Compliance, OHSC, with only 42 inspectors in the service and 35

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undergoing training. To be certified there is no way that even with a system like self-assessment and smart inspections of hospitals and other health facilities across the country, this office will be able to complete their work, therefore successfully. Suppress enforcement capacity need to be strengthened regarding the distribution of fake or unregulated medicine.

Let's stop looting at our health departments and facilities. I thank you, House Chairperson.

Mr A D BEESLEY: Chairperson, ActionSA notes the improvement in the Department of Health's performance from 58% to 62% with primary health care performing best. This shows some effort to stabilize delivery, but it falls far short of the standards South Africans deserve.

Despite this marginal improvement, the department again failed to prepare financial statements in full compliance with reporting standards, a repeat failure that exposes weak leadership and oversight.

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Across the sector, consequence management is virtually non-existent with irregular expenditure and poor accountability continuing unchecked. The Tembisa Hospital scandal remains a symbol of the rot in our public health system. ActionSA supports a call for a sector-wide audit to uncover corruption and ensure those responsible face consequences.

On the National Health Insurance, NHI, we remain deeply concerned. Engagements continue but there's little progress in establishing the NHR fund or contracting units while a R200 billion funding gap threatens to make this plan financially unsustainable and politically opportunist rather than practical.

We've seen what happened at the Road Accident Fund, RAF. We commend progress in the HIV and TB programs but note worrying signs, declining TB detections and rising new infections among young women. These demand decisive actions, not rhetoric.

Persistent infrastructure failures from Charlotte Maxeke Hospital to delayed projects nationwide reflect years of neglect and poor contractor oversight. ActionSA calls for stronger governance, transparency and quarterly accountability reports from all entities. South Africans deserve a health system that

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works, not one crippled by mismanagement and corruption. I thank you.

Rev K R J MESHOE: House Chairperson, South Africa's public health system continues to face systemic inefficiencies. Parliament must demand ethical stewardship, measurable outcomes and urgent reform on provincial health governance.

Chairperson, the Portfolio Committee's Budgetary Review and Recommendations Report on the Performance of the National Department of Health and its entities for 2024-25 reveals troubling patterns.

Despite a budget allocation of R64, 5 billion, the department underspent by R3,2 billion while irregular expenditure rose to R1,1 billion, a regression from the previous year's audit outcomes.

The Auditor-General attributes this to poor contract management, persistent vacancies in key posts and excessive reliance on consultants. The ACDP has consistently called for ethical governance, performance-linked funding and transparent oversight. Yet, Parliament has failed to enforce accountability

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mechanisms under Section 195 of the Constitution, which requires public administration to be accountable, development-orientated and governed by high standards of professional ethics.

The committee's report also notes that the Office of Health Standards Compliance, OHSC, remains under-resourced, compromising its mandate to enforce quality norms across facilities. Meanwhile, the National Health Laboratory Service, NHLS, facing huge backlogs in TB and cervical cancer diagnostics, which forces them to delay treatment and jeopardize patients' health, has turned to the private sector to help clear the backlog.

Social media commentary has criticized Parliament's silence on whistleblower protections and its failure to act on corruption allegations in provincial health tenders. Thank you.

Mr I ISMAIL-MOOSA: Hon Chairperson, on the declaration on consideration of the Budgetary Review and Recommendations Report, BRRR, of the Portfolio Committee on Health, Al Jama-ah supports the report of the Portfolio Committee on Health. We note with concern that the department's failure to meet employment targets, particularly in appointing doctors and other

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healthcare professionals amid severe shortages. While we welcome the Finance Minister's approved budget for the recruitment of healthcare staff, many qualified South African doctors and nurses remain unemployed. This must be urgently addressed to prevent further strain on our health system.

Al Jama-ah further calls for preference in filling vacancies to be given to South African healthcare professionals, especially women, youth, and persons with disabilities.

isiXhosa:

Malibongwe!

English

Ms S FRENCHMAN: Chairperson, parties need to stop speaking against the report that's being delivered and then vote in favour of it. Thank you.

Ms M M SENNE: House Chairperson, the ANC supports the Portfolio Committee on Health Budget Review and Recommendations Report as an expression of our commitment towards the realization of universal health coverage.

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We are encouraged by the continued support, positive support, performance of entities such as the SA Health Products Regulatory Authority, SAHPRA, which successfully maintains the International Organization for Standardization 9001 certification by the SAPS and the SA Banking Risk Information Centre, SABRIC, which has surpassed research output targets and awarded more than 600 research scholarships.

We also welcome the Office of Health Standards Compliance, OHSC, continued commitment to improving patient experience and health outcomes in the health sector through the committee's critical recommendations on consequence management investment on Community Health Workers, CHWs, infectious disease, ID, clinics and hospitals, expanding TB screening and multi-month ARV dispensing and accelerating the implementation of the National Health Insurance, NHI. We remain confident that the sector will expand access and build a more agile and responsive healthcare.

Health is a cornerstone of society. It must be our collective desire to support the Ministry in the interest of public health and also in ensuring that our health system leaves no one behind.

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Setswana:

Ke a leboga, Modulasetilo.

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

Report accordingly adopted.

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PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SERVICE AND ADMINISTRATION ON VOTE
7: NATIONAL SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2024/25
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CONSIDERATION OF BUDGETARY REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATION REPORT OF
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11: DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICE AND ADMINISTRATION, GOVERNMENT
EMPLOYEES MEDICAL SCHEME AND CENTRE FOR PUBLIC SERVICE
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12: PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

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There was no debate.

The ACTING CHIEF WHIP OF THE LARGEST MINORITY PARTY (Mr M Nontsele): Hon Chairperson, I move that the report be adopted. Thank you.

Declarations to vote:

Ms L R POTGIETER: Chair, the DA welcomes the committee's consideration of the 2024-25 Budgetary Review and Recommendations Reports for the Department of Public Service and Administration, DPSA, the National School of Government, NSG, and the Public Service Commission, PSC.

While the DA commends both the DPSA and the Public Service Commission, for maintaining clean audits and high-performance rates, 100% and 96% respectively, the deeper reality is that our public service continues to suffer from inefficiency, politicisation and a collapse of accountability.

The Public Service Commission, in particular, stands out as a model of institutional discipline and constitutional integrity. It has delivered consistent clean audits, upheld transparency, and fulfilled most or almost all its performance targets. Yet,

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Treasury continues to cut its budget, while channelling more funding to departments that routinely ignore its recommendations. In doing so, government effectively cuts off the PSC's hands, forcing it to rely on desktop assessments, instead of physical verification, and weakening one of the few oversight bodies that still functions without fear or favour.

The National School of Government, meanwhile, has faced an uncharacteristic but deeply concerning lapse. A qualified audit on its training trading account, the first in years, reveals weaknesses in internal controls and financial reporting. While this may be an isolated occurrence, it is particularly troubling in an institution tasked with embedding ethics, accountability, and professionalism across the public sector.

The NSG must urgently restore its credibility, because it cannot train others to uphold standards it does not consistently meet itself.

The DA will continue to champion a public service built on merit, integrity, and performance, not political loyalty. South Africa deserves a state that rewards excellence, enforces

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accountability, and restores pride in public administration. I thank you.

Mr J S MALINGA: Hon Speaker, the MK party rises today with a clear message. South Africans deserve a government that works, not one that merely attends workshop. The National School of Government was created to build a capable, ethical and professional public service, the kind that our people have been promised since 1994. Its mandate is crucial, but a mandate without measuring results, is just a slogan. And what do we see? Conferences, certificates, training headquarters.

Cabinet adopted the professionalisation framework back in 2022. Yet, two years later, the rollout is crawling at the pace of a broken printer. The department remains staffed with unqualified cadres who treat the public service like a personal employment and the public like an inconvenience. It seems we are measuring attendance, not impact.

The NSG promised a professionalism programme for middle managers but is nowhere near installation across departments. The report is silent on whether these initiatives have actually changed a

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single citizen experience at a clinic, a school, a police station or at Home Affairs.

We still have long queues, rude and uncountable officials, phones ringing, but unanswered, complaints, ignorance and corruption treated as HR. South Africans are tired. They are tired of an allied state working for a connected few, while the masses stand in queues from dawn to dusk. Vote 7 must be delivered - transformation not ... [Inaudible.] Until we see proof that the NSG is improving service delivery, the MK party cannot fully support the Vote. Thank you.

Ms S GCILISHE: Hon House Chair, the EFF has analysed the three Budgetary Review and Recommendation Reports before this House today. And our overall view is one of deep disappointment. While these reports carefully describe the challenges facing a weakened public administration, they fail to offer a bold and transformative solution needed for recovery. Instead, they reflect a managed decline, documenting slow deterioration, rather than inspiring change, and systematic and deliberate collapse of state capacity.

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The South African public service is not being reformed. It is collapsing. It has become a carcass, picked apart by exploitative elite, opportunistic entrepreneurs and their political facilitators within the so-called GNU. The vision of a professional and developmental state in the National Development Plan has turned into a fairy tale, meant to pacify the public, while corruption flourishes.

Take the National School of Government, for instance. The report notes a shift from a clean audit to a qualified one, due to a disastrous failure of the MyNSG platform learning system. This is not a minor error; it is a failed tender, likely awarded to an unqualified insider.

The Public Service and Administration Department has also abandoned key targets, due to budget cuts, effectively surrendering the dream of a capable state under the suffocating austerity imposed by National Treasury.

We see no accountability for the 294 senior managers who failed to disclose their business interest. The Government Employees Medical System spends millions on board fees, while public servants struggle to afford contributions. The Public Service

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Commission, despite clean audits, remains powerless with its recommendations ignored by the executive.

These reports do not represent progress. They represent a decay. The EFF rejects them outright and calls for a radical overhaul of the public service, not yet ... [Time expired.] Thank you.

Mr T M LANGA: House Chair, our public service stands at a critical point where efficiency, ethics, and accountability must meet to restore public confidence in the state's capacity to deliver to its people. The committee's Budgetary Review and Recommendations Reports revealed both encouraging progress and persistent weaknesses that must be urgently addressed, if we are to realise the vision of a professional, people-centered administration.

The report highlights advance in governance, digital transformation, and professionalisation, while also exposing ongoing challenges in financial management, audit outcomes, and system integration.

The National School of Government continues to play an important role in empowering public servants through digital and executive

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educational programmes, despite fiscal constraints and deficits in the training trading account.

The IFP agrees with the committee that there is a need for stronger internal controls, faster implementation of the professionalisation framework and sustained investment in e-learning platforms, to enhance capacity across all spheres of government.

We commend the departments for their achievements, but urge continued focus on accountability, efficiency, and inclusivity in advancing Batho Pele principles. In consideration of these findings and recommendations, the IFP supports the BRRR reports. Thank you.

Ms J A BASSON: Hon House Chair, esteemed colleagues, the PA has studied the Budgetary Review and Recommendation Reports of the Portfolio Committee on Public Service and Administration, and we say, it is time for real accountability in our public service sector. We appreciate the committee's work in assessing the National School of Governance, the Department of Public Service and Administration, DPSA, the Government Employees Medical Scheme, GEMS, the Centre for Public Service Innovation, CPSI,

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and the Public Service Commission, PSC. These institutions carry the heartbeat of professionalism, honest and self-driven governments. But our public deserves better.

The National School of Government must move faster in training the new generation of public servants, who can serve in a modern, digital South Africa. Let's work with our universities and private experts to make this happen.

The DPSA has made progress, yes, but the pace of reform is too slow and cadre deployment still holds us back. We need appointments based on skill, not political connection. Let us put competent people to lead, not comradeship.

And the Public Service Commission, the moral complex of our government must be empowered to act fearlessly against corruption and malmanagement.

The PA supports the committee's work, but we call for bold action, real change, and a renewed spirit of service. Our people deserve a government that works for them, a public service built on pride, professionalism and passion. Salute!

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Afrikaans:

Ons baiza nie!

Mrs H DENNER: House Chair, the effective functioning of the South African Public Service is non-negotiable for building a capable, ethical and developmental state. However, the South African Public Service has been marked by poor performance, skill shortages and service-delivery challenges, resulting in public dissatisfaction.

We all know that a professionalised service eliminates wastage, derives value for money and is essential for aligning the state with the imperatives of economic growth and job creation.

Sadly, this was not the case over the past 30 years. Corruption, a word that has sadly become synonymous with the South African Public Service, impedes service delivery and undermines public confidence.

The fight must be intensified, especially against the scourge of ghost worker fraud. The Public Service Commission, PSC, which must champion anticorruption efforts through oversight and initiatives like the National Anti-Corruption Hotline, must be

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better capacitated. The PSC must be able to enforce its mandate to its fullest extent.

The Department of Public Service and Administration, which according to reports is strengthening accountability by developing a central register for disciplinary processes to track offenders and to monitor adherence to the prohibition on officials doing business with the state, is showing signs of improvement. This is welcomed.

However, the lack of consequence management remains a persistent problem. Lifestyle audits are not being addressed comprehensively or urgently enough. Continuous mandatory audits for high-risk categories like supply chain management must be the norm in all departments.

The National School of Government, NSG, plays a vital role in the professionalisation of the Public Service. Though one cannot teach work ethic or honesty, the professionalisation framework is a step in the right direction, and must be fully and continuously implemented as a matter of urgency.

Afrikaans:

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Die Suid-Afrikaanse Staatsdiens is oor die verloop van 30 jaar deur swak bestuur, 'n gebrek aan politieke wil en misdadigheid van die ergste graad uitgekwalwe. Maar daar is ligpunte wat deurbreek, hoewel min. Mag dit vermenigvuldig tot die punt van herstel. Ek dank u.

English:

Ms M P KOBE: House Chair, Action SA believes that building a capable, ethical and developmental state begins with professionalising its Public Service. South Africans deserve a government that is staffed by competent, ethical professionals, not by political insiders or connected cadres.

The Department of Public Service and Administration, the NSG and the PSC each play a crucial role in this project. Yet, the committee's report makes it clear that progress remains uneven, with ongoing concerns about ensuring that all appointments across the public sector are transparent and strictly based on merit.

We welcome the recommendations for tighter monitoring of recruitment, stronger lifestyle audits and the development of a centralised digital platform that records all Public Service

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appointments in real time. These are practical steps towards transparency and accountability.

However, ethical governance cannot be achieved while irregular appointments like those that we've seen in the Department of Social Development and the sector education and training authorities, Setas, go unpunished. Such practices destroy morale, weaken service delivery and send a message that accountability and rules are optional. Action SA rejects this notion.

We urge that the PSC be properly funded to extend its mandate and oversight to local government, where dysfunction and interference still destroy communities and deny our people basic services.

Professionalising the Public Service must start at the coalface of service delivery and that is our municipalities.

Professionalising the public sector is not just a technical task; it is a moral one. To rebuild trust in government, we must put competence before connections and service before self-interest. Only then will South Africans again take pride in a Public Service that best works for them. Thank you, House Chair.

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Mr S N SWART: House Chair, the ACDP understands the necessity to build an efficient, capable and ethical state that is free of corruption and committed to improving the life of citizens. And, whilst there are hundreds of thousands of loyal, honest and hardworking public servants, regrettably there are still many who engage in corrupt activities.

The Zondo Commission identified the primary mechanism of state capture to be the strategic positioning of particular individuals in positions of power, which were then used to gain control of public procurement and over law enforcement agencies. Corrupt politicians and officials used appointments and disciplinary processes to remove law-abiding public servants and replace them with those who were willing to be complicit in corruption.

The ACDP believes what is needed are public servants who are true servants of the people and who understand the principle of stewardship of state resources, which are not there to be looted and stolen.

We agree that one of the ways to combat corruption is by continuous lifestyle audits, particularly for those officials in

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high-risk categories such as supply chain management, finance and revenue collection.

Lastly, the ACDP questions whether public servants are even aware of the provisions in the Prevention and Combating of Corrupt Activities Act, which not only criminalises corrupt activities, but also makes it a crime not to report such crimes where more than R100 000 is involved. We are not aware of a single prosecution in terms of section 34.

Perhaps public servants are prepared to turn a blind eye, given the inadequate protection of whistle-blowers. There is, in our view, an urgent need to significantly enhance whistle-blower protection and even to offer financial incentives, given the risks faced. The ACDP will support these reports. I thank you.

Xitsonga:

Tat S M GANA: Ndza khensa, Mutshamaxitulu.

English:

I'll give my two minutes to Bosa ... [Inaudible.]

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The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Huh-uh, hon member, you can't do that. We are not giving anything. Bosa?

Mrs N L HLAZO-WEBSTER: Bosa notes and supports Vote No 7 for the National School of Government, as well as Vote No 11 for the Department of Public Service and Administration. However, we want to turn our focus to Vote No 12 for the Public Service Commission.

We have got to confront a crisis that strikes at the moral core of our democracy. We have too many officials found guilty of misconduct that simply reappear in another department, while others linger as ghost workers that are draining billions from the public purse.

In Gauteng alone, over R300 million has been lost to ghost employees, and in Johannesburg corruption and mismanagement have crippled service delivery, as those who live there will know, with the city losing over R3,4 billion through water losses, unpaid supply and poor billing.

These failures, especially in local government, are not abstract, because local government is where citizens meet and

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confront with governance. These failures rob clinics of medicine, they rob schools of resources and quite frankly, they rob communities of hope.

So, ahead of the local elections, we really have to be honest that this is not just a governance failure. It is a moral one, and it's written on the faces of citizens who are being robbed of what is due to them, the services that are due to them, every single day.

Across the Public Service, billions are lost each year to ghost employees, while honest officials who are trying to do their work remain demoralised.

As Bosa, we call on the executive to work with the PSC to end the recycling of disgraced officials. There should be lifetime bans, audits and an elimination of ghost workers, and the stabilisation of leadership by ending the overreliance on acting and contract appointments.

South Africans deserve a state that works and one that rewards integrity, not impunity. Thank you.

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Mr I ISMAIL-MOOSA: Hon House Chairperson, as Al Jama-ah, the trusted party, we support this report. Al Jama-ah commends the NSG for its continued efforts to build a capable, ethical and professional Public Service.

Also noted is the need for greater impact in implementing training programmes that translate into improved service delivery, especially at local government level, where citizens experience the state most directly.

Al Jama-ah calls on the NSG to strengthen partnerships with academic institutions and expand training access to young graduates, women and persons with disabilities, ensuring that transformation and excellence go hand in hand.

We also urge continuous monitoring to ensure that public servants apply the training received in their daily work for the benefit of all South Africans. I thank you.

Ms P P XABA-NTSHABA: Hon Chairperson, the ANC wishes to declare its support for the Budgetary Review and Recommendation ... for the Department of Public Service and Administration, the

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Government Employees Medical Scheme, the NSG, the Centre for Public ... Innovation and the PSC.

The ANC believes that to combat poverty and inequality, the state must take a transformative and developmental approach. This requires well-run institutions and qualified public servants to ensure effective co-ordination, providing high quality services, highly prioritising national development goals. This fosters trust in the state and strengthens its efficacy, benefitting individuals from all backgrounds.

This vision necessitates a capable and developmental state to formulate and implement policies that serve the national interest. These policies should address the root causes of poverty and inequality, and strengthen the state's capacity to fulfil this role.

The Department of Public Service and Administration is at the strategic centre to enforce and monitor the implementation of the ideals of an ethically capable and developmental state. This Budgetary Review and Recommendation Report is a step towards Vision 2030, which government envisages. The ANC supports the recommendations. [Time expired.]

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Question put.

Motion agreed to.

Report on Vote No 7 – National School of Government Annual Report for 2024-25 financial year accordingly adopted (uMkhonto weSizwe Party and Economic Freedom Fighters dissenting).

Report on Vote No 11 – Department of Public Service and Administration, Government Employees Medical Scheme and Centre for Public Service Innovation accordingly adopted (uMkhonto weSizwe Party and Economic Freedom Fighters dissenting).

Report on Vote No 12 – Public Service Commission accordingly adopted (uMkhonto weSizwe Party and Economic Freedom Fighters dissenting).

**CONSIDERATION OF BUDGETARY REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATION REPORT OF
PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND CO-OPERATION**

The ACTING CHIEF WHIP OF THE LARGEST MINORITY PARTY (Mr N Nontselele): House Chair, I move that the report be adopted.

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Declarations of vote:

Mr R SMITH: Hon House Chairperson, while the DA supports the 2024-25 Budgetary Review and Recommendations Report, BRRR, for the Department of International Relations and Co-operation, Dirco, it heralds a marked departure from a culture of financial transparency and accountability, to one of financial recklessness and rank mis prioritisation under Minister Ronald Lamola.

For the first time in many years, this department's audit outcome has regressed from unqualified, to qualified with material findings. The Auditor-General has cited, among others, significant deficiencies in the department's asset management process where lack of maintenance has rendered our embassy buildings uninhabitable. The face of South Africa abroad is further tarnished by this financial mismanagement.

The department's asset register and asset verification processes have not been carried out on a bi-annual basis as required, meaning Dirco is losing its grip on our foreign properties. This is corroborated by reports of the South African embassy buildings in The Hague and London with broken windows and

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heating systems, no water or electricity, and lost or allegedly stolen artworks and artifacts.

Furthermore, Dirco's growing financial liabilities and misaligned priorities have robbed South African taxpayers of desperately needed services, such as those for crime intelligence and investigative powers which have been cut.

In addition, the department has yet to provide a detailed breakdown of all beneficiaries of humanitarian aid from the African Renaissance Fund, which is nothing more than the ANC's political slush fund used to prop up and sustain its party-political alliances through the South African state.

This BRRR is proof that Dirco's finances have clearly been pooled into funding the ANC's party-political diplomacy instead of capacitating a professional and credible South African foreign service, and Minister Ronald Lamola is the chief architect of our subsequent foreign policy decline and this department's severe financial regression. I thank you.

Ms N BUTHELEZI: House Chairperson and hon members, the MK Party rejects the adoption of this Budgetary Review and Recommendation

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Report on the Department of International Relations and Co-operation as it doesn't go far enough to bring the change needed and is an austerity budget, leaving vacancies unfilled, embassies falling apart and services on economic diplomacy unfunded.

The department's 99% expenditure is presented as a success yet behind the figure lies failure, a qualified audit, R983 million in unverified assets and 25% vacancy rate that has hallowed out the department. Infrastructure is collapsing, ICT modernisation has ballooned from R814 million to R1,19 billion and the OR Tambo PPP drains R329 million yearly. This is not a performance; it is paralysis. The Department of International Relations and Co-operation measures what it does, not what it achieves.

Where are the outcomes that improve the lives of our people? How many blacks, coloured, Indian and Khoi and San entrepreneurs have joined trade missions? How much foreign investment has flowed into townships and rural areas? Diplomacy without transformation is public relations for privilege.

The MK Party therefore calls for transformation and impact directorate to track inclusive participation, youth and small,

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medium and micro enterprises, SMMEs, quarters and all delegations, regular reporting on Foreign Direct Investment, FDI, inflows and cultural diplomacy that includes Khoi and San people.

We also reaffirm our support for Palestine and call for a real two state solution and accountability for genocide before the International Court of Justice, ICJ. We condemn the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, Nato's, reckless militarism in Ukraine and possible deployment of tomahawk missiles, provocation to World War III and call for nonalignment, peace and diplomacy across all global conflict and condemn any possibility on renewed attacks on Iran, pre-emptive unilateral strikes in Venezuela.

South Africa's foreign policies must serve the poor, not the elite. We cannot keep ... [Time expired.] ... therefore, we reject this BRRR.

Ms N M MHLONGO: House Chairperson, the EFF notes the BRRR. We are of the view that Dirco should not, in the 2025-26 financial year, be allowed to regress and get a qualified audit opinion again with recurring findings. There should be internal audit

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controls to ensure compliance and accountability of how the budget is spent.

The department is still battling with irregular expenditure of R2,2 billion and audit action plans are not implemented and there is no consequence management. The 24,6% vacancy rate at Dirco is a cause for concern, especially because the allocation for compensation of employees is overspent by R12,6 million due to the depreciation of the rand against major currencies. This is going to be persistent even in the next financial year because during Budget Vote 6 our recommendation to increase the allocation fell into deaf ears.

In a world of evolving and rapidly changing ICT infrastructure, Dirco still uses outdated ICT infrastructure broad that compromises the ability to capture and manage data. This calls for immediate intervention.

A country's foreign policies should be clearly communicated and not leave a room for doubt just like the President has failed to implement the resolution of the Sixth Parliament to cut diplomatic ties with genocidal state of Israel, while government has taken Israel to the ICJ. The Department should be given a

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mandate to appoint trade attaché in our embassies to leverage our power and influence on trade globally.

The failure to have significantly increased the budget of Dirco should be worrisome to all of us. We have embassies and missions that are affected by budgetary constraints and will not be able to do their role of selling South Africa as a strategic country for trade or tourism. Our ambassadors are left frustrated with a budget that hardly covers their functions and staff vacancies that cannot be filled. We continue to spend money on leasing instead of buying properties for our missions abroad, which makes the cost of keeping and running those missions very expensive.

Lastly, government should decide on the direction that they want to take when it comes to the US. Not filling the position of ambassador since the former ambassador Ibrahim Rasool was expelled is a sign of giving in to the bullying by the orange man in the White House. Yet, South Africa's paper tiger said we will not be bullied but he is still bullied and is afraid of appointing an ambassador of South Africa into the US. The EFF rejects this report with the contempt that it deserves.

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Ms B E MACHI: Hon House Chair, the IFP supports this report as I am still going to raise the following measures. The IFP acknowledges and commends the department's alignment on its priorities with national strategic goals. Our foreign policy must always serve the people of South Africa. As we strengthen our diplomatic presence across the world, we must ensure that our engagement translates into tangible economic benefits, investments that create jobs, open more markets for South African goods and support local enterprises.

Projections by global research shows that African countries will experience stronger exports growth if we align our foreign policies with domestic trade strategies. This reinforces the importance of linking diplomacy to development outcomes. The department's commitment to economic diplomacy and regional integration should therefore remain a central pillar of its work.

We further encourage the department to deepen collaboration with local industries and provincial government so that opportunities arising from international partnerships directly benefit communities at home. Our foreign policies must not only project our values abroad but also deliver prosperity to our citizens.

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In light of the matters I have raised, the IFP definitely supports the report. Thank you.

Mr E HENDRICKS: Hon House Chairperson and hon members of the House ...

Afrikaans:

Ja, ons baiza nie.

English:

This report is more than a fiscal review; it is a mirror held up to our international posture. It compels us to ask: Are our global engagements aligned with the lived realities of our people? Are we leveraging diplomacy to deliver tangible outcomes for our communities in Atlantis, Upington, Umlazi not just in Pretoria?

We commend the committee's oversight of the Department of International Relations and Co-operation and the African Renaissance and International Co-operation Fund, ARF. The findings reveal both strategic intent and operational gaps. Irregular expenditure, underspending and weak performance indicators erode public trust and diminish our influence abroad.

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These are not technical oversight; they are systematic failures that must be addressed with urgency.

The PA calls for a decisive shift in Dirco's priorities. Our foreign policies must be pro-poor and Afrocentric, rooted in the aspirations of ordinary South Africans, trade enabling with targets supported for township and rural entrepreneurs, culturally grounded, amplifying our artists, healers and heritage in global forums, diaspora conscious, building bridges with South Africans abroad and African communities worldwide.

We support the committee's recommendations for enhanced financial control, performance linked budgeting and strengthened parliamentary scrutiny, but we go further, we demand that every rand spent on diplomacy be traceable to a local dividend, be it a scholarship, a corporate investment or a cultural exchange. We also want to welcome the efforts made by Israel for a cease fire and also say thank you ... [Inaudible.] ... We support.

Mrs E N NTLANGWINI: On a point of order, House Chair.

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The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): What's the point of order, hon Ntlangwini?

Mrs E N NTLANGWINI: House Chair, can that member be called back to withdraw that misleading statement he just made? That is misleading and we can't continue to let South Africans believe that it is Israel that wants peace missions while it is Palestine that needs to be freed. It is Israel that has been bombing young children, women and hospitals, keeping kids out of school and from having basic services. It was Israel doing that, not Palestine. So, he must come back and withdraw that misleading statement he just made. It is a sin to let him pass and not withdraw.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Thank you very much, hon member, but that is not a point of order, and I am not going to request the member to come back. If you wanted to raise your point of order, you would have done it at that time, and it is a point of debate not a point of order. We continue and call Action SA.

Mrs E N NTLANGWINI: House Chair, my hand was up. You just didn't see my hand at the time that he raised that, but my hand was up.

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The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): No, he was quiet for some time and there was no hand ... [Interjections.]

Mrs E N NTLANGWINI: No, no, he was not ... [Interjections.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): No, there is no debate ... [Interjections.]

Mrs E N NTLANGWINI: We made a resolution in this House and for you to do that statement ... [Interjections.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Hon Ntlangwini, this is not a debate ... [Interjections.]

Mrs E N NTLANGWINI: ... is just an indication that ... [Inaudible.] ... is supporting Israel ... [Interjections.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): ... what you are raising is not a point of order. Please, I have ruled on it, and it stands. Action SA?

Ms M P KOBE: Hon House Chair, we must be frank about the report that it is secondary confirmation that this department consumes

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billions while delivering little measurable benefit. The Department of International Relations and Co-operation, Dirco's bloated network of 115 foreign missions across 102 countries may look impressive on paper, but in reality, it is an overstretched, poorly managed bureaucracy that fails to translate diplomacy into development.

Despite spending over R7 billion in the last financial year, the department has regressed to a qualified audit opinion, with a shocking R2,2 billion in irregular expenditure and an incomplete asset register that cannot even account for the hundreds of millions in state properties abroad. This is not a reflection of effective governance, but it is the cost of complacency and a culture without consequence.

Hon House Chair, from day one, ActionSA has argued that South Africa's foreign policy must deliver tangible returns to our people. Surely, our foreign missions must be geared to promoting trade, attracting investment and strengthening partnerships, not chanceries and residents that decay while taxpayers foot the bill.

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The department's 24% vacancy rate, its failure to modernise information and communications technology, ICT systems worth over R1 billion, and the poor upkeep of state-owned properties abroad all reflect an institution that is detached from its mandate. To be clear, ActionSA is not calling for a retreat from the world but believe that we desperately need strategic rationalisation of our diplomatic footprint.

ActionSA believes that there is an urgent need for a comprehensive audit of our foreign missions. to determine which serve genuine economic and strategic value and which ones should be consolidated or closed. Diplomacy must deliver dividends, not deficits, under this government. Thank you so much, House Chair.

Rev K R J MESHOE: House Chairperson. South Africa's international relations budget reflects strategic ambition but lacks fiscal discipline. Parliament must demand data on measurable impact with ethical consistency and transparency in global engagements. The Budgetary Review and Recommendation Report of Portfolio Committee on International Relations and Co-operation reveals persistent concerns. The department underspent its R6,5 billion by R1,1 billion in 2024-25, largely due to delays in infrastructure upgrades and unfilled diplomatic posts.

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Yet, this underspending coexists with irregular expenditure totalling R44,5 million as flagged by the Auditor-General.

The ACDP has consistently called for value-based diplomacy, budgetary accountability and ethical consistency in foreign policy. Dirco's continued support for regimes with appalling human rights records, including recent engagements with Iran and Belarus, undermines South Africa's constitutional commitment to dignity and freedom. Parliament has failed to interrogate these contradictions despite civil society and media critique.

Furthermore, the African Renaissance and International Co-operation Fund, known as ARF, remains opaque. Its disbursement lacked clear performance indicators, and Parliament has not enforced section 5 of the African Renaissance and International Co-operation Fund Act, which requires transparent reporting and measurable outcomes.

Social media commentary has criticised Parliament's silence on the diplomatic property scandal in New York, where millions were spent on a derelict building. This reflects a broader failure to exercise oversight over Dirco's asset management and global footprint. I thank you.

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Mr N L S KWANKWA: Hon House Chair, South Africa's diplomatic missions should mirror our economic ambitions, values, and our duty to help the African continent realise its long-awaited renaissance. Yet our foreign policy vision has become uncertain, weighed down by structural failures within the Department of International Relations and Co-operation. The department's vacancy rate is an example of this, for instance. Many of our missions also operate from neglected buildings with outdated infrastructure and do not have a clear plan of action.

Government's decision to close 10 diplomatic missions abroad captures the depth of this crisis. Even though cutting costs may be sensitive, but doing so without a strategy may harm our long-term interests. The closure of some of the missions in the West undermines our economic reach in the long run. Instead of closing doors, we should be refocusing the work of our missions to attract investment, promote trade and grow tourism. To achieve this, our embassies must be led by capable, politically aware diplomats who understand South Africa's interests and can act decisively. These positions cannot be rewards for political loyalty.

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Each mission should have measurable targets and work closely with the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition, Department of Higher Education and the Department of Finance to ensure that South Africa's economic objectives are realised. The absence of trade attachés as revealed by the Minister Parks Tau exposes a serious gap in our diplomatic effort. Without experts on trade and industry, we cannot expand our markets or bring investors to our shores. We must also invest in young South Africans who will serve as future diplomats. Our missions should identify opportunities ...

IsiXhosa:

Hayi, anisithandi kule Palamente. Enkosi. [Kwaphela ixesha.]

Xitsonga:

Tat S M GANA: Ndza khensa.

English:

Chair, in the spirit of unite.

Dr M A MAIMANE: House Chairperson, the history of our nation has been premised on the fact that our foreign policy is built on two pillars, both on human rights and trade as its objectives.

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History is witnessing a moment where both those things are being realigned. On the first, which is a question of human rights, I think all of us as South Africans must welcome the ceasefire in the Middle East and continue to fight the battle for the upholding of human rights all over the world.

This presents to us the second, which is the opportunity as geopolitical alliances are being restored. In this regard, I want to urge that it becomes important that South Africa lay out its economic story so that we can begin to expand our trade opportunities all over the world. This is a massive opportunity that we can maximise during the hosting of the G20 coming up in the next while.

In reading the department's own report, I think fellow South Africans, we all ought to be concerned, not celebrate the fact that we've now got over 100 missions. Diplomacy in the world is undergoing severe change. Therefore, our diplomats need to be younger, they need to be better trained, but we need to also rationalise the number of diplomatic missions we put forward, because our budget simply cannot sustain it.

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On the third issue, I would argue that as the President returns from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, Asean and Malaysia, that this is a powerful model for us to strengthen our SA Development Partnership Agency, which has become stuck in administrative dilemmas. [Interjections.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Hon Seabi, hon Seabi, please mute your microphone. Continue hon member.

Dr M A MAIMANE: The market that sits in Southern African Development Community, SADC is significant. I think we can develop something similar so that we become a better trading bloc, not only for the continent, for what we do in the world. Thirdly, I think we need to continue to fight to strengthen democracy. We cannot sit here whilst the rights of Zimbabweans are being suppressed. We welcome elections in other parts and note that we've got to fight for democracy. Lastly, hon members, it's time that we elect an Ambassador to the United States. We cannot delay this any further because without an ambassador, we cannot continue trade talks. Thank you very much.

Mr I ISMAIL-MOOSA: Hon House Chairperson, hon members, fellow beloved humanitarian South Africans, Al Jama-ah supports this

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budgetary review. We acknowledge the department's continued commitment to advancing South Africa's foreign policy objectives, promoting peace, multilateralism and solidarity with oppressed nations. Dirco plays a vital role in positioning South Africa as a voice of conscience on the global stage, particularly in support of the Palestinian struggle, the Sahrawi people, and all nations striving for self-determination and justice.

We commend the department's work in strengthening the African agenda through active engagement in the African Union and regional bodies as well as through economic diplomacy that fosters trade, investment, and cultural exchange. Al Jama-ah advocates for the people-to-people diplomacy, engaging South Africans abroad, youth exchanges, and partnerships that enhance our nation's global footprint.

Al Jama-ah expresses appreciation to the Minister, Deputy Ministers, the Director-General and all officials of Dirco, as well as the Portfolio Committee on International Relations and Co-operation, whom I am thoroughly proud and grateful for, especially under the guidance of hon Supra, managing this portfolio very well with par excellence. I also place on record

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that all the government departments that I mentioned here through their true dedication under challenging global conditions, we stand firmly behind a foreign policy rooted in justice, human rights, and the advancement of global peace. I'm proud of South African stance to continue to echo our strong stance on principles of humanitarian rights. Free, free Palestine! Free, free Palestine!

Ms A N KUMBACA: Hon House Chair, hon members, this report represents a positive step in strengthening our collective efforts to ensure that South Africa's international relations continue to serve the interests of our people and the broader African continent. It reflects a department that is increasingly aligning its work with the national priorities of growth, peace, and co-operation.

We acknowledge the progress made in enhancing governance and performance management within the department. The efforts to strengthen systems, improve co-ordination between missions abroad and headquarters and building institutional capacity are commendable. These are the building blocks of a capable and developmental state, one that conducts its international work with integrity, discipline, and a sense of national pride. While

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there remain areas that require continued attention, the overall trajectory is encouraging. The department has demonstrated a willingness ... [Interjections.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Hon members! Sorry, hon Kumbaca. Can you please keep it down. We can't hear the member at the podium. I didn't say who and who, I said, can you please keep it down. Continue, hon member.

Ms A N KUMBACA: The department has demonstrated a willingness to learn from past challenges and to apply corrective measures that will improve service delivery and strengthen accountability. The spirit of renewal and improvement is welcomed.

Hon members, our foreign policy is an extension of who we are as a nation. Our foreign policy is guided by values of peace, solidarity, and mutual respect. Oversight in this area must therefore extend beyond our borders to where our missions operate, where our partnerships are built, and where our country contributes to a better Africa and a better world.

Therefore, this report is not only about performance, but also about purpose. It is about ensuring that our diplomacy remains

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people-centred, that our engagements advance development and justice, and that the department continues to fly our flag with dignity and responsibility. South Africa's position on the question of Palestine remains firm and consistent. We support the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination. With these words, as the ANC we express our support for the adoption of this report. I thank you.

Question put that the report be adopted.

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

Report accordingly adopted.

The House adjourned at 18:52.