

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 1

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

PROCEEDINGS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

The House met at 14:03.

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The SPEAKER: You may be seated. Order, hon members. I can see you have missed one another. There's a lot of handshaking and greetings before we start. Hon members, order.

The only item on today's Order Paper is questions addressed to the President. There are four supplementary questions on each question. Parties have given an indication on which questions their members wish to pose a supplementary question. Adequate notice was given to parties for this purpose. This was done to facilitate the participation of members who are connecting to

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 2

the sitting through the virtual platform. The members who will pose supplementary questions will be recognised by the presiding officer.

In allocating opportunities for supplementary questions, the principle of fairness, among others has been applied. If a member who is supposed to ask a supplementary question through the virtual platform is unable to do so due to technical difficulties, the party Whip on duty will be allowed to ask the question on behalf of their member. When all the supplementary questions have been answered by the President, we will proceed to the next question on the Question Paper.

The first question has been asked by the hon J S Malema. The question is on the imposition of 30% duties on South African products by the President of the United States of America, Mr D J Trump, and the extent to which the government will react to these senseless tariffs, and the impact that it expects to have on current and future diplomatic and trade relations with the United States. The hon President, you are welcome, and welcome to the podium to answer the question.

QUESTIONS TO THE PRESIDENT

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 3

Question 13:

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Hon Speaker and hon members, in answering the question that is imposed, I would like to say that, like many other countries around the world, our own country is facing the prospect of significantly higher tariffs to the exports that we make to the USA. Our government is therefore in continued engagement with the USA to secure what we would term a mutually beneficial trade and investment deal. The Presidency and the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition have sent representatives – who are currently in the USA – who are preparing for further formal negotiations with the USA government, which will be taking place in just a few days.

They are meeting a number of stakeholders, as they are in both New York and Washington, including representatives of their administration, legislators, business people and a whole number of other people. It should be known that many other countries are doing the same to secure agreements with the USA government.

As a country, the USA is South Africa's second-largest trading partner. Our economic relations are strong and these relations go back many, many years. Trade between our two countries has historically been complementary in nature.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 4

We buy many goods and services from the USA, such as petroleum, aircraft parts, medical instruments, soya beans, motor vehicles, poultry and pharmaceuticals.

South African exports to the USA include our minerals, our agricultural products, pharmaceuticals, motor vehicles and medical isotopes.

South Africa is the biggest investor from the African continent into the USA, with 22 of our companies investing in areas like mining, chemicals, pharmaceuticals and food chains. More than 600 USA companies operate in South Africa through various investments.

To advance our negotiating position, our government submitted a mutually beneficial trade and investment package on a basis of negotiations with the USA. This builds on the previous package which was submitted on the 20th of May.

In addition to the proposal put to the USA, Cabinet has also endorsed our own country's economic package to assist our businesses. This includes measures that we are putting in place

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 5

to support South African businesses that are affected by the tariffs.

Government has decided that, in response to the USA's position on tariffs, South Africa should take this as an opportunity to diversify our export market platform for increased resilience and to facilitate entry into alternative markets for affected exporters.

As part of measures to assist companies to absorb the effects of tariffs and facilitate what I would call long-term resilience, the Localisation Support Fund has made a commitment to support affected companies.

We have initiated an export competitiveness support programme that will include working capital, plant and equipment facilities to address short to medium-term needs of those that are exporters across all industries.

Working with industry, we are accelerating efforts to diversify export markets and enhance competitiveness to mitigate the economic impact of losing preferential trade access. A crucial part of this work is to make full use of the opportunities that

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 6

are presented by the African Continental Free Trade Area. We are also looking at using the buying power of local consumers, of businesses and of government better to support local producers.

South Africa is responding to the imposition of these tariffs by the USA by intensifying its own engagement with the USA administration. We are working to stabilise diplomatic relations and we are introducing a range of measures to make South African companies more resilient.

We do believe that this is the best course we should take and in a way it is double-pronged. We negotiate with the USA, but at the same time we encourage our companies to use this as an opportunity to start seeking out other markets.

To enhance this, we are involved in various visits to other countries, trade missions, if you like. The President, the Deputy President and Ministers are scouring the world, going from place to place, country to country, seeking to open channels and markets for our South African products. We have not really fully exploited some areas in the past, but we have now started doing so.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 7

A case in point, for instance is Latin America. Beyond just Brazil, we have not gone full force into Latin America. They are interested in dealing with us. Asia is also a huge market that is waiting, so is the Middle East. This gives us a great opportunity to open up new markets. It's an opportunity that we are exploiting. Thank you.

Mr J S MALEMA: Mr President, following Trump's tariffs on the country, our approach has been that of appeasement and almost tantamount to begging. You created an impression of us crawling on the floor and begging, and cementing our place as a very junior partner to the USA. You have ... [Inaudible.] ... this country and it has lost its status globally.

We do this while countries such as China, Canada and the EU announced retaliatory tariffs against the USA. I know that we import finished products from the USA, while we largely export our raw materials such as platinum, gold and raw aluminium, all of which are central to the USA's economy.

Instead of appeasing the maniac, why have we not stood firm and imposed ... own retaliatory tariffs against Trump, while looking

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 8

to open up trade with our Brics partners and the rest of the countries of the global South? I thank you.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Hon Speaker, there are various options that countries can elect to respond to the unfair tariffs that have been levelled against, I would say the world. A number of countries have sought to engage in negotiations with the USA government. Some of those have been fairly large economies that are currently in negotiations with the USA.

We have chosen the route of engaging the USA. They said that they have a deficit, but we argue that they do not have a deficit. That requires that we should actually sit down and negotiate these issues. In sitting down, we have come to the conclusion that we will find good answers to be able to take matters forward.

Let me say, our response has also been informed by engagements with our own private sector. Our own private sector, as exporters as well as importers, including the trade union movement, has been very involved in crafting the response that we have offered to the USA.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 9

It's all very well to say that what we should've done was to retaliate. In retaliating, you've got to be absolutely clear as to whether you will be able to achieve precisely what you need to achieve.

We believe that we are on the right course; a course that should end up with a mutually beneficial outcome. The USA is our second-largest trading partner, accounting for hundreds of thousands of workers who are employed here. The 600 USA companies that are doing business in South Africa employ many people and it is the interests of these many people that we as a government have to take care of before we engage in a war that may not yield the results that we want. So if one wants to play to the gallery, one could embark on the type of option that hon Malema is talking about, without knowing what outcome that option will have.

Our option is informed by what we want to gain, and what we want to gain is to continue exporting to the USA as much as possible and to enable our companies to invest in the USA, but to also get USA companies to invest in us.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 10

We do have leverage. Yes, our leverage has to do with the natural resources that we have, the minerals that we have, which the USA needs. The discussions that we are having now with the USA also revolve around that. The critical minerals that South Africa has and the capacity that we have to process those minerals with the energy backing that we have, which many other countries don't have, is something that we take to the table and use as leverage.

So I'd like to say that it is a strategy that we have opted for, and a strategy of engagement and a strategy which we believe will yield results, notwithstanding the fact that we are obviously dealing with a USA administration that at times is unpredictable and that at times just retaliates.

Without being supplicant, without going on bended knee, which we have never done and which we will never do ... and we have said we will not be bullied, we will stand as a sovereign country and negotiate and get the best deal for South Africa. That's precisely what we're doing.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 11

Mr S O R MAHUMAPELO: Thank you very much, President, and we appreciate the extent to which strategic engagements are taking place with the USA on these tariffs.

President, the USA on its own, realising that its trumpeting trumpets of the tariffs are inflicting pain on them, volunteered ... exclusion of some of the critical minerals from the initial list, which is an advantage to South Africa. So, I want to check how we as South Africa can continue to deepen their own realisation on the strategic tactical advantage that we have. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Hon Speaker, yes, as I said earlier, the issue of the strength and the endowments that we have, which are critical minerals, is a matter that is firmly on the table now as we have these engagements with the USA.

Yes, we have been exporting these to them on a tariff-free basis, whilst they had offered us a tariff-free entry through the *African Growth and Opportunity Act*, Agoa, offering or process. Therefore, in order to gain the advantage that we need for our own country, we are utilising precisely this aspect of

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 12

what they need most. In the end, we are saying we need to balance the books.

What they need most from us is what we put on the table for them to consider and what we need most from them. In balancing these two issues, we then believe that we will be able to come up with a fairly well-balanced negotiation that goes beyond just what they are focusing on in ... position of a 30% tariff regime on us.

We go to the USA negotiating table with a strong hand. We don't go with a weak hand. Our endowments, as you correctly say, are exactly what we take to the table, and the ability on our part to have those products processed here.

Obviously in doing so, we want to take it a step further. We want to be able, and that's what we are insisting on, that even as we may well want to export the critical minerals, we want them to leave the shores of South Africa as finished products, so that we beneficiate what we will finally sell to them. So that is the type of discussion that we are having with them. It's a proper engagement by two sovereign powers that are

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 13

engaging for a fair deal outcome. That is how we are proceeding with this.

Our people who are now in the USA are fully fired up with this type of approach. The Ministers of Trade and Industry and of International Relations will be joining them, and they will be advancing those discussions. We are on the ground and we are working the ground in the USA as we speak now. Thank you, hon Speaker.

Mr R SMITH: Mr President, as this question so rightly points out, a full spectrum of government responses is required to negotiate the best possible deal for South Africa in light of the USA's imposition of a 30% tariff on South African imports.

Part of this response, which is your sole responsibility, is the appointment of a capable ambassador to represent our interests in Washington DC. Can you confirm to this House that South Africa's ambassador nominee to the USA will be a capable, skilled and nonpartial career diplomat, and not another party political deployee?

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 14

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Yes, the appointment of South Africa's ambassador to the USA, which is soon to be finalised and made public, will be a person who is capable, a person who is sufficiently well-experienced and sufficiently well-versed in world views and world politics, and who knows the American market extremely well. That is the type of person that we are going to appoint.

It is interesting that, over some time they themselves have been mulling over who to deploy to South Africa. Indeed, we have found that because the geopolitical situation has changed so much, countries these days are scratching their heads so much to find the most suitable people that they can deploy in various markets, and to get people with the necessary skills, know-how, experience and world view.

That is the type of person that we are going to deploy to the USA as ambassador, as we also await them to bring their own, and as we will also be deploying a number of others to other markets and locales.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 15

The answer to your question is, yes we will be appointing a well-versed and a well-rounded person who has the necessary skills. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr President. I am smiling. I saw members listening attentively and I was wondering whether there may be some application here for such a position. Thank you very much, Mr President.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Madam Speaker, I must tell you that there have been a lot of applications and some of them have come from this House.

Dr M A MAIMANE: Thank you and good afternoon, Mr President. All of us as South Africans observed your meeting in Washington and can fully appreciate the fact that we are now in the realm where domestic policy impacts foreign policy.

A general goes off to Iran and makes some significant statements on foreign policy. That general has had a global implication on the USA's relations with those whom it does not deem its allies, of which Iran is one.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 16

In the light of all of these tariffs and our low GDP growth from today, I want to ask, Mr President, if you could bring the nation into your confidence as to whether South Africa does in fact have military co-operation with Iran. No sanction was taken against the general who had spoken.

Ultimately, are you of the view that our close relations with Iran have had any impact on our tariff impositions by the USA and what is your government's plan to respond to that issue? Thank you very much, Mr President.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: We do not have any military operations with Iran. Iran is one of the members of Brics. In fact, we held an online Brics summit yesterday and Iran was present, as were other countries like China, India, Ethiopia, Egypt, Brazil and all others.

Together, we are members of Brics and in dealing with Iran, we also deal with them as a sovereign country; a sovereign country that is dealing with the various issues and challenges as it is doing, like ourselves.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 17

The general went to Iran on a predetermined visit which was planned a number of ... almost two years ago. I had a long discussion with him and we both agreed that the timing could have been managed differently. He conceded that, because of what is happening globally. That in itself demonstrated to me – as he himself conceded – that the timing could have been different and that what he said in Iran was really an expression of the continued relations that have existed between our two countries.

In the end, the relations we have, have no impact whatsoever, and should have no impact on our relations with other countries. We deeply respect the relations that other countries have with whomever in the world, and similarly we say the same should obtain with us.

There was a time when we were lambasted for even having any relationship with Russia, as it was involved in a war with Iran. Now of late, hon Maimane, nearly everyone comes to us and says, could you kindly impart a message to President Putin? These are largely countries that had decided to shun Russia, to boycott Russia and never wanted to have any discussions with them. We've often said, do continue engaging with Russia.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 18

I remember very well when I went to the White House and met President Biden. I said, do not disengage from talking to Russia, even as there is a conflict. He said, can you please pass on a message to Russia because you have historically had a relationship with Russia? He himself said, we know that Russia was one of the only countries that supported your struggle, as you were involved in a gigantic struggle against apartheid. I said, yes, they did support us and we've continued to engage with them.

Our engagement with them does not result in the abandonment of our own principles. We have principles and they deal with us with great respect, with great honour, knowing very well that we are a sovereign state and we will not abandon our principles whatsoever.

Now, many of them are calling us and saying, can you please pass on this message to President Putin about the Ukrainian war, so that we can find a settlement? This is done by nearly all of them; nearly all of them. These are countries that criticised South Africa very harshly when the Ukraine-Russia war started. Now of late, they've become converts. They now come to us and

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 19

ask us to pass on messages and to see how best we can work for peace.

The position we've always had is that we, in pursuing peaceful outcomes, will talk to all parties. We will talk to those who are belligerent in any conflict and we will adhere to our principles. Our principles are to make peace, to make sure that there is peace in the world and that all conflicts are resolved peacefully.

So, our standing as a country has been greatly enhanced, much as others say our standing has been dashed. It has actually been greatly enhanced, as many countries want to talk to us and see how best we can get involved in settling a variety of conflicts around the world.

The Iranian case is a case in point. We've been very clear in our dealings that they are principled and we will always adhere to our own principles and values, and never abandon those. Thank you, hon Speaker.

Question 14:

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 20

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Hon Speaker, driving financial inclusion remains a national priority for us. When more South Africans, especially the South Africans who live in the rural areas and underserved communities, are able to access affordable banking and credit, we unlock entrepreneurship support job creation and stimulate growth in local communities. Now, financial inclusion also empowers youth and women owned enterprises but it also narrows inequality and builds resilience in households and communities as well.

South Africa has a well-developed and competitive financial services sector, in fact, one can say almost second to none on our continent. It is one of those great attributes that investors also look out for to distinguish our market from many others. Our commercial banks, development finance institutions, co-operative banks and new digital entrants, all provide a range of financial products and services to small businesses and individuals. However, of course, we want more access by our people, particularly our small and medium enterprises to have easy access to finance from these institutions.

The Postbank Amendment Act was enacted to strengthen the diversity of our financial sector and to ensure a dedicated

focus on underserved communities. The Act was meant to establish a Postbank as a developmental state-owned commercial bank, offering accessible financial services to all South Africans but more particularly to South Africans who live in the rural areas. Whilst obtaining banking license is an independent regulatory process, the Minister of Communications and Digital Technologies as the representative shareholder and executive authority of the Postbank on behalf of our government, is tasked with ensuring that the Postbank receives the necessary support to obtain the banking license.

According to the Minister, the Postbank has not yet fully met the conditions for a banking license particularly around its card key management processes and the compliance with the prudential standards that are required. Its immediate challenge is to strengthen its governance to ensure compliance with prudential standards and to stabilise its own finances. Capitalisation of the bank will be considered as it must, once the Postbank is granted authorisation to operate as a bank, after which it has 12 months to raise the funding to become a registered to bank.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 22

This will be determined by its business case for which the Postbank board is responsible and submitting the business case to government via the Minister of Communications and Digital Technologies. These steps, Madam Speaker, are essential to ensure that the Postbank obtain its banking license and is able to fulfill the vital mandate that it bears to promote financial inclusion for all. I am sure and certain that these requirements should be met and will be met, and all that we need to focus on is the timeframe through which the bank itself will be able to meet all these requirements.

I know that the board is at work to address all these matters. As it is a financial services institution, the requirements are quite stringent. They are stringent because the prudential authority wants to protect the public when it comes to their money. Therefore, those standards have been well set out and it is now incumbent on the Minister, as well as on the bank to ensure that they meet all these standards. Once these standards are met, then, the bank will be able to offer all the services as a registered entity. Thank you, hon Speaker.

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP OF THE LARGEST MINORITY PARTY: Thank you very much hon President for the comprehensive response to this

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 23

question. One of the measures that has enabled the Postbank to obtain exemption in terms of the Banks Act to implement its commercial strategy and ensure its viability in the interim, is the Masters Service Agreement with the SA Social Security Agency, SASSA, for the payment of social and the Social Relief of Distress Grant paid to beneficiaries.

The Department of Social Development and the SASSA has indicated that they will terminate the Master Service Agreement, MSA. The effect of losing the Master Service Agreement with the SASSA could place the bank at risk of insolvency and possibly going under liquidation, which could see the bank retrenching over 250 employees and not obtaining its full commercial license. What is government doing to avert the risks that are associated with the termination of this agreement? Thank you.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: According to the SASSA, the agreement it had with the Postbank no longer serves any purpose. That is why that agreement is to be terminated. It is said that since the termination of cash pay points and other over the counter services at the Post Office and the removal of the Post Office's recognised grant payment channel, the agreement is no longer relevant. The department is, however, in discussions and

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 24

this has involved a multi departmental type of discussion, to try and forestall this whole fallout.

In the end, the SASSA beneficiaries will not be affected because they will continue with their own accounts. However, the operation of the Post Office itself is what is currently under discussion to ensure that we forestall the total collapse of the Post Office. Indeed, the Postbank has to meet a number of requirements and we have said that this should be met on an urgent basis so that we can see how best we begin to address the whole issue of capitalisation. Thank you, hon Speaker.

Ms J N NOLUTSHUNGU: I will take the question. President, in terms of the statement released by the SA Reserve Bank on 25 August, we know that the Postbank is still a designated clearing system participant and not a fully-fledged bank. Yes, we've heard you that you are in the process of establishing it as a fully-fledged bank. However, in 2018, we introduced a Bank Amendment Bill in terms of which we proposed that the bank should be a fully-fledged state bank.

Further, we proposed that the public service bank be established using the asset base of the African bank, which is largely owned

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 25

by the SA Reserve Bank and the Government Employees Pension Fund, GEPPF. While your party rejected the Bill back then and given your belated delays of the state bank, would you be in support of the sort of the interventions we proposed in the Banks Amendment Bill today in order to boost the capacity of the state to facilitate ease of banking and give it trust for the state-led banking services that prioritise development? Thank you.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: The issue of a state bank has been the topic of great discussion amongst all of us. There is general agreement that there should be a state bank. The whole question is really how do we then move forward to put it together and how do we put all the key elements, whether they reside in the Postbank or whether the African Bank could be part of them?

We should remember that the African Bank has other shareholders who are not state entity parties, like the commercial banks. So, all those entities now need to be properly synchronised to ensure that we do utilise whatever assets that there are to create a state bank. I do think that we have moved considerably closer to what it could finally emerge as a state bank because

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 26

the key question is going to be capitalisation and if we print assets that reside elsewhere can be put together with whatever inputs the government can make to set up a state bank, that would be the ideal outcome.

So, in the end, I do believe that a state bank is no longer a question of whether it will be set up or not, it is really the mechanics of how we go about setting up the state bank. That it will be done in my view is a foregone conclusion, it will be done. How we go about it and how quickly we move to set it up is the critical question. It is a question that I believe is being addressed both by the Treasury, by the central bank and also a number of other entities, as well as Ministries. So, a state bank is something that will happen. Thank you.

Ms M C MAFAGANE: Mr President, Postbank requires about R7 billion to recapitalise and has no intention to privatise. It has gone three times to the National Treasury to capitalise. These requests were rejected. Considering that Ministers signs performance agreements and are accountable to you, Mr President, does your failure to ensure the capitalisation of the Postbank represents a failure to anticipate at the signing into law the state bank the risk factor associated with the viability of the

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 27

State Bank? When this decision, like many others, is not implemented will you say that you are shocked and call for the citizens to provide an answer and solution as you normally do? [Laughter.]

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: [Laughter.] I like your laughter on this. You know, when somebody laughs the way you are laughing, they know that they are not telling the truth. [Laughter.] Nevertheless, let me answer ... [Laughter.] ... Let me answer you directly.

Firstly, I am not shocked. Secondly, I am not asking South Africans to provide the answer. Now, once we have cleared those two questions, I should say that capitalisation of the Postbank is something that needs to be handled with the necessary care. Firstly, the physical challenges that we face are enormous. We don't have easy money lying around but at the same time what I said in my ... [Interjections.] ...

The SPEAKER: Hon Cloete, can you, please, switch off your microphone.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 28

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: What I said in my reply-in-chief was that there are quite a number of conditions that have to be met. I should say that the progress that is being made in moving towards getting the Postbank to become a properly registered bank is actually quite encouraging because now there is a clear road map. The road map is, from a governance point of view, the board must ensure that everything is well aligned, themselves as the people who are responsible for governance. At the same time, they need to look at the financial viability of the bank itself.

Once all that has been done, we will then be able to move to the whole question of capitalisation and then determine how that capitalisation should happen. It is then that the Minister will come to this House and propose a capitalisation amount and where the money should come from. That we want to move towards setting up the Postbank as the registered bank, is a given. All we need to do is to ensure that all these other matters that are regulatory, that have to do with governance and that have to do with financial prudence are all attended to.

Remembering that the Postbank in the end will be managing public money, we therefore, ourselves need to be absolutely certain that this bank will operate in terms of the laws and in terms of

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 29

the regulations that we have that governs banking in South Africa. So, I do hope and believe that that will happen. Thank you, hon Speaker.

Ms A L A ABRAHAMS: Mr President last year the Postbank was looted of a R100 million of taxpayers' money. This was after the Reserve Bank was repeatedly warned of security vulnerabilities. This perpetuates the trust deficit between South Africans and government. Can the President tell South Africans why a state-owned bank will not come yet another Venda Building Society, VBS, looting scheme? Thank you.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: The VBS saga has taught us a lot of lessons. There is a great desire amongst South Africans to have a state-owned financial services. We know that those state-owned financial services will operate with a greater sensitivity to serve the interests of South Africans from a financial point of view. Nevertheless, at the same time, those entities need to operate in accordance with our very stringent financial regulatory framework. The VBS, as you might recall, was not yet a registered financial institution. That is why the type of mishap happened in the VBS.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 30

What we are seeking to do now is to forestall to make sure that what happened, for instance, in the VBS does not happen.

Sometimes it becomes very frustrating for many of us that the government is not moving forward to set up these entities. The frustration is something I can understand, but we must also understand that we've to be absolutely careful because this is about managing public money. If you talk to any banker today, they will tell you that the regulatory framework in which they have to operate is governed by so many laws that keep them straight on the narrow path and that make them to be very careful in managing money that comes from the public.

So, the assurances that one can give would be adherence to regulations and to the watchful eye of the prudential authority, which is part of the SA Reserve Bank, who watch every bank so closely to a point where no one can serve as a director of a bank without being approved by the Reserve Bank. The whole process of scrutiny of ensuring that everybody who serves at a bank is a proper person, it is quite stringent. We need to thank them for that. That is why our financial services architecture is so well respected in the world.

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 31

So, when the Postbank finally gets that license it will join that league of well-regulated bodies and well managed bodies to ensure that things like fraud and the disappearance of money does not happen willy-nilly. We should trust our regulatory framework and know that once we accede to that level of approval, a lot would be much better and safer. Thank you, hon Speaker.

Question 15:

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Hon Speaker, the outcomes of the National Dialogue will, in the end, be determined by the citizens of our country. They are not going to be determined by the President or anyone sitting here.

The National Dialogue should be seen as a structured process where the citizens of our country, together with political actors, civil society, and other stakeholders, come together to deliberate on the future of their own country, to debate on the South Africa they want. Its importance, therefore, lies in several interconnected dimensions. The National Dialogue is aimed at giving ordinary South Africans a voice to articulate precisely the South Africa that they wish to have and how they participate in crafting the solutions for the country.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 32

Now, crafting the solutions sometimes is seen as privy for the leadership, and that is why, when I addressed the National Dialogue, I asked the people of South Africa a number of questions that they should also participate in answering. A wave of criticism has come my way when I sought to elicit real participation so that, as South Africans, we must ask ourselves those very important questions. We must ... [Interjections.] Yes, ordinary South Africans must ask: Why does the tap not have water? They must ask us as their public representatives because the taps do not have water in many places. They must ... [Interjections.] No, no. They must then say, you know ...

The SPEAKER: Order, hon members.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: ... the taps do not have water because there is corruption, and there are water tanks, and we see it in our own communities. They themselves must be able to point out exactly what is happening on the ground. That is the opportunity that South Africans are going to be given to address these issues.

Now, over the next few months, South Africans from across the length and breadth of the country will be engaging in

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 33

conversations on the issues that concern them deeply. The first national convention, which was held from 15 to 16 August at the University of South Africa was attended by over 1 000 delegates representing more than 200 organisations. That was quite a crowd of people, not Mickey Mouse at all. The convention brought together around 30 different sectors in society, ranging from business and labour to traditional leaders and faith-based organisations. There were organisations of women, youth, students, academics, emerging businesses, and older persons, military veterans, persons with disabilities, and unemployed persons.

The SPEAKER: Order, Mr President. Please take your seat. I am advised there is a question on the platform. Hon Skosana, what is your question?

IsiNdebele:

Nom D M SKOSANA: Sihlalo, ngithokoza khulu. Somlomo.

English:

The SPEAKER: Is it a point of order?

IsiNdebele:

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 34

Nom D M SKOSANA: Ngithi ke - liphuzu lokulungisa.

English:

The President is misleading the House.

The SPEAKER: Hon member, on which Rule are you raising your point of order?

Mr D M SKOSANA: Rule number 85.

The SPEAKER: No, hon member. Can you please close your microphone so that we can continue? Thank you, hon President.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: I was enjoying the rest. Hon Speaker, also among the represented organisations were people in the media, in sports, arts and culture, justice, peace, governance, democracy, and human rights. That was the collection of people who were at the national convention. In many ways, the national convention reflected the broad and vibrant diversity of our society.

Whether people like it or not, that was the reality that was represented at the National Dialogue – at the convention,

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 35

rather. The first convention was a great success by any account ... [Interjections.] ... where delegates endorsed the need for the value of a National Dialogue. The convention agreed on key themes for the National Dialogue, understanding that citizens will be able to raise any issues that they want. The nine broad themes that were identified were building a dynamic, inclusive economy that will create jobs and improve livelihoods; tackling crime and corruption; winning the future through education and a healthy nation; fixing the state and making the Constitution work for our people; building South African values, culture, and strengthening our social fabric; advancing gender equality and ending gender-based violence and femicide; dealing with intergenerational trauma and healing; promoting environmental justice; and advancing land and mineral rights.

Delegates to the first national convention expressed their support for a representative steering committee to drive the National Dialogue process. Over the next three weeks, organisations involved in the 32 identified sectors had been meeting amongst themselves to nominate their own representatives to the steering committee. These nominations will now be compiled and collated by the Eminent Persons Group to ensure inclusivity and representativity before the steering committee

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 36

is constituted. Once established, the steering committee will work together with the interministerial committee chaired by the Deputy President, and with the advice of the Eminent Persons Group, to co-ordinate public dialogues across the country. Let us be clear: The steering committee will be led by the citizens of our country, giving credence to our intention that this must be citizen led, whilst government's role is that only of a facilitator.

The purpose of the dialogue that will take place at local level and within various sectors is to develop sustainable and effective responses to the challenges the country faces. It is expected that this process will result in the social compact we all yearn for that outlines the roles and responsibilities of each sector of society in building the South African nation. Whilst South Africans still have to have their say, it can be anticipated that the National Dialogue will make a significant contribution to economic growth, to poverty reduction, to job creation, to lowering the cost of living, and to building a capable state, the very priorities that we outlined over and over again in this House.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 37

Now, citizens feel ownership over national decisions when they are directly themselves involved in shaping them, complementing the important role that is played by elected representatives. Involving the people directly enhances the process of developing a shared vision for the country of our future. What happened when the national convention was held was quite a moving process, where we had so many South Africans expressing a deep yearning to be in conversation with each other. It is something that we should never dismiss out of hand. It is not something that can be called a misnomer. It is something that happened and that is going to lead to the holding of a National Dialogue through the length and breadth of the country. If one just looks at the number of organisations that were represented, they represent the entirety of our society in South Africa, of our citizenry. Let us give this whole process a chance, an opportunity to progress, rather than stand on the sidelines and criticise. As they say, it is better to be inside the tent and doing something than to be outside. Let us all be in this National Dialogue tent. It is almost like a caravan. It is moving. We call on everyone to be part of it. Thank you, hon Speaker.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 38

The CHIEF WHIP OF THE SECOND LARGEST MINORITY PARTY: Madam Speaker, to the President: The National Dialogue is a failure no matter how you sell it. [Interjections.] No, listen. Thabo Mbeki Foundation, Steve Biko Foundation, Chief Albert Luthuli Foundation, Desmond and Leah Tutu Foundation, F W de Klerk Foundation, Oliver and Adelaide Tambo Foundation, the Strategic Dialogue Group, and many others withdrew. Mr President, how do you plan to get the entire country behind what results from it if you could not even get the entire country in the room to begin with?

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Madam Speaker and hon member, I do not want to get into the politics of who withdrew and who stayed in because if I get involved in that ... Let me just say this: This is not the President's dialogue. The people of South Africa called for the dialogue, and then they said it has to be convened for the first meeting by the President because, embedded in our Constitution, there is that notion that when we talk about nation-building, it is the President who should lead the process. Now, as often happens ...

The SPEAKER: Order, hon members, can we lower our voices?

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 39

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Now, as often happens, and you are talking here to somebody who was unfortunately involved in a number of other dialogues. You know, we had the peace process in our country when the country was dogged by a lot of violence. A number of South Africans got together and said we should have a peace summit, and, when that was held, a number of other people did not participate, but a peace pact was framed, and it helped to bring down the levels of violence in the country. When we were moving forward to democratise our country, I remember very clearly that we held a convention for a democratic future, which brought together a number of organisations. Many others did not participate. That convention for a democratic future helped to craft the path towards negotiations. When the multiparty negotiations happened, starting with Codesa, a number of other entities did not participate, but it still resulted in the caravan moving forward.

When the multiparty negotiations happened for a new Constitution, a number of parties did not participate. These were parties of great weight, of real, big influence. They did not participate, but the caravan moved on and finally produced the Constitution that we now have. The process of drafting that Constitution was so broad and so inclusive. The drafters went

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 40

throughout the country to involve a number of South African citizens. So, it often happens – we are experienced with this – that when national processes happen, there will be those who will decry that they have not been included, and there will be those who say this is irrelevant, and there will be those who say we do not want to participate. However, the majority always participates, and they move the process forward.

So, in this case, I am hopeful, much as, truth be told, much as I now have nothing to do with the dialogue because the dialogue is now being led by a steering committee of which I am not a member. This dialogue is now going to be taken forward by those people who believe that this process should be theirs, and all we will do as government will be to play the supportive role of financing their various activities. In many ways, that caravan is going to move on, whether people like it or not. For those who may have an inclination to now want to be part of it and join in, I am told that they will always find the door open, and the caravan will stop for a while to allow them to climb on, and then it will continue moving on. Thank you, hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon President. Hon members on the virtual platform, really, please help us to make sure that we

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 41

move with the process of the question and not disadvantage other members who still have their questions. I think it is important that we note that. Let us not be disruptive. I now call on the hon Ismail-Moosa.

Mr I ISMAIL-MOOSA: Speaker, I would like to thank His Excellency the hon President Cyril Ramaphosa for the opportunity. Considering the widespread public perception of a lack of trust at grassroots level in government and noting that nongovernmental organisations and civil society organisations are playing a pivotal role in supporting communities where government capacity falls short, it is concerning that their pivotal role was not adequately prior engaged, recognised, or included in the National Dialogue.

So, may I ask you, hon President, does the National Dialogue intend to broaden its engagements to meaningfully include grassroots and civil society organisations at its top structures so that the process is more adequately and genuinely people driven? I ask this in the interest of our South African citizens, given the urgent realities faced by millions of South Africans. Thank you.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 42

The SPEAKER: Your time is up, hon member. I am sure the President picked up at least one question you asked.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Hon Speaker, as I am no longer involved in the whole process of the National Dialogue, I am told that one of the key principles that the National Dialogue steering committee will seek to adhere to is inclusivity, to make sure that as many organisations as possible, organised according to sectors, participate at grassroots level in the rural areas and in the urban areas. Already, I am told that those sectors are meeting as we speak. They are finalising, as sectors, their own representatives, be it in the sporting fraternity and its subsectors or other sectors. It could be rugby; it could be football; it could be tennis; it could be whatever. It could be traditional leaders; it could be all other sectors. It could be medical; it could be legal. They will all be meeting right now and identifying those who can be selected to come onto the steering committee.

I do believe that it might well be a fairly large steering committee that will seek to be representative of the people of South Africa, of various sectors around which our people coalesce. So, the fear that some will be excluded should really

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 43

be waylaid because, in the end, we want this dialogue process to be as inclusive as possible, and it must be people driven. It must be driven right from the grassroots level, and people must be able to speak their own minds.

I envisage that, in the end, we will have even – and this is what I am going to be calling for and encouraging – at university level and at school level National Dialogue days where young people come together and discuss precisely what South Africa they want to inherit going forward. They themselves must have those types of discussions, and I do believe that the steering committee will organise that so that there should be a day in which people collectively throughout the country get together and have a discussion. We should have school governing bodies getting together as well and talking about the type of education system they want to see.

All of this, including the questions that I raised, are matters that South Africans should be talking about and should be crafting solutions around. It must be a people-driven process, not a top-down type of process. It must be from the bottom right to the top. That is how inclusivity in the end will be achieved. Thank you, hon Speaker.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 44

Rev K R J MESHOE: Speaker ...

Sepedi:

... dumela, Mopresidente.

English:

It is concerning that calls for the postponement of the National Dialogue made by the seven legacy foundations who ultimately withdrew from the national convention task team have gone unheeded. The foundations raised concerns that core principles of the dialogue have been violated, yet these concerns have not been addressed. They cited the erosion of citizens' leadership, a lack of financial and operational infrastructure, and the absence of an approved budget allocation as some of the reasons for their withdrawal. If the running of the National Dialogue is to be transparent – as transparency was initially one of the core principles – which line items were removed from the planned expenditure that enabled the initial cost of the National Dialogue to be cut from R700 million to the estimated R441 million? Thank you.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Speaker and hon member, the decision to go ahead with the National Dialogue and the decision

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 45

for me, as it was planned, to convene it was a collective decision. It was not one person's decision. It was a decision that was taken collectively with the Eminent Persons Group and those who were involved initially in organising the task team who now mutated to become the organising committee. The issues that were raised were that we are not quite ready, the documentation has not yet been properly printed, we don't know how the finances will be managed, and all that. Those were the reasons.

The counter-reasons that were then put forward were that the invitations had already gone out, and various organisations were responding. There were going to be more than 1 000 people attending. Arrangements had already been made. Bookings had already been done for transport, accommodation, and what have you. The preparations for documentation could be solved fairly quickly. The issue of the budget was not really the key issue in the end. The key issue for me, and I must put my hand up in this, was that the budget that had been drafted was R740 million. I asked what we would be doing with R740 million. It came out that some of the money would be utilised for booking people into expensive accommodation and booking meeting halls. I questioned whether that was really necessary. When our people

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 46

meet at Ward level, they will always find places to meet, like we do with our stokvels, with our prayer groups, with our whatever. People always find places on a free basis to meet. Why do we budget so much money for the holding of such manifestations?

I then directed that that budget be brought down substantially. Even for the national convention, when I looked at the budget – and I do look at these things – I found that the hotel charges and all that were so high. I said, no, we are government. As government, we operate on economies of scale. We can bring prices down. Go back and ask for bigger discounts. This is precisely what they did, and it brought that budget down.

Now, the good thing is that the finances are being managed by the National Economic Development and Labour Council, Nedlac. Treasury allocates money to Nedlac. Nedlac, which is a state organisation, manages that, and it plays the role of the secretariat. That, for me, is very comforting, to ensure that what people feared – that money would disappear – should, to a large extent, be curtailed and that Nedlac should ensure that we keep a hawk's eye on how the money is utilised.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 47

Those were some of the concerns. In the end, hon Meshoe, the decision taken was a collective one. If we stopped after having invited people, it might have been very difficult two, three, or four months later to bring them in. The principle that this is not a people-oriented process is false. It is very false because, in the end, Rev Meshoe, if you were there, the whole dialogue, the whole convention, was being run not by a single government person. It was being run by civil society, people from organisations. I kept asking: Who is this one? Who is this one? I did not know them. To me, that was a joy – that we have people who were not the known names running things. The Deputy President was not the chairperson of the dialogue, and we had no Minister who was the chairperson of the dialogue. It was ordinary South Africans.

That whole process is now going to be transposed to how it happens at the local level. I have insisted that, from a government point of view, it must be hands off – hands off. The only time we will need to get involved is to delineate the money and to make sure that the money process is being well handled through Nedlac. So, government is hands off, our people are in charge, and I trust our people to deliver the product that the

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 48

people of South Africa need. That is why the dialogue then went on.

Let me add, Rev Meshoe, the Eminent Persons Group delegation was there. Most of them were there. Bishop Lekganyane was there. He sat throughout the process. Various other leaders of the Eminent Persons Group were there. They were overseeing, but also hands off, as it was being directed by ordinary people. I derived a lot of joy, and I am waiting for the report that you too will get. So, it is hands-off government but hands-on our people. Thank you very much.

Dr C P MULDER: Hon Speaker and hon President, I want to make three quick points and then ask a question.

The first point I would like to make is that you referred to the questions that you asked during the convention. I think South Africans did not ask the questions because they know the answers. They expected the President to reply and to say why these things were there, and why they were not done differently. The second point I would like to make is that I think it is common cause that the majority of South Africans were not represented. If you purely look at the parties represented in

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 49

Parliament who did not participate, in terms of their support, it is quite clear – never mind trade unions – that the majority of South Africans were not represented. Lastly, on the problem with regard to the outcomes you referred to, I am not aware that any decisions were taken at the convention.

My question is the following: The original question dealt with possible outcomes, and it referred specifically to economic growth, job creation, etc. We have had some interaction, you and I.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, hon Mulder. Your time has expired.

Dr C P MULDER: The question I would like to ask is this.

The SPEAKER: Hon Mulder, your time is up.

Dr C P MULDER: You've made it very clear on behalf of the Presidency but also your party that you are not going to support those kinds of amendments. If that dialogue comes out and says these things should be done, will your government implement those changes?

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 50

The SPEAKER: Hon Mulder! We couldn't hear most of your question.

Dr C P MULDER: I switched off my microphone a long time ago.

The SPEAKER: Information technology, can you please switch off the hon Mulder?

Dr C P MULDER: I have switched off.

The SPEAKER: Mr President, you can answer the question if you heard because it was very difficult.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Hon Speaker, it was very difficult to hear, and whatever I might answer might not entirely answer the questions that he might have had. To the extent that I heard, the hon Mulder seems to be saying that the majority of parties represented in Parliament are not participating in the dialogue. That may well be so, but there are some parties in Parliament that are represented in the whole process of the National Dialogue. As I said earlier, at times, when we hold national manifestations, there are those who choose not to participate. I think, past just begging them to

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 51

participate, we can never, as the English say, take a horse to the river and force it to drink.

I'm expecting that, with time, as they see this process unfolding, they may well want to participate. In the end, the value of South Africans talking to each other – and, let me be clear; let me be very clear – it is South Africans who will be talking to each other, meeting at Ward level, where even our voters, the people who voted for us, are represented. So, they will be talking, and they will not even be cajoled not to talk. They will opt to go to those meetings and participate. So, it is to the detriment of us who are sitting here to say, no, we are not going to participate because of this and that.

I often say, and I referred to this, with regard to the Pan Africanist Congress, that their message to me was quite heartwarming because the president of the Pan Africanist Congress came to me and said: Mr President, we, as the PAC, have always shunned and stayed away from various national manifestations, and we now realise that, due to our absence, our voice was not heard. Now we want to be there because we want our voice, as the PAC, to be heard. I took that to heart, and I said that is precisely what the South African response should be,

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 52

that we should participate because, you know what, your own members, your own voters, are going to participate at grassroots level. They are going to go to those Ward meetings, unless, of course, as a party, you issue a directive to not participate. Maybe all you should ever say is that, if you see the President at any of those, don't go. I promise you I am not going to be there, so they should go.

I do hope that various parties will find their way clear, and those who are staying out will find their way clear to participate. This is a serious citizen-led process. Our people want to participate. Thank you, hon Speaker.

Question 16:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr President, before you proceed, hon Skosana, was that a point of order?

Mr D M SKOSANA: No, it's a point of privilege.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, hon Skosana, we are now busy with the questions. Hon President, please proceed.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 53

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Hon Deputy Speaker, South Africa's Group of Twenty, G20, Presidency under the theme: "Solidarity, Equality and Sustainability" has received strong support from G20 members, also strong support from invited countries that are not members of the G20 whom we have chosen to invite, particularly those who are on our continent and immediate neighbours to us, as well as receiving great support from international organisations. South Africa's G20 Presidency has entered its final 90 days.

Approximately 87 of the 132 official meetings on the G20 calendar have already taken place. You might have seen some of these meetings taking place in various parts of our country. I must immediately say that they've all been well organised, well run, and in this regard, we really thank our provinces. Our provinces have come out in the strongest way to be hosts of these various G20 meetings that have been held from as far field to the Kruger National Park, to the Eastern Cape, North West and all over. In fact, all over the country, these meetings have taken place.

Therefore, we thank also the people of South Africa for being great hosts themselves, because they have, in several ways,

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 54

interfaced with the G20 colleagues who have come to our shores. A number of these meetings have resulted in people who didn't know our country falling in love with our country and saying that they will return on holiday, and they will come and see our country more closely. Now, these meetings address some of the most urgent and significant challenges facing the global community, demonstrating our firm commitment to finding sustainable and innovative solutions through dialogue, through collaboration, and through co-operation as well.

The ongoing G20 discussions aim to advance, in the end, South Africa's overarching priorities. Now, these priorities are to strengthen disaster resilience and response, and we chose this because of the experience that we keep on having regarding disasters. Year in and year out, three of our provinces continue to be befallen by terrible disasters that damage infrastructure, damage living abodes, and leading to loss of life, loss of assets and loss of livelihoods. Therefore, we want the G20 to address this.

We also wanted the G20 to address debt sustainability for low-income countries. Many of the low-income countries in the world suffer under the burden of heavy debt, and we wanted to mobilise

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 55

finance for a just energy transition and to harness critical minerals for inclusive growth and sustainable development. Those have been our clear objectives under the rubric of the themes that we have chosen, equality, sustainability and solidarity. For us to bring to the fore the concept of solidarity has been very important, particularly in the light of what is happening in the world. We are calling for solidarity.

It has demonstrated its sharp end through several countries now coming to the fore on a matter where we were so heavily criticised when we chose to support the struggle of the Palestinians, and where we said we will support them. We will, yes, take another country to the International Court of Justice, ICJ, to stop underlying, to stop the atrocities that are happening there. Several countries are now coming forward to express solidarity and in many ways inspired by the position that we took that solidarity is still an important value in the world, that we need to pledge solidarity with those who are suffering and those who are being horribly treated.

Therefore, we are rather pleased that much as our theme was so heavily criticised, particularly from the Global North, when they said a theme like diversity, inclusivity, and equality and

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 56

equity should not even see the light of day in, say, the G20. We have forged ahead, and it is now being broadly accepted. South Africa is also championing broader and cross-cutting issues on all G20 working groups. Now, this includes reform of the multilateral trading system and international financing architecture, including strengthening of multinational development banks. While there is divergence on some issues, as is expected in multilateral engagements, there is support, and strong support for that matter, for South Africa's priorities among G20 members. Negotiations on the G20 Working Group Ministerial declarations and outcomes are currently underway.

You will recall that at the end of the G20, we need to have a declaration. A declaration which in the main will be drafted by all participants. A declaration which South Africa is going to pilot to ensure that South African G20 declaration becomes the accepted outcome that will unite the world or the G20. Most of the last round of Ministerial meetings will be held in September and October, ahead of the Leaders' Summit, which will be held in November.

Now, significant progress has been made, and a milestone was achieved with the holding of the third meeting of the G20

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 57

Finance Ministers and central bank governors in July 2025, remembering that the G20 process really got started to address the financial crisis that the world faced some years ago. The meeting outcomes were agreed in a communique, consented to by all parties. The meeting delivered productive and constructive discussions on Africa, the global economic outlook and the macroeconomic stability, the international financial architecture, sustainable finance and global health, infrastructure, tax, financial sector issues, and financial inclusion.

Now, these to us were a milestone because to have gotten the Ministerial meeting, which involved the reserve bank governors and Ministers of Treasury, to finally reach consensus and all these was really, in my view, the heart of what the G20 South Africa will mean. On the 29th of August, we launched the G20 Extraordinary Committee of Independent Experts on Global Wealth Inequality, and this was a South African initiative. The panel is being chaired by the Nobel Laureate, Professor Joseph Stiglitz. This initiative seeks to heighten global attention on inequality and outline practical action to address growing disparities in income, wealth and opportunity. Our former Minister of Trade, Industry and Competition, former Minister

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 58

Ibrahim Patel, is going to Washington, just a day from now, to go and interact with Professor Joseph Stiglitz on precisely the issues that we have asked him to chair our committee on. The outcomes of the G20 Ministerial meetings will form a key part of the G20 leaders' declaration, which will be adopted at the G20 Summit in Johannesburg in November.

South Africa aims to produce an ambitious leaders' declaration that will promote the development agenda of the Global South in general and the African continent in particular. All in all, Madam Deputy Speaker, a great deal has been achieved. We are way beyond the halfway mark. We are now on the final stretch of the G20 South Africa's Presidency, and so far, it has been really good. The discussions have been rich, they have been robust, and they have been well organised, which in many ways is a great feather on the head of South Africa that we have been able to hold these meetings without too much angst, without too many differences, but getting various countries to coalesce. Even those countries that initially boycotted some of the meetings, and this is the thing about boycotting meetings, even those that boycotted, they found that the meetings continue, the caravan moves on, the caravan did not stop, and when they wanted to come and attend, the caravan was stopped to enable them to come and

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 59

attend. They got on the caravan, and the caravan is moving on. That is what is happening.

Ms M MODISE-MPYA: Deputy Speaker, through you to hon President, as the ANC, we are encouraged and confident that the hosting of G20 brings global attention and will help attract foreign direct investments and will create opportunities in various sectors, as we have expressed. However, a lot of our people are uncertain and are asking the questions of how will the G20, as hosted by South Africa in 2025, benefit ordinary persons on the streets, as well as help improve our economy and ensure that some of the opportunities created can be sustainable even beyond the event?

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Hon Deputy Speaker, and of course, as we hold these big manifestations, everyone wants to see of what benefit is this going to be to us, and particularly at the individual level. The benefits are not something that will eventuate immediately. What this does do, though, particularly when it comes to the themes that we have identified and the priorities, is that these are processes that will finally turn the wheel of development to start getting the world to address all these issues.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 60

The G20 is an agglomeration of some of the big economy countries in the world. They account for a massive gross domestic product, GDP, number, and just to get them to come together, to agree that they will agree on the reform of the financial institutions like the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, IMF, and also to agree on continuing forward with multilateralism so that we do not have a unipolar world, that we have a multipolar world, and where, for instance, on the outcomes that we want to see in terms of financing renewable energy, or climate change and how, for instance, we would like disasters to be properly financed. This, for us, is an important ambition as we face, as I said earlier, recurring disasters.

Therefore, in time, the people who live on the eastern seaboard, in KwaZulu-Natal, in the Eastern Cape, in the southern Cape, who continue to suffer from climate change damage, we're hoping that through the decisions that will be taken, we'll then be able to get finance that will assist us with rebuilding. Obviously, we're also doing this for our own continent, for countries in the Global South, but more particularly for Africa, that in the end there should be agreement on how countries that are suffering from a high debt burden can get cheaper loans to address their own developmental agendas.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 61

Now, all these matters do take time, as many others that have been decided by the G20 do take time. For instance, in Brazil, the decision was taken to target the 3 000 richest people in the world and to levy tax on them. Now, that was agreed, and that work is now underway. It will admittedly take some time before it is finally put into place. However, in the end, the taxation of those people will lead to higher taxes for the countries where they live, and in the end, it will result in development finance being present.

Therefore, we, as South Africa, being positioned as a country that is hosting the G20 for the first time, we should be pleased that it positions our country as a very important country from an influence point of view, because we are up there with many other nations, and we're able to influence decisions that will be taken by various multilateral organisations in the world. As it is now, because we are G20 Presidency, our views, our opinions are sought, and our word is heeded and listened to. These are some of the key benefits that position our country at the top level of countries that operate in the world.

More so, for us, it was more to focus on Africa and to focus on the Global South, which has broadly been accepted, and also to

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 62

focus on the African Continental Free Trade Area and to convince the various countries that are part of the G20 that South Africa remains the gateway into the rest of the African continent, where if they want to set up operations, we are an investable destination. Therefore, from an investment point of view, it also showcases our country. It gives us an opportunity to talk about South Africa, and in fact, in all the meetings that have been held, all our Ministers and our Deputy Ministers have done nothing but to showcase South Africa. As we have held these meetings, we've taken them to places that showcase our country as well. That has brought tourism in and will also bring future tourism.

Therefore, the benefits can be multiplied in many ways. To say this will be the one thing that everyone will benefit from would be false on my part, but it's general benefit, and it's a good opportunity that we have. It's an opportunity that may only befall us or come to us possibly 20 years again from now. Though we need to make good use of this opportunity that we have, being the first African country to be a G20 President, and being in a very good position, having inherited the position from Brazil, a Global South country, and handing over to the United States, US, a northern country which is a superpower and the biggest economy

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 63

in the world. We are well-positioned, and I do believe that that gives us clout, that gives us an opportunity to be able to mobilise several things that can benefit our country. Thank you, Deputy Speaker.

The LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (Dr M J Hlophe): Madam Deputy Speaker, I beg leave to remain seated. Mr President, don't you find it strategic and, indeed, necessary to influence the G20 to dissect this undesirable attitude of the United States against some countries in the world? Consequently, are there any plans in place by South Africa to influence the G20 Summit to put on the agenda the current regressive attitude by the United States against South Africa and other progressive countries? If not, don't you think South Africa must just focus on cementing economic ties with Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, Brics, countries and other progressive countries in the Global South, and excuse itself from global bodies in which the US is part of the main driving force? I thank you.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Hon Deputy Speaker, South Africa continues to participate in a multitude of multilateral organisations, and in doing so we always insist that a multipolar world is much more advantageous than a unipolar

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 64

world, where the might of one country means right and means that they can dominate other countries. We participate because we do always advocate the interests of our continent, and of course, the interests of our own country and continent, and the Global South. We are highly respected around the world for doing precisely that. Even as we participate in meetings, for instance, of the Group of Seven, G7, where we are invited for their outreach programme, we always articulate the views of the African continent and the Global South. Being a member of the G20, we can do so as being a rightful member, and our voice is heard.

Of course, you will know that as part of all this, we are members of Brics, and some members of the G20 are also in Brics, such as India, Brazil and China. They are members of Brics. In Brics, we are a collection of fairly progressive countries that have a particular set of values that bring us together. Just yesterday, as I said, we held a Brics summit in which all the leaders of the Brics family participated and took decisions that are aimed at consolidating what we have and leading us to even improving the manner in which we trade, the manner in which we respond to challenges, and how we should strengthen the multilateral system. All of us, as one spoke about how we

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 65

strengthen the United Nations and how we strengthen the World Trade Organisation and the World Health Organisation.

Now, these organisations are organisations that many other countries participate in, including the United States. We then take decisions to be the voices of reason, the voices of progressiveness, notwithstanding that they also participate. We have the view that we cannot extract ourselves from those types of organisations by virtue of the fact that the US participates. We should participate and be able to exchange views and exchange opinions with them. Obviously, with the hope that our views will win the day because they are based on good values, based on progressive principles.

However, to answer your questions more directly, yes, we are strengthening Brics, and we are relying on Brics to be the organisation that will consolidate our own standing and our own values. Brics already, from a population point of view, is already half of the world population and accounts for between 30 to 40% of world trade. That basically means that it's a very strong collection of countries that in time will continue to have a strong influence in what happens, not only in the G20, but also in the world.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 66

In the G20 process, we've got a good number of countries that are very progressive, that see eye to eye with what we believe in. We will be able to keep on pushing that agenda, because our agenda is aimed at advancing the interests of humanity and making sure that ordinary people live a better life. Thank you, Deputy Speaker.

Mr N M HADEBE: Madam Deputy Speaker, through you to Your Excellency, I would like to know what legacy projects or initiatives are being developed as part of South Africa's G20 Presidency to ensure lasting developmental impact beyond 2025? Thank you.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Hon Deputy Speaker, we have a few projects that are being worked on that will see full fruition when we get to the Leaders' Summit. We are, through the various departments that we have in government, have been looking very closely at certain projects, and some of which will, the temptation is always you go for a legacy project at the region where the Leaders' Summit will be, like we've seen in many other parts of the world. However, we want it to be a much more broad-based type of legacy projects that will – our people will then be able to say, this is what – we had the G20, and this is what

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 67

has been left behind. Therefore, a few such projects are now in the works, and some of them are reaching a level of fruition, and we will be able to talk about them in time. Thank you, Deputy Speaker.

Xitsonga:

Ttn S M GANA: Xandla xa Xipikara, ndzi kombela kusungula hi ku navelela Bafana Bafana ntlangu lowunene eka madyambu ya siku ra namuntlha loko va tlanga na Nigeria. Hi tlanga na Nigeria namuntlha, Phuresidente. Phuresidente, ekaya eLefara, eTzaneen, va vula leswaku loko hi fanele ku amukela vayeni ku na nkhekhi lowukulu wa ku tirha vusiku na nhlikani. Kambe endzhaku ka loko vayeni va fambile ...

English:

... we go back to the default setting. Therefore, now, when you drive through the G20 route, there's so much work that's happening. However, I know, as we have seen with the World Cup, that after the hosting of the G20, we go back to the default setting.

Xitsonga:

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 68

Kutani va kombela leswaku ndzi mi vutisa, Phuresidente, leswaku mi ta swi endlisa ku yini leswaku matirhelo lawa, magingirikelo lawa hi ma vonaka eka nkarhi wa sweswi ma ya emahlweni ...

English:

... after G20. Not these things coming to an end, all this 24-hour work is coming to an end, because now the visitors have left our country.

Xitsonga:

Ndzi khensile swinene, Xandla xa Xipikara.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Deputy Speaker, through you ...

Xitsonga:

... ndza khensa swinene. Na hina hi tsakela leswaku Bafana Bafana va ya wina namuntlha. Va tlanga na tiko leri tikaka swinene. Nigeria yi tshama yi hi komba xipuku. Hikokwalaho, hi lava ku va komba xipuku namuntlha. Kutani ndzi khensile swinene. Kutani u vula ntiyiso loko u hlamusela leswaku hi mikarhi yotala loko ku fanele ku vhaka vayeni na le makaya swi endleka tano. Loko u tiva leswaku ku ta vhaka muyeni, ku nga va mukon'wana, ku nga va Phuresidente, ku nga va Xirho xa Palamente, loko a fikile

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 69

aku dyiwi swakudya swin'wana na swin'wana, kambe ku dyiwa swakudya swa kahle swinene. Rivala ra muti ri ta fanela ku basisiwa kahle, timbyana ti ta bohiwa leswaku ti nga vonaki, i ntumbuluko, naswona swi endlisiwa xiswona.

English:

It's natural all over. When visitors come, we spruce up and we clean up. However, when visitors are gone, we revert to our usual practises. You are absolutely right. There are concerns also about precisely that in areas where these meetings are happening. However, what I have seen is that where we've held some of the meetings, people cleaned up, people put everything right, and they've continued even post the meeting, because they use that as an incentive to get better. I'm hoping that where we are going to have, for instance, the Leaders' Summit in Johannesburg, and we've been putting a lot of pressure on Johannesburg itself, that Johannesburg must pick itself up from what it is. It should not only be because the Leaders' Summit is coming to Johannesburg. It must be because it should be done.

I took time to talk to the mayor and explained to him that one time as I was travelling around, I saw how even the driveways, even the roads were really in a terribly sorry state, with weeds

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 70

along the path and with the rails having been damaged, and paper all over and dirt. I painted that picture to the mayor.

Therefore, I said that this must end. We must deliver a better-looking Johannesburg. It must not only be done for the G20, but it must also be done beyond the G20. He sat there and listened. He said, Mr President, I want you to come and measure us in a month's time. That's precisely what I'm going to do. Therefore, we will see whether Johannesburg gets better. However, the point that you made ...

Xitsonga:

... ndzi swi twile swinene. Hi ta endla leswaku vanhu va tiyisisa leswaku loko vavhaki va fambile swilo swi tshama swi sasekile ku ya emahlweni. Kutani hi ta swi endlisa xisweswo. Swi fanele ku saseka ku fana na wena hikuva u sasekile swinene.

Question 17:

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Hon Deputy Speaker, since the advent of our democracy in 1994, Deputy Ministers have played an important role in assisting Ministers in the performance of their functions and responsibilities. The Constitution provides for the appointment of Deputy Ministers to assist the members of the executive. According to the Constitution, Deputy Ministers

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 71

are accountable to Parliament for the exercise of their powers and the performance of their functions. Ministers and their respective Deputy Ministers agree on the delegation of responsibility in certain areas of work in terms of departments' annual performance plans, ensuring that there is consistent political attention and oversight.

In announcing appointments to the national executive following the May elections last year, I indicated that due to the need to ensure that the national executive is inclusive of all the parties to the Government of National Unity, GNU it was not possible to reduce the number of portfolios, for instance in the executive. We have sought to ensure that the national executive is representative of the people of South Africa, giving due consideration to gender, youth, demographics and regional distribution.

The Deputy Ministers appointed in June last year continue to add value to the work of government and to support in a meaningful way the implementation of the priorities of the Seventh Administration. Yes, we are always concerned about the size of the executive as we are also concerned about the number of Deputy Ministers. You may recall that right at the beginning

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 72

when we constituted this government, we did address this issue and said that my own wish was that we should have a much smaller executive. That has always been my declared wish. But the need to accommodate various parties that are part of the GNU resulted in us having the size of the executive that we have now.

All my colleagues in the GNU accepted that, yes, it would have been ideal to have a much smaller executive. However, the needs to have a GNU which is properly representative meant that we needed to have the type of architecture that we have. It is an architecture which I believe works. I have seen how the various Ministers and Deputy Ministers go about executing their tasks. It is what we have, and we need to keep the government moving forward with the type of architecture that we have right now. Thank you, Deputy Speaker.

Mr R A P TROLLIP: Hon President, you're the steward of South Africa. Despite your so-called wish that your Cabinet would be smaller, it has grown like Topsy. You didn't cut any of the ANC positions, you just added the GNU ...

IsiXhosa:

... ngaphezulu.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 73

English:

You have recently appointed ... I need protection.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, hon members.

Mr R A P TROLLIP: Hon President, you have recently appointed an Acting Minister of Police who incidentally says there's no such constitutional provision, he is the Minister of Police, because you couldn't promote two of the deputies. You didn't trust them to become Ministers. You also you also fired the Deputy Minister of Trade, Industry and Competition 75 days ago, and that position remains vacant. These two examples illustrate just how insignificant and redundant these positions are.

Stewardship Mr President is well explained in the Book of Matthew, where three of the Minister's servants were given 10, five and one bags of gold to look after. Two of them increased the value of what they were given, and they were rewarded. One buried what they were given and was rebuked. Why are you burying what you've been entrusted with by maintaining such a costly, bloated and ineffective Cabinet?

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 74

Will you and your party support my Private Member's Bill's constitutional amendment to do away with Deputy Ministers, so that the cost of these redundant members can be redirected to the betterment of our country. Simple question. Will you support it? It's coming. Will you support the Private Member's Bill? If you want a smaller Cabinet please ... [Time expired.]

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Deputy Speaker, what hon Trollip is saying sounds like a threat. So, my response to that rather than saying, I don't respond to threats, is the following: My response is, I would really like to look at that Bill. Please have the Bill forwarded so that we look at it. I'm not able to respond in any way whatsoever until I see the contents of the Bill. Therefore, as much as I said, it sounds like a threat, it isn't a threat. No, I want to actually compliment you and say, I don't see it as a threat, I see it as a very meaningful contribution, because you are concerned as I am of the size of our executive.

The size of the executive we now have is a result of the outcome of our elections, where we had to put together a Government of National Unity with 10 political parties that sat down and negotiated the structure of the government we have. Whether we

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 75

like it or not, it is what we have. Ideally, hon Trollip, I would want a much smaller executive. I would also like fewer Deputy Ministers. But right now, we do have. Deputy Ministers who are really putting shoulder to the wheel, who are going even beyond what I would call the call of duty. Those Deputy Ministers are distinguishing themselves as real contributors to our governance.

What I am also really appreciating is the fact that many of our Deputy Ministers are working so well with their Minister colleagues. So ...

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, hon members. Order! Hon President, please take your seat. Hon Matiase, on what point are you rising?

Mr N S MATIASE: Deputy Speaker, on a point of being mischievous.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Matiase, that is not a point of order. Please take your seat hon ...

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 76

Mr N S MATIASE: The President is deliberately twisting facts, misleading the public. Madiba says: A man who, depending on who listens to him, changes his message ...

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Matiase, you are not now making a speech. Please take your seat.

Mr N S MATIASE: ... is a man who cannot lead our nation.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Matiase, please take your seat. That is not a point of order. Hon President, please proceed.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Hon Deputy Speaker, I think I've responded to the question and have given the reasons why we continue to have the size of the executive that we have, as well as why we have the Deputy Ministers. I have said that it remains a wish and, in the end, an objective that we should have an executive. I've said it here a number of times. But this time around, it was given rise to by the outcome of our elections, where we needed to set up a Government of National Unity. Thank you, Deputy Speaker.

Tshivenda:

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 77

Vho L E LIGARABA: Ndo livhuwa, Muthusa Mulangadzulo.

English:

Hon President, given that Deputy Ministers play a crucial role in supporting Ministers and contributing to oversight and co-ordination of government departments despite not having executive authority. Can the President elaborate on how their advisory and co-ordination functions enhance the effectiveness of government Ministries, also recognising that they participate in Cabinet Committees and support the District Development Model as champions.

If possible, President, can you also outline specific examples or successes where Deputy Ministers have effectively contributed to policy implementation, departmental oversight, and stakeholder engagement, thereby justifying their continued existence for ... [Inaudible] [Time expired.]

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Deputy Speaker and hon members, yes, Deputy Ministers continue to play a critical role in our governance. They are members of the executive. They participate in Cabinet Committee discussions. I'd like to believe that we have a really wonderful system that functions so well. That

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 78

every proposal that finally sees its light of day in Cabinet, goes through rigorous processes, starting off in the department where the Minister and Deputy Minister will engage in discussions with their directors-general and deputy directors-general, to put forward a proposal or a proposition that could lead to a project or that could lead to an amendment of a law or a structuring of a policy.

That then goes to the forum of directors-general to be thoroughly discussed across the various departments. That then ends up going to the cluster that we have.

An HON MEMBER: Chair, I've raised my hand.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon President, if you would just allow me a second. Hon members, please keep your microphones muted and do not interrupt the proceedings. Mr President, please proceed.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: When it goes to the clusters, Deputy Ministers also participate in those discussions.

Thereafter it goes to the various clusters of Cabinet Committees where Deputy Ministers participate vigorously in the crafting of policy of proposals, or even the drafting of laws. Whereafter it

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 79

then goes to Cabinet, where Cabinet collectively then examines what will have gone through this sausage machine if you like, where a proper decision is then taken.

The value of having Cabinet Ministers is clearly demonstrated in this whole process. It starts at the department level, and it goes forward to the cluster level and the Cabinet Committee level, where they engage with other Deputy Ministers and Ministers on the crafting of any position that should lead to either a change or an enhancement of a proposition. So, Deputy Ministers do play a very critical role.

Hon member, you asked if I could give you any concrete example. I can give you many, but standing here, I would only be able to give you a few and leave out others. But they are all participating in a meaningful way in governance. They are participating in the execution of decisions. They assist Ministers. Where Ministers are not able to act on a particular project or initiative, Deputy Ministers ...

Mr D M SKOSANA: Deputy Speaker, you must recognise my hand please.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 80

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon President, could you please take your seat. Hon Skosana, please state the point that you are now rising on.

IsiNdebele:

Nom D M SKOSANA: Sekela Somlomo, ngiyakuthokoza. Elami ngithi uMongameli uyasitjhewa begodu uyasirareja, akaphenduli immbuzo.

English:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Skosana, that is not a point of order. It is now being frivolous, and you are interrupting proceedings. We will now continue. Hon President, please proceed.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Hon Deputy Speaker with those words, I have answered the question that the hon member raised. I see the real value of Deputy Ministers, if truth be told. I appreciate the inputs and the commitment that they demonstrate. In many ways. Deputy Ministers' positions can also be seen as training ground for future Ministerial positions. That's how I look at it. So, they are doing a good job. We may not see the value that they do, I see great value. Thank you very much.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 81

Mr N L S KWANKWA: President, the crux of the problem here is that it's a no brainer that Deputy Ministers play an important role in supporting the work of Ministers in, in terms of departmental oversight and the programmatic work of government. However, President, do you not think that in light of their assigned responsibilities, that the time has come to make the performance agreements of Deputy Ministers public once they've been entered into. That they too, face parliamentary scrutiny on the work they do in support of the government and the political principles, especially when it comes to managing the political bureaucratic interface.

Learning from other jurisdictions where such measures have been put in place like Canada and elsewhere, has the time not come for us to actually make it transparent and clear upfront what to expect from a specific Deputy Minister rather than leave it up to chance and leave it to the relationship between the Minister and the Deputy Minister because ...

IsiXhosa:

... baza kuba ngathi abanye ...

English:

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 82

... they are personal assistants, PAs.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Hon Deputy Speaker. I would like to agree with the hon Kwankwa. Thank you.

Mr N M HADEBE: Your Excellency, my question is: Considering that Ministers within the Government of National Unity are often overstretched with the workload of managing various tasks within their departments, Deputy Ministers have proven invaluable in assisting Ministers with executing their mandates. Has consideration been given to expanding their roles and the responsibilities of Deputy Ministers in ensuring better continuity and succession particularly when Ministers are abroad or unavailable? Thank you.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Hon Deputy Speaker, yes, I'm glad that at least there are some in this House who recognise the important role that is played by Deputy Ministers. So, thank you very much. Yes, as I said, Deputy Ministers play a critical role. That role that they play should be more accentuated in a way where they should be given even more responsibility.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 83

The Constitution of our country invests in a Minister a particular role which is quite special. For instance, when a Minister is absent, the protocol that we have is that another Minister who has sworn the oath to act as a Minister is then asked to participate in that. I don't see that as a drawback at all because Ministers are not often away for too long anyway. When there is clear sharing of tasks and clear areas of responsibility, it should not impede the Deputy Ministers' ability to act and to execute some of the work that should be done.

However, I must say that there has in the past been challenges and some of them have either been personal or on issues where they may not have seen eye to eye on issues. But right now, we are fortunate or I'm fortunate that many of the Deputy Ministers are working very well with their Ministers. Where there are issues, we do intervene to assist and to give support on an ongoing basis. Because you are dealing with people, you will always have situations where they butt heads and, in the end, the role that we play is to try to ameliorate all that. So far, it's working very well. But the points that you have made and the points that hon Kwankwa also made are points that are very

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 84

cogent, which I would like to take into account as we move forward. Thank you.

Question 18:

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Hon Deputy Speaker and hon members, it is vital that the National Council on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide is established with authority and resources that are outlined in the Act. I feel a bit disappointed that this Council has not yet been established in a way that it will take on the task that was envisaged when the National strategic Plan was crafted.

As I embraced National Strategic Plan, I saw the role of the Council being the one that is going to help us as South Africans to bring down the incidents of gender-based violence. So, it remains a huge disappointment to me that this Council has not really been set up. Now, the interim allocation of R5 million for the Secretariat is a transitional measure enabling the co-ordination of the implementation of the National Strategic Plan against gender-based violence and femicide.

To ensure that the National Council is able to fulfil its critical function, the National Treasury has approved the

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 85

Council as a separate subprogram with ring fence funding from the 1 April 2026. The Council is planned for establishment, as I am told, from the 1 April 2026, following due processes -due processes, in my view, that have taken an inordinately long time.

Ministers have co-ordinated government representatives to the Council and the relevant portfolio committee in the National Assembly will call for civil society and private sector nominations. I would like this to be speeded up so that the process of establishing the Council should really get underway. The board will appoint the CEO and the Secretariat staff. Draft regulations to co-ordinate the provincial as well as the local gender-based violence and femicide structures are being developed.

The strength of the National Strategic Plan lies in mobilising multiple stakeholders, and mainstreaming the work of these stakeholders across government, ensuring that each department of government has its own work cut out when it comes to gender based violence or addressing gender-based violence. Every government department and entity is expected to contribute to the implementation of the National Strategic Plan within its

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 86

mandate, while the National Council provides leadership and oversight.

All relevant government departments have dedicated funds towards the implementation of these pillars of the strategic plan, that fall within their respective areas of responsibility. While the work to establish the National Council is underway, the implementation of the National Strategic Plan is proceeding. For example, The Gender-Based Violence and Femicide National Joint Operational and Intelligence Structure, NatJoints, established in April 2025, has strengthened government-wide co-ordination.

Awareness campaigns, school and university interventions are ongoing, whilst the National Council is being set up. Sexual Offences Courts, Thuthuzela Care Centres and GBV desks are operational nationwide. Psychosocial support and integrated services are provided through the Department of Social Development's Khuseleka One Stop Centres and GBV Command Centre are also set up.

There is also progress with economic empowerment, mainly through improving the access of women-owned businesses to procurement opportunities in both government and also in the private sector.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 87

Now, these initiatives show that the National Strategic Plan is a living framework that in many ways is being implemented but needs much more tighter implementation through the establishment of the National Council.

The Council is expected, once operational, to accelerate this process through stronger oversight co-ordination, as well as accountable. Accountability will come from the fact that it will have a budget - a budget that it will be able to oversee to ensure that it executes the tasks that we have foreseen. Gender-based violence and femicide is a stain on the conscience of our nation. The National Council is an important instrument in strengthening our response to this epidemic, ensuring that all South Africans are properly mobilised to ensure that this scourge of violating the rights of women and children is brought to an end.

We now do have an instrument that is emerging, and I wish it had been set up as we brought the matter here to Parliament, but we do have the various other substructures that are already functioning. What we now need to do, is to make sure that the Council is set up, the budget is going to be ready and able to support its work, and accountability process will then be set in

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 88

place. Also, oversight, particularly when it comes to what we do in government.

The reason why we that felt we needed National Council is for the National Council to have a proper oversight of what we are doing in Council through every department of government. The word we have given to every department of government is that we must, together, be involved in the fight against gender-based violence - within government and also in society - and support various efforts that are being taken by various formations throughout the country, to fight gender-based violence.

The Council will enable us to see this as a national task involving all of us, and it will also help to give a real powerful face to what needs to be done by all of us in the country when that Council is put in place. So, a lot of work awaits this Council. As I say, once again, I' am rather disappointed that it has taken this long to establish this Council, but, as always, some of these things do take time. However, we should be pleased that they do happen in the end. Thank you, Deputy Speaker.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 89

Mrs T M CHAUKE-ADONIS: Chairperson and hon members, greetings and revolutionary greetings to our hon Cyril Matamela Ramaphosa in our midst. My question is centred around this, and I appreciate that there is reassurance that they will be ringfenced financing for the GBVF Council. South Africa plays quite an instrumental role globally in ensuring that we are able to have global influence.

With GBV, being one of the pandemics that we are faced with globally and not only locally: How does the President look to utilise South Africa's influence globally on ensuring that we are able to impact on curbing the GBV crisis that is faced globally and by other countries, but additionally, utilising the NCGBVF Model in order for us to utilise it as a platform, but also as a pillar to lead when it comes to curbing the crisis of gender-based violence across the globe?

Most importantly, it would be: How does the President look to utilise his Presidency also in the G20 to ensure that we are able to greatly have influence towards empowering those who are victims of gender-based violence and femicide? Thank you very much.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 90

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Hon Deputy Speaker, yes, we utilise our position as South Africa to be the voice on talking about gender-based violence. At times, we believe that we bear the greatest burden when it comes to gender-based violence, which we declared a pandemic. To this end, wherever we can and whenever we can, we become part of structures that make us focus more on gender-based violence and also spread the message.

For instance, in Africa, our own continent, we have continued to advocate the position of having to fight against gender-based violence and participate in various UN structures and committees at a global level. Even at the UN level, we participate in various structures, that not only deal with the issue of gender-based violence, but the broader issue of also promoting the health of women, children and adolescents, which are very much a part of the whole ecosystem of having to deal with the challenges that the women of our country face.

So, we, even in the G20, have structured an issue on solidarity, that our solidarity value must also be about caring for ordinary people and caring for the interests of women, of children and adolescents, and also caring for them from a health point of view.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 91

So, our position is not only national, but it is broader than just being national. It is a message that we do believe should be spread more strongly around our own continent, as well as around the world. Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker.

Ms T A KHANYILE: Deputy Speaker, Mr President, in 2022 you promised the nation, but women in particular, to establish a National Council on Gender-Based Violence. Two years later, this Council exists only on paper; but also exists as a broken promise. Mr President, have you deprioritised GBV as a final act of humiliation to every victim and survivor of gender-based violence?

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Hon Deputy Speaker, if you heard me carefully, right from the beginning of my reply, I expressed my disappointment. It is a deep disappointment on my part that this Council has not yet been set up. It has not yet been set up because the structuring thereof was such that this House has had a role to play.

If there was a time when I wished I was a dictator, this would have been the time where I would have set up the Council on my own, and this Council would have started working way before

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 92

2022. When the women of our country marched on the Union Buildings in 2018 and insisted that we should hold a summit, I agreed that we should hold a summit.

They marched to Union Buildings. I was told at 9pm that they were there, before going to sleep. I was told that the women said they are not going to leave the Union buildings until you come. So, I got into the car. I went to the Union Buildings. I met them, and I gave them the promise that we would hold a summit, which we did. It was a very successful summit, which they led on their own.

I just convened it and on their own, and on their own - listen, listen, listen - they decided what needs to be done. It was a dialogue. It was the dialogue of the women of our country. Others did not come, while others stayed away, but the dialogue went on. Others came beside the caravan, and it stopped. They climbed in and the dialogue was held.

The dialogue ended up with a National Strategic Plan, which said there must be a Council that will be set up. Obviously, to give it authority and the positioning of being a state institution, it had to be legislated here. You, as legislators, decided that

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 93

you are going to set up this Council. My wish would have been that I should set it up, because we would have moved on. However, because you are addressed and you have a dictator, which is a good thing, you have delayed in setting up this Council.

So, much as I am to blame for many things - for everything that happens in the country - this is one area, my dear, hon sister, I am not to blame for. That is why I say I am disappointed that this Council has not yet been set up because it detracts from the promise I made to the women of this country in terms of dealing with GBV. I have been an ardent speaker and campaigner on GBV. I will continue doing so, getting our men to treat the women of our country with respect and with honour. Thank you very much.

Ms M B B MUHAMMAD: Mr President, the Gender-Based Violence and Femicide Act came into effect in November 2024. Yet, by mid-2025, the National Council is still incomplete, with civil society and private sector's seats vacant. In just one quarter, 966 women and 314 children were murdered. While shelters collapsed from funding delays, and where SA Police Service has even omitted GBV data from its crime stats, perpetrators still

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 94

continue to walk free on bail, further eroding trust in the justice system.

If GBV is a pandemic, as you just said: Why is your response so nonchalant? Are you once again shocked? What is your excuse for not having tabled the ringfenced costed plan with quarterly milestones for survivor services, provincial structures, credible steps, GBV reporting and bail reforms in such a manner that makes this law to be not just symbolic while women and children continue to die?

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: I am not shocked; I am just disappointed that this structure has not been set up. This Parliament should have played its role in setting up this structure, and this structure would have then inspired the work that needs to be done, including ensuring that the budgets are in place because it is this structure, this Parliament that sets out budgets.

It is Parliament that should be calling for accountability, whether it is from the police reporting on GBV or whether it is the programs that need to be embarked upon. Yes, money can be allocated, but the structure that has to be put in place should

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 95

be set up first because Treasury is ready, willing and prepared to finance the work that needs to be done.

The work continues to be done, as I said, through various of our departments - every department and every Minister. I am going to be even insisting more on each of our Ministers, to make it clear that gender-based violence becomes a priority in their activities. So work is being done, and I do want this Parliament to move with maximum speed to make sure that this Council is set up. If you, as parliamentarians, can act quicker, then this work of gender-based violence will move at maximum speed. Thank you, hon Deputy speaker.

Ms M R MOHLALA: Deputy Speaker, Mr President, we have noted your expression of frustration right from the start of your response. However, let me remind you, Mr President, that the main impediment towards getting the Council to do its work is chronic underfunding, which makes it impossible, for instance, to appoint members who come from civil society organisations if there are no guarantees that they will be paid.

Considering the crisis level of gender-based violence and femicides in this country, and the several commitments you have

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 96

made towards the fight against GBV and femicide, do you not consider your failure to fully institutionalise the National Council on GBVF as a betrayal of women's safety in this country? If not, what measurable commitments do you make to the women of this country in relation to the functioning of the National Council on GBVF? My name is hon Mohlala. Sorry for that. Thank you.

The PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: Hon Deputy Speaker and hon Mohlala, the commitment that I would make is that I have pass on the message to members of this body to get on with the process of appointing the Council. Hon Mohlala, once the structure is in place, the Minister of Finance now has the authority, with your allowance - with your permission - to allocate the funding that should finance the work of the Council. The Minister will not be able to do so unless Parliament plays its own role.

Yes, I said that I am responsible for everything that goes wrong; but not this one. Please ...

IsiZulu:

... awungixolele.

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 97

English:

Not this one!

Sesotho:

O ntshwarele moo! Ke kopa o ntshwarele. Tse ding kaofela, tjhehe, nka dumela; empa ena ka nnete, ke a hana! Ke a hana ka nnete! Ena ke lona!

English:

I want all of you, as you always say to me – what do you always say: Mr President, don't you think you have been derelict in executing your duties? Now, I want all of you to agree that all of you have been derelict in executing your jobs. I would like to see ... So, I will stand outside there and shake each one's hand and say: Do you agree that you have been derelict?

Hon Deputy Speaker, that that to me really should add to the urgency of setting up this National Council. I can say that the budgets will be there, and people who will serve on the Council will be assisted to do their work, because this is important work – it is a national project that this seventh administration is committed to ensuring that it is executed. So, with those words, I thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

Page: 98

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members, that concludes Questions to the President. I thank the hon President. Hon members, before I request members to stand, I would also like to say that looking at the T-shirt that the hon Minister of International Relations and Co-operation has on, we all have to support Bafana Bafana this evening, and we trust that it will go well. So, members please stand and wait for the Presiding Officer and the Mace to leave the Chamber.

Business of the day concluded.

The House adjourned at 16:52