WEDNESDAY, 09 MARCH 2022

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PROCEEDINGS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

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The House met at 15:00.

The House Chairperson Ms M G Boroto took the Chair and requested members to observe a moment of silence for prayer or meditation.

NEW VACANCIES OWING TO THE PASSING AWAY OF OTHER MEMBERS

(Announcements)

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G Boroto): Hon members. Hon maKhawula, please put on your mask and relax. Thank you very much.

Hon members, the process is still the same about our safety, nothing has changed. There is a lot of echo. I do not know why? Please check on that. There is echo around the speakers here.

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Hon members, I wish to announce that the vacancy which occurred in the National Assembly owing to the passing away of Ms M M Tlou has been filled by the nomination of Mr X N Msimango, with effect from 7 March 2022.

The member made and subscribed the oath in the Speaker's Office. May I welcome the hon member as he stands. [Applause.]

IsiZulu:

Siyakwemukela baba.

English:

Hon members – hey this thing is disturbing man!

It is disturbing. I do not know.

Mr A M SHAIK IMAM: It could be because the House is empty, Chairperson.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G Boroto): Because of what, hon Shaik Emam?

Mr A M SHAIK IMAM: Because the House is empty. There are not much members here.

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The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G Boroto): No, something must be done. I think they will be able to reduce whatever – as I am speaking, they are also listening and I know they will help us. Alright.

Yes. I can see them. They will do something.

That corner.

The first item on today's Order Paper is Questions addressed to the Ministers on Cluster 2: Social Services. There are four supplementary questions on each question. The parties have given an indication of which question 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 the sitting through virtual platform. The members who will pose supplementary questions will be recognised by the presiding officers. In allocating opportunities for supplementary questions, the principle of fairness among others has been applied.

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If a member who is supposed to ask a supplementary question through the virtual platform is unable to do so, due to technological difficulties the party Whip or the Whip om duty will be allowed to ask questions on behalf of their member. When all the supplementary questions have been answered by the executive, we will proceed to the next question on the Question Paper.

The first question has been asked by the hon C V King to the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation. I was told that the Minister will be personally be here in the Chamber. Is that so?

I do not see the Minister.

The MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND INNOVATION: No. Unfortunately, Chair. My apologies. I was unable to attend as I originally intended to.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G Boroto): Understood, Minister. I will now allow you Minister to respond to Question 90, asked by the hon King. Hon Minister.

QUESTIONS TO MINISTERS

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Question 90:

The MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND INNOVATION: Hon House Chair and hon members, and thanks to the hon King for her question.

My response to the question is that the National Treasury allocated an additional amount of R7,775 billion for the 2022-23 financial year. A further amount of R1,5 billion will be reprioritised from the Department of Higher Education, Science and Innovation, 2022-23 Budget.

This allocation is in line with the projected R9,3 billion shortfall for National Student Aid Financial Aid Scheme, NSFAS, in the 2022-23 financial year.

In addition, the National Treasury has allocated additional amounts in the Medium-Term Budget Framework to anticipate the anticipated shortfall in subsequent years.

Hon House Chair and hon members, however, this done whilst at the same time the department is working with a Ministerial Task Team that I appointed in 2021, which is working on

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developing a full comprehensive student financing model or a student financial aid system that hopefully will bring certainty in terms of the different funding needs of students with the hope that by the middle of the year one would have actually been able to finalise such a model and the necessary policy frameworks in order to move forward.

However, the long and short of it is that all the NSFAS qualifying students this year, who have been admitted to accredited programmes at universities and colleges will be funded for the 2022 academic year. Thank you very much, hon House Chair.

Ms C V KING: Hon Minister, in 2021, NSFAS funded 54 000 Students, of which 9 098 students were unfunded and 21 972 student appeals were rejected or closed. For 2022, more than 700 applications were received, clearly Minister, this actually highlights that the R10 billion shortfall is not really a clear projection.

So Minister, the Treasure-General actually said that R32,6 billion additional funds will be made available.

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How will this R32,6 billion be utilised in totality to cover the additional students who have applied for NSFAS funding?

The MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND INNOVATION: Hon House Chair, I must say the figures that the hon King have, I do not recognise them at all. For what I know is that in the 2021-22 financial year or the 2021 academic year, to be specific more than 700 000 students were funded by NSFAS and this year they are about to hit 800 000. And NSFAS has processes of determining who is funded and who is not funded. We have very clear criteria including mechanisms for those who wish to appeal who have actually not been funded.

As I am saying now, what we are committing is that all students who have been admitted to accredited programmes in both universities as well as colleges for this current financial year, will actually be funded who are NSFAS qualifying and that is what I mean.

So, I do not know the figure of 54 000 where it comes from, because it is too little. That is not what NSFAS funds. It funds much bigger numbers.

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Indeed, you know there are some challenges in relation to the need to have enough funding of the system to be able to support the growing number of funded students. I think that is the issue going forward that we are looking into as well as the fact that the Ministerial Task Team is also looking at a model that will then enable us to identify where the gaps are and so on.

For now, unfortunately I do not recognise the numbers that the hon King is talking about. At the next available moment even at the portfolio committee meeting, I will be more than happy that we pursue this question of hers. Thank you very much, hon Chair.

Ms C V KING: Hon Chairperson, I rise on a point of order.

The Minister would know that NSFAS ... He was in the meeting when NSFAS presented to us in December that 542 193 students were funded. So, I would like to know where his 700 000 comes from?

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G Boroto): Hon member, let us not forget that this is an oral reply question. So, if you have a

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debate on the issue, you have to do it the right way. The rules allow you to do that. Thank you.

The hon Kwankwa.

Mr N L S KWANKWA: House Chair, is it possible to sort out the echo before we continue, because we cannot hear the members ask questions.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G Boroto): I also had the same problem with that.

Mr N L S KWANKWA: Now we run the risk of repeating what has already being covered in the follow-up questions.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G Boroto): Alright. Let us just be patient and let us continue with it for we cannot stop, sir. Please, they are working on it and I trust that they will come up with something. Yes.

As we proceed, we call on the second follow-up question. The hon Mahlatsi.

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Ms K D MAHLATSI: Hon House Chairperson and hon Minister, you will agree with me that the NSFAS of today is way better than that of yesterday. Though we continue having challenges, but this are tipping challenges in a system that is progressing very well.

Hon Minister, in light of the fact: What is the sustainable funding model can equali the supply demand deficit in the system to meet the financial needs of NSFAS eligible students without negatively impacting other departmental programmes. Thank you very much, House Chair.

The MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND INNOVATION: Thank you very much to the hon Mahlatsi for actually asking a very pertinent question, as to how do we find an equitable model.

Firstly, the answer to that is what I have pointed out. The work of the Ministerial Task Team that I have appointed to actually respond to help me respond to the challenge that has been posed to Cabinet for me, will be able to come up with a funding model that is based on what needs to be funded by how much, so that we are able to fund all the NSFAS qualifying students.

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Now, the most important thing is that this Ministerial Task Team is also going to be looking on issues of student debt as well as looking at other aspects of student funding that are needed.

However, hon Mahlatsi you are hitting on the right issue, because also this thing must say: What are the implications of increasing student funding for the mainstream budget of the department? For as things stand now, it is not healthy the fact that we are going to be taking R1,5 billion from other programmes of the department in order to support student funding, because at the end of the day, that is self-defeating. We will actually be funding more students into a system that is less capable of effectively responding to their needs.

However, with the task team report, I am expecting it will address all that such that government and the National Treasury are very clear on what needs to be done in order to strike the right balance. So, I agree with you about this concern. I hope that the team will be then able to give us a better answer so that government would be able to respond comprehensively, rather than on a year-by-year basis rather

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than as we are doing at this moment. Thank you very much, hon House Chair.

Mr N L S KWANKWA: Hon Minister, regularly or rather on a daily basis we get complains from students about portal errors and delayed disbursements of allowances by the centralised NSFAS administration system. Has your department done anything about these portal failures to make sure that students are not unnecessarily denied funding or that their funding is not delayed? The disbursement is not unnecessarily delayed. Thank you.

The MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND INNOVATION: Hon Kwankwa, let me say that I do appreciate the concerns that you are raising, because I myself and my office is dealing with such on a daily basis. The issue is often like this that: Whilst there may be glitches with the NSFAS system which we monitor very closely by the way as the department, NSFAS itself does monitor the system such that whenever there is a problem in my Facebook page for instance students raise it all the time. We are able right away raise the issue with NSFAS to say are there problems and then they are able to address them.

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However, the other challenge that we have is sometimes the problem of communication between NSFAS and institutions. For sometimes, some institutions take time to confirm to NSFAS the list of students who have been admitted so that then NSFAS will be able to say out of your list, these are the ones whom we have really informed and qualify for NSFAS and therefore we are going to pay for them.

That is why what I am now preoccupied with is the development and for NSFAS firstly to acquire a more advanced information and communication technology, ICT, system to be able to process issues, but at the same time we are looking at the capacity of especially Technical and Vocational Education and Training, TVET, colleges, because that is where the bigger problem is to also have the necessary ICT system to be able to interact with NSFAS on time.

So, the problems sometimes come from institutions rather than from NSFAS itself, despite the glitches that are there. However, I am working towards upgrading that these institutions all upgrade their systems so that in future we do not have these kinds of problems that we had.

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However, so far we have been able to deal with the problems including the appeals that are there. I would like to encourage members like the hon Kwankwa that sometimes if you do not get joy, please as an, hon member gets in touch with me as the Minister right away without any delay. Thank you very much, hon House Chair.

Mr M N PAULSEN: Hon Minister, in November last year, you indicated that NSFAS has funded over 750 000 students in 2021. The number of students from poor households who are going to need assistance to further their studies is surely going to increase over the coming years. The NSFAS is experiencing problems as we heard them now, it is not the answer to these problems. Why are you resisting developing a comprehensive plan for a universal free higher education in South Africa to ensure that not a single student is left out? Thank you very much.

The MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND INNOVATION: Hon House Chairperson and to the hon Paulsen, firstly I would say in response to this question I am glad that you have come out with the correct number of around 750 000 students who have been funded, unlike the hon King who spoke about 54 000

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initially which is why I was questioning the numbers. And then also later she says 540 000.

[Interjections.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G Boroto): Order!

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G Boroto): No, not the hon Minister. The hon members are making noise in the House. Proceed. I am sorry.

The MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND INNOVATION: Alright. Yes. I was also saying what the hon King got wrong is that she is only counting university students. If you then include TVET college students, that is how the number goes to 750 000 students that we have funded.

Now I want then to say in that light to the hon Paulsen that we are developing a comprehensive plan for student funding, but the government policy is clear. We have no universal policy of funding of higher education in this country. That is not the government policy. The government policy is funding students from the poor and working class backgrounds who come

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from families who are earning not more than R350 000 per annum. Those are the priorities for government.

However, in addition, I have asked the task team to look at what other system which possibly would be a loan system can that be found for those who come from families who are earning more than R350 000, but at the same time not rich or wealthy enough for them able to pay for their students.

However, where a family has two university students and is earning up to R600 000, that family can make an appeal to NSFAS to be able pay for them. So that is the system that now we are looking at, how do we tighten and make sure that the glitches in NSFAS are ironed out and how do we deal with what we call the missing middle.

Really this position of the EFF, hon Paulsen, I am sorry to say this is a very reactionary position. Thank you very much. [Time expired.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G Boroto): Alright. I wanted to remind the hon Minister about the two minutes' response and for others to follow. Thank you.

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Mr M N PAULSEN: Hon House Chair!

IsiZulu:

Mnu N L S KWANKWA: Mama.

English:

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G Boroto): Hon Paulsen you want to say something?

Mr M N PAULSEN: Yes, hon House Chair.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G Boroto): Is that a point of order?

Mr M N PAULSEN: The Minister threw something back at me and I feel we had to respond. That is our position that education work with ... [Interjections.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G Boroto): Alright. We are not debating here. I am sorry. Let us proceed we are now on Question 121.

Mr N L S KWANKWA: House Chair, House Chair, just before the Minister answers. I know that the hon Minister is born before

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technology but, please can he not sit to close to the screen we end up only seeing his mouth.

Afrikaans:

Die HUISVOORSITTER (Me M G Boroto): Ai man! Hoekom is julle so? Nee man, mense!

English:

You can simply talk to the Chief Whip; the Chief Whip will inform him. Please!

We now move to Question 121.

This thing is not going away. What is wrong ICT? It is not going away and we are really struggling to be honest. When hon members speak, we cannot hear them very clearly. I do not know what went wrong because we have been doing so well. Alright. Is it only from me? Are you fine as members there? Yes. So, let us give them another opportunity to try and sort this out.

Question 121 is asked by the hon Tambo to the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation. The hon Dr Nzimande.

Question 121:

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The MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND INNOVATION: Thank you very much, House Chair and also to hon Kwankwa for helping me about how I look. Thank you to hon Tambo for the question. I want to respond by saying National Student Financial Aid Scheme, NSFAS, can only provide information about the number of students that it has approved for provisional funding. The final funding decision is linked to the formal process, as I have explained earlier, whereby a student registered for a funding qualification at a particular institution.

The final number of funded students therefore depends on the integration of registration data with the NSFAS funding database which can only take place once all registration processes have been completed. But in the meantime, I can be able to say that NSFAS is able to report that of the 645 000 applications received for university study, 635 331 applicants have received provisional funding decisions. Approximately 144 000 of these provisional funding decisions, indicate that the applicant’s request for funding has been declined and approximately 130 000 of the applicants do have the option to appeal. Approximately 97 000 of these provisional funding decisions, indicate the student’s request for funding has been declined. So, that is the picture at the moment. Lastly, NSFAS

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will receive the first tranche of its 2022-23 allocation from the department on 1st of April 2022 and then, we will disperse funds for students where institutions have submitted complete and compliant registration data to NSFAS. Thank you very much, hon House Chair.

Mr M N PAULSEN: Minister, as recently as the end of February many students at the University of Cape Town, Durban University of Technology and the University of the Free state, to name a few, were left in limbo after their applications for NSFAS were rejected and the appeals process was delayed. Can you guarantee today, that all of these qualifying students have been given confirmation of funding from NSFAS and are registered at universities?

The MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND INNOVATION: Thank you very much, hon Chair and thank you for that follow-up question from hon Paulson. I want to say that virtually all these problems that have been raised have been addressed by institutions. I am very pleased to say that the interaction between institutions and their SRC's, to address many of these problems, have generally gone very well. That is why the sector largely is very stable. In fact, the academic programme has started and progressed.

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The report that we are getting is that all these outstanding problems are being addressed. I can't, of course, stand here and say up to the last but my commitment is that working together with the institutions, we must ensure that no problem is left unattended, including working together with NSFAS such that all students are attended to. Obviously, hon Paulson there will be those who do not qualify. We have criteria as to who qualifies, who doesn't qualify. So, those who do not qualify, do not get NSFAS but they also have a chance to appeal within a particular period. The turnaround of the appeals also has really improved because we commit that we deal with appeals within a circle of no longer that 14 days, so that there isn't much delay and students are negatively affected. Thank you very much hon House, Chairperson.

Ms J S MANANISO: Thank you, House Chair. Hon Minister, I heard you on your response, you have covered the issue of appeal. However, one wants you to take the House into confidence on what interventions are in place to enhance the NSFAS system, to improve its application approval as well as appeal process? I thank you.

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The MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND INNOVATION: Thank you very much, hon Mananiso. That's a very important question that you've raised.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G Boroto): Hon Minister, just a minute. Hon members, as I have said yesterday, this House is too small.

IsiZulu:

Awekho lawaya amakhona besinawo ngale.

English:

So, let's try to minimise our loudness, please. I am doing what you asked me to do. My mouth is straight with the mic, but still I can feel the echo. Anyway, Minister, you still have your full two minute to respond to hon Mananiso. I am sorry for disturbing you.

The MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND INNOVATION: Thank you very much, hon House Chair. I was saying that the question that is asked by hon Mananiso is a very important question, as to what interventions are being made to make sure that the NSFAS is responsive. Firstly, one of the biggest interventions that have been made towards the end of last

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year, is that, now students are able to get a response, most of them instantly as they apply. Unlike before, they would wait for weeks, sometimes for a month or two before they get a response if they qualify. Now they get the response, especially that category of students who are SASSA recipients. They are able to get their response as they actually lodge their applications. The others who did not get their responses like SASSA at the time they apply, NSFAS is able to come back to them within 48 hours, which is a very, very huge improvement to what actually was happening before.

As I have said, what I am now focused on is to assist NSFAS that you get the necessary funding for NSFAS, to be able to acquire a better ICT system that will be able to even improve more and be able to interact much more effectively with institutions, because part of the delays are caused by the institutions not sending responses indications to NSFAS on time, to indicate which students have actually been admitted and to which accredited programme. That is the second major intervention that we are actually going to be making in order to make sure that NSFAS indeed does respond on time. Thank you very much, House Chair.

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Ms C V KING: Minister, I am glad that you are saying that you are intervening to ensure that the networking and the ICT system is taken care of. But Minister, today, students as we are speaking here still do not know what the outcome of their appeals are, because of My NSFAS system which collapsed during the course of the application process. So, Minister please take us into your confidence and tell us exactly on which date will most of the appeals backlogs be addressed?

The MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION, SCIENCE & INNOVATION: Hon House Chair, thank you very much for that follow-up question. I would like though to correct, hon King. Don't say students do not know whether they are getting their money or not. As I'm talking to you now, I don't have the exact number. But NSFAS has assured me that overwhelmingly the students have actually been informed. In fact, the number that I quoted earlier of the 645 000 applications, 635 000 applicants have received provisional funding decisions. They know that they are actually going to be funded - that question I have already addressed. So, you can't say students, as if it's everybody.

Where there are students who have had problems with MY NSFAS portal, NSFAS at all times is interacting with them. I have what I call my own war room in my own office working together

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with the department that is actually monitoring the situation. Sometimes we even respond or check on behalf of those who contact my office. I do not encourage that because I do not have that capacity in my office, but we are monitoring NSFAS all the time. You will be able to have an appropriate information. You are free to ask this in the portfolio committee when we have actually concluded the registration processes and also it's important that we make sure that students have got the right numbers - they do not change. Thank you very much, hon Chair.

Mr K P SITHOLE: Thank you, hon Chairperson. Hon Minister, last year the IFP received numerous complaints from students of payment about NSFAS that have stopped without any information, especially in the Mangosuthu University of Technology. What steps have been taken to rectify this issue in order to reconcile the student's accounts and what were some of the reasons to cease payment of approved applicants? Thank you.

The MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND INNOVATION: Thank you very much, hon Chair, to the follow-up question by hon Sithole.

IsiZulu:

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Jobe, njengoba ngichazile, [Uhleko.] ngigculiseke kakhulu kulonyaka ngisho nalaphaya e-MUT ukuthi kubekhona ukuxhumana phakathi kwabafundi nabamele abafundi kanye nabaphathi baleya nyuvesi ukuthi zonke izinkinga ezithinta u-NSFAS azixoxwe, zixazululwe. Bengingakatholi okuqhamuka ke laphaya e-MUT okuza kimi, okuthi hhayi, Ngqongqoshe sesinenkinga engaxazululeki, mhlawumbe sowungangenelela wena. Kunomehluko omkhulu okhona njengamanje ...

English:

... on what is actually happening and is going on at MUT and what this year seems to be improved interaction between the SRC as well as institutional management.

IsiZulu:

Kodwa ke Jobe njengoba ngishilo nje, uma ngabe kukhona okusalele ngane yakwethu, okungalunganga, okubonayo. Hhayi, ngiyacela ukuthi ungishayele ngisho ucingo mina. Ngiyokuphendula, sibone ukuthi senzenjani. Silungise ngoba siwuMnyango senza konke ukuthi siqiniseke ukuthi izingane okufanele zithole uxhaso maziluthole, njengoba vele iningi lazo seziluthole njengamanje. Ngiyabonga kakhulu Sihlalo.

IsiZulu:

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USIHLALO WENDLU (Nk M G Boroto): Sithokoze Mhlonishwa.

Question 122:

The MINISTER OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS: House Chair, we have acknowledged the challenges and recognised the challenges caused by lack of co-ordinated planning. Hence, the department planned and developed a declared 136 priority human settlements and housing development areas. The intention is to ensure the integration of planning, funding and development within priority development areas.

This allows as well for the crowd-in of private sector funding to support and supplement government funding to achieve a set of uniform, equitable and integrated development objectives and outcome. The Priority Human Settlements and Housing Development Areas, PHSHDAs, as we are calling them, are incorporated into the various districts and metropolitan municipalities, where we are talking about one plan - the District Development Model, DDM.

Within this financial year that is going to start, we will be announcing a set of changes that are going to assist us to be able to implement this plan. We are aware of the unfinished projects – what we call blocked projects - that are forming

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part of our work for the 2022-23 financial year, so that we start unblocking them and responding to what has been previously the challenge of low co-ordinated planning and some of the weaknesses that existed because of capacity building. Thank you very much, Chair!

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G Boroto): Thank you, hon Minister. I am advised that, on the question asked by hon Masutha, the Hon Tseke will take charge of the follow-up question.

Sesotho:

Mong M A TSEKI: Ho na le Tseki ... [Interjections.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G Boroto): Okay, they wrote wrongly, they said Tseke, and that is Tseki. Okay! Thank you, hon Tseki. You may proceed.

Sesotho:

Mong M A TSEKI: Tseki ke monna; Tseke ke mosadi!

English:

This is a follow-up question, hon Chairperson. What are the main barriers for integrated planning, budgeting and

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implementation? And, how does the department, working with private developers for inclusive economic development are going to act moving forward? Thank you.

The MINISTER OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS: House Chair, major issues that would allow to crowd-in private sector investment is whether we identify these priority areas to support them with bulk infrastructure. This is the major part, because when you look at what private developers want to do is that they are inhibited because of this area of work where it is costly for them to do, where it is service that relate to municipalities.

So, what we have done in terms of our Human Settlement Development Grant, HSDG, is that we have heard when the Minister of Finance announced in terms of the changes in the Budget, but also with the Appropriation Division of Revenue Bill that has been tabled. However, compared to previously, in terms of non-metropolitan municipalities, we will now be able to move in terms of direction, from 2% of bulk infrastructure development to 5%.

Subsequently, the provinces have a leeway of increasing it to 30%, and this will be done as they submit their plans, so that we can ensure integrated co-ordination - working together to

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ensure that what we are developing in terms of the infrastructure, supports economic growth. Thank you very much, Chair!

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G Boroto): Thank you. As we proceed we now invite the hon Moruti Meshoe!

Mr W M THRING: Chair, the Hon Thring, as I understand it, will be taking the follow-up question, with your permission.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G Boroto): Allowed! [Interjections.] Proceed, hon Thring!

Mr W M THRING: Thank you, Chair. Hon Minister, the challenges of bulk infrastructure as well as the lack of integration across all three spheres of government affects most departments. The ACDP has in this regards raised these challenges with Department of Trade, Industry and Competition, DTIC.

The ACDP has also long championed the principle of sweat equity when building human settlements, as this principle allows unskilled members of the community to develop an artisan skill in the process of assisting one’s neighbour to

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build a house before building one’s own house. Sweat equity is Ubuntu in practice.

Will the Minister employ this principle of sweat equity as a model for building human settlements? If yes, what percentage of development will be allocated to sweat equity and by when? If no, why not? Thank you.

The MINISTER OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS: House Chair, hon Thring, let us start here: Bulk infrastructure can’t be done by inexperienced people, because it is work that is done by engineers. So, this is the work. What do we talk about when we mention bulk infrastructure? It is the bringing of connections, for example.

Let me simplify it. When you want to connect sewerage from a plant to houses, into a community; or when you want to connect water from dams into communities; or when you want to connect electricity from the grid into Soweto, you can’t take inexperienced people to do that. That is why it is done by engineers, and it is done by professionals. So that is the first thing.

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I think you are confusing things. Where we utilise artisans, for example, bulk has been put and then you are connecting to the houses. There you can use artisans under supervision. On building of houses, yes we utilises artisans as well. So, there work is currently there. As part of our work in most of the areas, we do have learners that are trained. Some of them are coming through EPWP. You would see in provinces where the MECs as well will have young people graduating as we conclude the project. So, that work is already there. So, I am not so sure about this sweat programme that you are talking about, but it could be just the utilisation of different words of what already exist in the programmes that we run. Thank you.

Mr B N HERRON: Chairperson, the question as I understand it is about the alignment or the misalignment between the different spheres of government spending and planning infrastructure where human settlement developments are taking place. Obviously the alignment and planning on socioeconomic infrastructure across all three spheres of government is critical in that we are going to address deprivation and achieve meaningful outcomes of local economic growth and inclusion.

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In 2011, the national government introduced the Built Environment Performance Plan, BEPP, over there for our metropolitan municipalities, metros, and it was the requirement of the metros to prepare this integrated plan across the three spheres of government, including the SOEs. In order to qualify for the Urban Settlements Development Grant, the USDG, the purpose was to align the infrastructure and other investments in the metros by the three spheres of government, so that we don't have these housing developments taking place where there are no other services.

So, perhaps the Minister can tell us: Does the Built Environment Performance Plan still play a role in the allocation of USDG and other funding? This is so that we don't have these incomplete and poorly planned... [Interjections.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G Boroto): Hon Herron, I gave you extra time thinking that you maybe you are not familiar yet with the Rules. You have one minute to do that, as it comes from Rule 142, and you haven't asked your question yet.

Mr B HERRON: I have asked my question. I will ask again... [Interjections.]

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The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G Boroto): You did after I gave you extra time. Minister, please proceed!

The MINISTER OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS: Thank you, Chair. Indeed, hon Herron, I agree with you: Hence, it is part of what we are doing now. Previously, you would have had the metros submitting business plans, to say based on the allocation of the USDG, therefore this is what we are going to do for a particular year.

What has been the weakness is that the USDG allocation, together with business plans, would be done between the national department and the metros directly. When we engaged with provinces, they raised this as a concern because it allows for misalignment.

We have agreed that as we do the new business plans in the new financial year, we will ensure that we involve provinces and ensure that we sit together in the planning - among ourselves as national, the provinces and metropolitan municipalities, which are metros - for the infrastructure and the utilisation of USDGs, so that there is alignment together with the Informal Settlement Grant that will be allocated to

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municipalities. That work has started already. Thank you very much hon member.

Mr A M SHAIK-EMAM: House Chairperson, I think we need you as a referee when *Bafana Bafana* is playing, when we need to score a goal, to give us extra time. House Chairperson and Minister, my understanding is that the human Settlements Development Grant was created to accelerate the process of housing development, particularly for those people in the middle-income group, who do not qualify for bonds or financial assistance through the financial institutions.

Through the Human Settlement Development Bank and private investment, we might be able to accelerate this. However, what is very clear for the last couple of years is that clearly what you are saying is that you are addressing it, but we lack the capacity to be able to provide the service sites to be able to accelerate this process.

Now, Minister, would you consider also speaking to the Minister of Higher Education, so that we could include in their curriculum those skills that you need at this local level to be able to accelerate that process?

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The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G Boroto): You had your few second extra – never ask again! The hon Minister!

The MINISTER OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS: House Chair, let me just again clarify to hon Shaik Emam: The HSDG, which is Human Settlement Development Grant, does not cater for social housing. The Social Housing Programme is what we call Financed Linked Individual Subsidy Programme, Flisp, or in short, from 1 April 2022, we will be calling it, Help Me Buy A House.

Help Me Buy A House/Flisp is currently run under Social Housing Regulatory Authority, SHRA, together with National Housing Finance Corporation, NHFC, is the one that is meant to close what we call the missing middle, where people who are not qualifying for Breaking New Ground, BNG or RDP house. RDPs are funded under HSDG. HSDGs are for our top structures in terms of our BNGs, as I explained the 2% in terms of our infrastructure and also some allocation for Government Housing Rectification Programme, GHRP.

So, what he is referring to is what we are regarding under social housing programme where we are responding to the missing middle in terms of applications. That programme is running very actively, and now we are reviewing it.

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On 1 April 2022, we are going to make a full media briefing hon members, and we will share with you the details of how we intend to continue with this programme. Thank you.

Question 123:

The MINISTER OF SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE: Thank you very much, House Chair. And thanks to the question asked by the member here. My department has already included the fight against gender-based violence and femicide, GBVF, amongst its flagship programmes. To that end, and particularly at this point in the country's history around the subject specific initiatives have been put in place as part of our programme. Example here will be the programme Baqhawafazi, which is a campaign led by young women tackling this matter of GBVF from the prison of young women. Golekane programme which is the conversation between men or fathers and sons looking at this matter. And all of them are linked to what we call SILAPHA Wellness Intervention Programme, which is a programme about about mental illness, substance abuse, legal issues, financial issues and so on.

A victim opted to exercise her legal rights and subjected the matter to criminal investigations by the SA Police Service. At least the portfolio committee and ourselves were informed by Swimming South Africa though SA Sports Confederation and

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Olympic Committee, Sascoc. However, the reported incidences against Swimming South Africa related to allegations of abused by a coach and staff member gave rise to the urgent need for an evaluation of what processes were in place to deal with the full spectrum of safeguarding in sport without interfering with continuing legal processes. To that end, discussions on the subject has taken place both within Sascoc and the Portfolio Committee on Sports, Arts and Culture.

Amongst the practical measures, Chair, which we are looking in this regard: Firstly, the development and adoption of safeguarding policy by Sascoc that will be cascaded down to all its affiliates and national federations. Secondly, the process which has commenced from the department looking at the possibility of making the provision of such safeguarding policy amongst the departments funding criteria. Thirdly, the prioritisation of schools by the department through the initiation for measures whereby proper vetting of personnel dealing with tyrant in sports events is instituted. Fourthly, the establishment of a sub-committee under the Safety and Security Commission to deal with the safeguarding of school children events. Fifthly, the appointment of safeguarding officers at the events hosted for the various provincial

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departments, which will collaborate with SAPS convening of workshops as part of the school's sport events.

The last part point there, Chair, is the full co-operation and participation by my department with the envisage workshop on the safeguarding in sport that the Portfolio Committee on Sports, Arts and Culture led by hon Beuty Dlulane has resolved to convene. Thank you very much.

Ms R C ADAMS: Thank you, Chairperson. Hon Minister, how does the department monitor and address sexual abuse minors and adults in the sector? I thank you.

The MINISTER OF SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE: As I have responded, Chair, thank you very much.

Ms V VAN DYK: Thank you, Chairperson. Minister, it is just not true that Sascoc is serious about safeguarding when their own reporting email address for these victims and compliance on their website does not work. An email bounced back as I previously reported in a portfolio committee meeting. Minister, what have you done in this regard, the whole Sascoc held accountable the lack of action to protect victims?

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The MINISTER OF SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE: Well, I think the hon member will help her not just to throw a statement without substantiation. We have in a comprehensive way explained what is happening within the department, what the department is doing, what Sascoc is doing, what Swimming South Africa is doing, and also what the victim has done, which we support actually that taking the matter to the law enforcement agency which at face value comes across as a criminal matter is what need to be supported. And I think that the hon member quite clearly should prepared her speech before I responded so that I understand that. Thank you.

Mr B S MADLINGOZI: Thank you, Chairperson. Minister, the junior sports seems to be a settle ground for sex pests who want to pray on our children from tennis and especially trailer tent coach turned rapists to water polo coach which was rocketed by sexual abuse scandals from two coaches, Collen Rex at Parktown Boys' High and Fiona Viotti at Bishops Diocesan College. These cases are prevalent. Why have you not established a unit and when are you going to do that, that will especially deal with prevention of cases like these and ensuring speedy prosecution of these perpetrators? Thank you.

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The MINISTER OF SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE: Thanks, hon member. I thought the member because he is so close to me and whatever I was saying he heard it. The subject you are raising is a serious subject. And as a result, we took steps to evaluate whatever policies are there not only for swimming. It came about through swimming but it's a problem which we feel that all the sporting codes, all the national federations under Sascoc have to deal with and hence the steps we have put in here.

If perhaps these steps are inadequate in your view, we would be very much happy to get more views but it's a matter we are dealing with because there is no way and you are correct to say that our sporting codes cannot be allowed to be used as the ground for sex pests, especially to our children because these are the children we are talking about. But these are the steps as I have said, six steps here which we have put forth and we believe that they are going to help to alleviate this problem because it has to be eradicated. Thank you.

Mr W M THRING: Thank you, hon House Chair. Minister, I think the integration of sport into the academic field of many students is much appreciated. Within the rule areas in particular, however, we find that many of the sports

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facilities are absent. What is the Minister doing to ensure that within our rural areas our students in these rural areas are incorporated into the sports fields? Thank you.

The MINISTER OF SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE: Well, thank you very much, hon Chair, and hon member. I think that the member is asking a very important question - the question of the facilities. I want to say, Chair, that with the final budgetary resources we have as the department through transfers to provinces and district municipalities, we have ring fence the Municipal Infrastructure Grant to ensure that we contributing the building of facilities in our communities because that is a big problem. Having said that though I must remind hon member and hon members that this is a national matter.

The provision of sporting facilities is the responsibility of the local government and not the National Department of Sports, Arts and Culture. We are doing all we can because every year we ensure that in our own way within our own budget we create these facilities and we open them almost on a weekly basis. We will continue to do that. But we also urge the spheres of government which is responsible for facilities to

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ensure that these facilities are actually established. Thank you very much.

Question 76:

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: Thank you very much ...

IsiZulu:

... Sihlalo, ngixolise kakhulu, bengisathe shelele ngasendlini yangasese ngakho ladlula elami ithuba kodwake sengibuyile. Ngicela ukubonga kakhulu umbuzo ...

English:

... from the hon member and indicate that the Department of Social Development in its portfolio has a number of prevention programmes targeting youth at risk of gang involvement and addressing underlying socioeconomic factors that push young people to join gangs in the first place. I think that is what we really need to deal with - what pushes young people to join gangsterism. Adding that gangsterism and gang violence is a cross-cutting issue that no single department or entity can solve alone. To this end we have adopted a whole of society approach by working with a number of key partners such as Basic Education, the SA Police Services and Department of Justice and Constitutional Development, among others, to

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implement social behaviour change programmes focusing on prevention, and prevention is more important, early intervention, statutory reintegration and after care services.

These programmes include: You only live once, Yolo, targeting 15 to 24 year-olds, ChommY focusing on 10 to 14-year olds and the developing skills empowering children to make informed choices to reduce human immunodeficiency virus, HIV, infection such as substance abuse, boys championing change, men championing change seeks to involve boys and men in advocacy and social mobilisation campaigns; Resega, a community-based prevention and early intervention targeting children and youth at risk; Ke Moja, I'm fine, without drugs and national substance abuse prevention programme implemented in all nine provinces. Specialised community-based probation services which include, diversion, pre-trial and pre-sentence psychosocial support to children and youth with conflict, psychosocial support as early intervention programmes to create resilience amongst children.

These interventions seek to involve and empower young people and their families as active social actors in their own development rather than passive recipients of services with specific reference to questions, and in addition to the

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aforementioned interventions. We are working jointly with civil society and community-based organisations to implement the following programme in Cape Flats: Rhythm of Life, playing through the forest wake-up call, stop to start school and community-based life skills parenting workshops and the holiday programme. These interventions are targeting children and youth at age 10 to 18. Hon House Chairperson, there are four interventions seek to complement ongoing national efforts notably the antigang strategy led by the Minister of Police in a number of areas.

Recently, and I call upon other hon members when they have requests with the Department of Social Development to do so, we went to with hon Marie Sukers of the ACDP in Lavender Hill and surrounding communities to address similar challenges raised by hon Hendricks. We are also working with Father Patrick Naughton of the Salesian Institute Youth Project which is specifically targeting youth at risk from the Cape Flats. Going forward our plan is to scale up collaborative interventions in this nature that empower young people and communities in which they live to deal effectively with gangsterism and associated challenges.

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I therefore urge all members to join hands with government and communities across the country to wage an unrelenting fight against gangsterism and illicit drugs, but we must also go deeper into why are we here and why are the drug lords in men always roaming the streets or sending children out into the streets. I thank you.

Mr M G E HENDRICKS: Thank you, hon House Chair. Hon House Chair, the response of the Minister gives us hope and we are concerned about the Cape Flats and I want to know if the Minister will extend the same courtesy to Al Jama-ah like she did to the ACDP to visit an outfit that has some plans to combat gangsterism on the Cape Flats with an eye on the social economic response. Thank you.

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: It will only be with utmost commitment and the pleasure to respond to hon Hendricks. As I said I responded actually to all Members of Parliament who would like us to come through as the Department of Social Development. In fact, I was having a conversation earlier on before the start of this sitting with the EFF member, Mam Khawula, who was talking to me about some of the progress in the areas where she comes from. Therefore, I'm

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still indicating that any member who would like us to come through, we will come through. Thank you.

Xitsonga:

Man N K BILANKULU: Ndza khensa Mutshamaxitulu ku nyikiwa nkarhi wo landzelerisa ndzi vutisa swivutiso eka muchaviseki Manana Zulu.

English:

Hon Minister, I heard you answering the question that has been posed by hon Hendricks, but my follow-up question is, Minister will you expand your interventions beyond addressing the challenges in the Cape Flats? Please confirm. Thank you very much.

IsiZulu:

UNGQONGQOSHE WEZOKUTHUTHUKISWA KOMPHAKATHI: Ngicela ningangibangeli umsindo ngingekaphenduli nokuphendula. [Uhleko.] Ngicela nje ningabuzi ... umangabe nifuna ukubuza imibuzo buzani leyo mibuzo ngizoniphendula.

English:

Thank you very much, hon Bilankulu. Yes, as I indicated that we are a department at national level and therefore we expand

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and go as far as is possible for us. We crisscross the entire country and you would also be aware as we report to the portfolio committee of our activities in the Northern Cape, in the Eastern Cape, in KwaZulu-Natal and across the country. We actually don't even choose on the basis of politics where we go to. We go and address the issues as they are being brought to our department by all hon members, and all hon members as I said earlier on should you - particularly those members who know of hotspots because we would like to target those hotspots.

However, thank you also hon member for asking the question because when we indicate that the issue of drug and drug trafficking and drug abuse is something that has to be dealt with by all of us in community and society in general because these people from the drug lords to the users they live within our community and therefore we must take responsibility and ask our communities also take responsibilities so that we can be able to address this once and for all. Thank you.

Ms B S MASANGO: Thank you, House Chair. Hon Minister, we have seen the benefits of collaborative efforts between the City of Cape Town's lip service officers, SA Police Service, SAPS, and other community and government forums crime stats in hotspots

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on the Cape Flats have reduced at some places by double digits with Nyanga no longer the capital murder of South Africa. Given these successes in dealing with the social ills through these efforts, is the hon Minister going to consider a collaborative partnership with the City of Cape Town, the Western Cape government, SAPS and other departments tasked with dealing with gangsterism? Thank you. [Applause.]

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: Thank you very much, hon Masango and respectfully, I think you're very much aware that as the Minister of Social Development one of the things I don't do is that I don't get into any place irrespective of which government is in office without writing the necessary letters informing the relevant structures that I am coming into town. You can also check that with your member of the executive council, MEC, Minister of Social Development and any other. Even when I come to the Western Cape I do send communication because I truly believe that a collaboration and work that we need to do sometimes we have to realise that the challenges that are on the ground sometimes and many at times are just beyond our politicking.

Those are issue that we need to deal with. I am on record you can check that out. Every time I go anywhere including in the

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Western Cape, I do write the necessary letter requesting that the provincial authorities join me when I go. In fact, even to the one place that hon Sukers invited me, thankfully the province and the local structures were there because I invited them to come along because I believe that some of these issues need us to put politics aside and deal with the real challenges that are facing our people – the real needs of our people. I thank you.

Ms T BREEDT: Thank you, House Chair. House Chair, has the effectiveness of this department's programme being evaluated? And is there actual outcomes that can be measured to physically indicate that less youth are involved with gangsterism and could the Minister share the statistics and outcomes with us. If there is no tangible measurable outcome this program is fruitless and the youth will remain vulnerable to gangsterism. Thank you.

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: Thank you very much, House Chairperson. There isn't any work of this government of the African National Congress that we don't evaluate because we believe that in order for us to have effective impact we need to go back and evaluate and check whether there's an impact or not, number one. Number two, we also have what we call

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monitoring and evaluation at national level and at provincial level with sole responsibility and task is to check the impact of the programmes of departments including the impact of my own work as a Minister and all other Ministers. We sign performance agreement with the President because we have to be accountable and we have to show what is it that we have done.

However, I do want to say, House Chairperson, that we can have the most beautiful, the best programmes that we have in place, if we cannot connect to the local structures, we cannot connect to the nonprofit organisations, NPOs, and nongovernmental organisations, NGOs, that also are doing the work will never be able to get anywhere. Therefore, lastly, I think that as South Africans collectively we need to appreciate the fact that there are things that we have to hold hands in doing, because sometimes if we spread fear amongst our people and keep on saying that government is not doing this and government is not doing that. We need to be able to be united in efforts, especially when it gets to programmes that are promoting young people and positivity amongst young people. Thank you.

Question 124:

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The MINISTER OF BASIC EDUCATION: Thank you very much Chair, and thank you to Ntate Morwatshehla ... [Inaudible.] ... programmes. There is a programme which the President announced during Sona, whereby the Department of Public Works nationally, under Minister De Lille, is going to assist us and the provinces with our infrastructure.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): Hon Minister ...

IsiZulu:

... asikuzwa kahle.

English:

Yes, you are not audible.

The MINISTER OF BASIC EDUCATION: Let me check ... ooh! [Interjections.] Oh my goodness!

IsiZulu:

USIHLALO WENDLU (Mnu M L D Ntombela): Uhambile uNgqongqoshe.

UNGQONGQOSHE WEMFUNDO EYISISEKELO: Cha, ngibuyile.

English:

I'm just trying to check my volume.

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The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): Okay, go ahead, hon Minister.

The MINISTER OF BASIC EDUCATION: I am very sorry about that, Chair. Let me start all over again. I am saying that we have major problems with our infrastructure in Basic Education, and as a result we have adopted a number of strategies to help us deal with the problem. One, we work with the Department of Public Works under Minister De Lille ... [Interjections.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): There is a member who is disturbing us.

The MINISTER OF BASIC EDUCATION; Okay. We are working with Minister De Lille to assist us through the Presidential infrastructure team to deal with the problems. The other approach we have is an ongoing one where Public Works in provinces work with the Department of Basic Education to provide infrastructure. And now because of the crisis we have about teaching spaces and natural disasters, again as a national department we have a third programme where we will work with our provinces to repair schools which are rainstorm damaged. Where we have overcrowding because of either high enrolments or poor infrastructure in schools, we use different

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methods and different approaches to deal with our infrastructure challenges, Chair. Thank you very much.

Sesotho:

MODULASETULO WA NTLO (Mong M L D Ntombela): Re a leboha Letona le hlomphehang. Ke ile ka tseba hore ho tjhetjha ha hao ha se ho baleha empa ke ho nka matla. [Ditsheho.]

Sesotho:

LETONA LA THUTO YA MOTHEO: Ke ne ke sa tjhetjha hle ntate.

English:

Ms N G ADOONS: Thank you very much, House Chairperson, and thank you very much Minister. Minister, how is the department working with various stakeholders to address the problem of infrastructure delays due to disruptions of projects on the basis of local empowerment demands. Thank you, House Chair.

The MINISTER OF BASIC EDUCATION: No, we are experiencing such challenges but what we have decided as the department, working with other government department, is to work with the Department of Police so that they can help us where we have unreasonable demands. But if demands are legitimate - where people feel that outside contractors are brought into their

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space when they have skills, we try to negotiate with our service providers.

Basically, as a department, we don't have the capacity to deliver. We work with the implementing agents, the Department of Public Service and Administration and ... [Inaudible.] ... and all other implementing agents. Our approach is that we really try to make peace with local people, but if it's unreasonable. Sometimes if it's extortion or it's criminal, we bring the Department of Police. It is not being serious of late. It used to be extremely serious in the past to an extend that we have to abandon other projects because we were unable to find each other, with the protesters who were demanding jobs which they didn't qualify for. Thank you, House Chair.

Mr B B NODADA: Thank you House Chair. Minister, crumbling infrastructure and overcrowding in classrooms are chronic challenges that the education sector continues to face as you mentioned, while there is inadequate funding for provinces and reduction in the Education Infrastructure Grant, EIG. Special purpose vehicles seem to be an admission of failure of the Accelerated School Infrastructure Delivery Initiative, Asidi, and Sanitation Appropriate for Education initiative, Safe, programmes which were established with the aim of eliminating

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backlogs in school infrastructure such as mud, asbestos and pit toilets.

What would this new special purpose vehicle offer that would be different from the Safe and Asidi programmes in addressing infrastructure backlogs? Will implementing agents that have continuously failed to deliver on time and some building schools and wetlands, and some building toilets that are not working, be involved in this process? And is there accountability mechanism that we can work towards and timelines for us to look at in terms of this special programme that will deal with infrastructure in schools? Thanks, House Chair

The MINISTER OF BASIC EDUCATION: Well, we first have to admit that our infrastructure are major challenges. Since we returned back to school, there is a big problem of teaching spaces with this incessant rains and storm damage, classes are falling apart. So, we are the first to admit that we have a problem. That is why the Presidency had agreed with us that we will need another vehicle - we are not removing this one - to add to our capacity, to things differently. But the Asidi programme is a special project which was given to the national

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department to deal with infrastructure. Your phase was meant to deal with pit latrines.

So, those are special projects which the Department of Basic Education gets involved in. Generally, as the Department of Basic Education, it is not our competency to be building schools - but because we realised that it is a problem, we've decided to work with the provinces and support them. The member is right when he says that there are quite a number of things have created problems but the implementing agents ...

As the previous member, hon Adoons, has said construction mafias who disrupt work on the ground. And all those are being attended to because it is not just one problem that is confronting us, it is quite a number of things. I am very confident that this special agent is going to help in adding capacity. It is not going to be the only one. It is going to add capacity to our work because we are admitting that there are problems in terms of our school infrastructure. Thank you, House Chair.

Ms N N CHIRWA: Thank you very much, House Chairperson. Minister, early last year your department announced that it was suspending about 2 000 infrastructure projects across the

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country because there was no money. Apologies House Chair, I would be taking the question for the hon Mashabela. Minister, in the Eastern Cape it was announced that the department has stopped all kinds of infrastructure projects in the province for the same reasons that I stated above. This is despite the fact that there are still mud schools and schools with no water and sanitation in that province. Minister, what are the sustainable short and long term plans that you have as a Minister to resolve the problem of school infrastructure in the Eastern Cape, in particular?

The MINISTER OF BASIC EDUCATION: Thank you House Chair and thank you member for the question. Indeed, with the budget cuts in order to create space for money to deal with COVID-19, we did experience budget cuts and as a result had to revise our plans and only deal with emergencies. The problem is not only the Eastern Cape, but the problem is national. There are problems in Limpopo; there are problems in KwaZulu-Natal, there are problems even in Gauteng for instance with overcrowding.

What we've decided regarding the three approaches is to approach Treasury, and also the national Department of Public Works. We need help and extra capacity and extra resources.

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The Minister of Finance is working with us. But on our side we also said that in terms of speeding up the process– it doesn't help to be looking for contractors by putting out on tenders. In provinces like Gauteng, we have already piloted the self-build projects where there are no big infrastructures, but additional classes and staff rooms. We use local community people to build infrastructure in schools as a way also of fast-tracking our delivery but also ensuring that the resources and the monies remain in communities which are being serviced. As I said there are three approaches and those approaches are meant to address exactly what the member is raising but also Treasury was working with us to make sure that we are assisted in terms of dealing with the current ongoing infrastructure challenges in schools.

IsiXhosa:

Mnu N L S KWANKWA: Mama uMphathiswa.

UMPHATHISWA WEMFUNDO ESISISEKO: Tata!

Mnu N L S KWANKWA: Ukuba ndithetha esi siNgesi sam sikaNsfas abayi kundiva eXhorha. [Uwele-wele.]

Sesotho:

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LETONA LA THUTO YA MOTHEO: Bua ka Sesotho ntate, ha ke tlo utlwa IsiXhosa le nna.

IsiXhosa:

Mnu N L S KWANKWA: Mandiqale ndithi Mphathiswa, phaya eXhorha sasityelele iilali apho kwakususwa khona izikolo zodaka, - hayi uzakusimamela ngendlebe yakhe kuba bekumele ukuba ulapha xa engenamntu wokumtolikela.

USIHLALO WENDLU (Mnu M L D Ntombela): Hayi qhuba lungu elihloniphekileyo, qhuba.

Mnu N L S KWANKWA: Ndithi ke ingxaki phaya eXhorha bathetha ngento yokuba kwizikolo zabo banikwa nje isibonelelo ...

English:

... of R100 000 or more, I can't remember the specific amount. It was for the eradication of mud schools but only a few classrooms would be built – one, two or three. And immediately after that those classrooms have been built, there would then not be regarded as mud schools, even though the rest of the structure is made up of temporary structure such as prefabricated buildings or just mud structures in general. We visited a few of those schools where the principals were

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complaining about that. How can you address that and ensure that ...

IsiXhosa:

... asibaqhathi abantu sithi abanazo izikolo zodaka ekubeni isezizo?

English:

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): Thank you, hon Kwankwa.

N L S KWANKWA: I tried to accommodate you by mixing the languages. [Interjections.] Hon Minister ...

Sesotho:

MODULASETULO WA NTLO (Mong M L D Ntombela): Letona le hlomphehang, ke kgolwa hore o e tshwere?

Sesotho:

LETONA LA THUTO YA MOTHEO: Ke a leboha ntate. Ke tla kopa moetapele moo hore a mphe lenane hantle hobane jwalo ka ha ke se ke hlalositse, kaho ya dikolo ke mosebetsi wa di profinse. Empa, ntho yeo re seng re dumellane ka yona ke hore re sebedisana mmoho le di profinse hore re ba thuse hobane ho ya

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ka tlhaloso ya pele ya hore “mud school” ke eng, ke sekolo se kaofela ha sona se ahilweng ka seretse.

Ha re ntse re tswela pele re sebedisa le di profinse tse fapaneng eseng Eastern Cape feela, jwalo ka ha ke se ke hlalositse, Limpopo, Natal, naha ka bophara, re fumana hore di profinse ha di ya refa lenaneo kaofela. Ka hoo, re sebedisana le Botshwari ba matlotlo hore e etse Asidi ya bobedi hobane Asidi ya pele e ne e sebediswa ka lenane leo re le fumaneng di profinsing mme ra fuwe tjhelete ya lenane leo. Jwale, jwalo ka ha a bolela mme a bua nnete...

English:

We discovered that there are indeed extra schools which were not on the original list which keep on being brought forward by committees and provinces. That is why again we are working Asidi 2, because Asidi 1 was informed by the numbers that we were given. And as ... [Interjections.] ... in some areas for example, you will find out that the school is not on the list, and it has not been stated to us that it is a mud school, but we discover that it is a mud school. With the new programmes - together with Public Works, that is where we are also going back to remediate where there are existing problems as the member has correctly stated. Thank you.

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Question 93:

The MINISTER OF BASIC EDUCATION: Hon Chair, hon Van der Walt, as the Department of Basic Education, we have adopted, what is called, the National Reading Sector Plan, to improve reading for meaning amongst 10-year-olds and the National Reading Sector Plan is premised on 10 strands.

The first strand is to strengthen teacher capacity; the second one is strengthening the capacity of the sector itself, to be able to deal with the matters. The next one is the right support to learners where we have rallied couching and training around reading. We are also working with communities to make sure that there is parental support. There is also community support. The fifth strand is provisioning of reading books, because that is the other big problem. He sixth one enables us to monitor, so that we can track the learner performance in the areas, so that we are able to conduct research. To get partners, we have reading champions, to make sure that we have really support beyond ourselves. We work with partners such as the National Education Collaboration Trust, NECT, which is helping us to work with different actors and people interested in the sector. There is also efficacy, reading across the curriculum and we are monitoring the programme.

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So, those are the 10 main strands that we have. The member will know that we also have the early grade reading assessment, where we assess the current capacity of our kids.

We also have the Primary School Reading Improvement Plan, because that is where we think it has to start. We also have the Foundation Phase Reading Framework, because we have the foundation phase, then the intermediate phase. We also have the annual teaching plans that guide teachers and we have provided study guides.

So, in short, we have tried different methods advised by experts, professionals, researchers on how to deal with these ongoing challenges. As the members also know, we participate in all assessments, both regionally and internationally, to benchmark ourselves against the best.

We also have our own assessment programmes, to check if we are making progress around these 10 pillars that we have adopted for the reading strategy. Thank you.

Afrikaans:

Mrs D VAN DER WALT: Dankie Voorsitter, ...

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English:

... Minister, I have no doubt that you understand and want to improve the issue around mother tongue education. However, in listening to all of what you are already doing, I would like to ask you whether you have investigated the reopening of our teacher training colleges, specifically for primary school teachers and with the extra special focus on mother tongue language in the foundation phase, and if not, whether you will. That is important. It is also true that we have to read with meaning, but we also need teachers who can actually understand these languages. To add to mother tongue, we would also like to know whether you will consider, in your department, looking at printing the workbooks in dual languages, one page next to the other, like English and IsiXhosa or Afrikaans and IsiNdebele or whatever? We believe that we want to add to your plans, to make sure we are successful. Thank you.

The MINISTER OF BASIC EDUCATION: Hon Chair, hon member, there is no doubt that mother tongue instruction is the best instruction for cognatic development. There is no debate about it, but let me dispose of the teacher training colleges.

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I used to ... Twenty years back, I though closing teacher training colleges was a mistake. In hindsight, which is the best sight, I think it was a correct decision. The quality of teachers that we are getting from universities is immeasurable. As you know, the education system cannot be better than your teachers. Your teachers are the anchor of the education system. To give them the best is to get the best. So, I am now confident that we should not reopen teacher training colleges; we should continue working with universities and get the kind of product that we are currently getting from the young new graduates that come from universities.

In terms of mother tongue, I am in full agreement with the member. The member is aware that the Eastern Cape is really leading. When they call themselves the place of legends, on this one, they are really legends. For a solid 12 years, they have piloted with the mother tongue instructions and did all the things that the member is saying.

They piloted IsiZulu and Sesotho and this year, tested the learners that started off in Grade 6 learning in IsiXhosa. In Grade 11 they compared them with those who were only taught in

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English. They found that those who were taught in IsiXhosa and Sesotho far exceeded.

So, we agree with the member that mother tongue is good for cognitive development, but because of our history, it is taking lots of investment, research and we are at the point where we think, as a sector, learning from the Eastern Cape, we are going to spread the mother tongue. So, I am in full agreement and ... [Inaudible.] ... welcome.

Ms N G ADOONS: Hon Chair, Minister, what factors contribute to learners struggling to read with meaning by the age of 10 and how will the early, childhood development, ECD, migration contribute to improving learning and development outcomes in children? Thank you.

The MINISTER OF BASIC EDUCATION: Chair, one of the major problems, especially for African kids, is when the majority of kids or learners are expected to learn in a foreign language from the word go. So, it is a major problem for cognitive development, if kids are not enabled to learn in their mother tongue. So, it is a major problem, especially for African kids.

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That is why, as I say, we can have policies, but I think the solution is mother tongue instruction, and to continue to build on what the Eastern Cape has started. The other provinces are already beginning to pilot. For me, that is one of the major problems.

Secondly, regarding access to reading material, the affluent families' kids have access to reading material and they read quite early. Therefore, if we strengthen the ECD, it will help us to deal, for instance, with remediation quite early. So, we will be able to remediate kids with visual problems, speech problems before they come to school. So, any other thing that hampers or stalls reading or learning will be dealt with in the ECD programme.

So, by the time, they come to school, they are school ready and the sector also understands where the shortcomings and difficulties are. So, I think it is going to give us a solid foundation for our children's development. Thank you.

Ms A M SIWISA: Hon Chair, Minister, with reference to the familiarity as a principle of simultaneous language learning outside of the classroom, which basic tools of reading must

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you have, to avoid as a submersion approach of teaching taking place in the classroom? Thank you.

The MINISTER OF BASIC EDUCATION: Chair, I hope I understood the member correctly. The bottom line is, I really think, as a country, we have to adopt mother-tongue instruction. Indeed, we will find that, for instance, in Gauteng, we will not be able to have a pure class in Sesotho or in isiXhosa, the way they are able to do it in the Eastern Cape. So, they are supposed to use any language that the kids know. The biggest problem, as the member says, is that, in classes, teachers use different languages. So, if kids do not understand, they speak in the language that they understand.

However, when they go to assessment, they are assessed purely in that language that they did not understand for learning. Then teachers are no longer testing their cognitive development or understanding, but they are now testing their language abilities. That is a problem. It is a problem when Afrikaans speaking kids will start from Grade 1. They don't necessarily need to know English and they are able to succeed in life, even if they did not start in their mother tongue.

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So, we are saying that the same dispensation must be done. And we have started the process. So, the next step is to assess them in the language in which they were taught, so that we are able to assess performance, not language proficiency. Thank you.

IsiZulu:

Mnu K P SITHOLE: Angibonge kakhulu Sihlalo.

English:

Hon Minister, recently, the world observed Internal Mother-Language Day. The theme of the 2022 International Mother-Language Day was: Using technology for multilingual learning: Challenges and opportunities. Multilingual education, based on mother language is a key component of inclusion in education and during the Covid-19 school closure, many schools around the world and countries employed the technology-based solution as distance-learning tools. How will this department ensure that learning tools, programmes and content exist for all, and are able to reflect language diversity?

IsiZulu:

Ikakhulukazi ezindaweni zasemakhaya. Ngiyathokoza.

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English:

The MINISTER OF BASIC EDUCATION: Chair, indeed we celebrated that International Mother-Language Day in the Eastern Cape as a province leading in this aspect, with Pansalb and all other agents that are working in education. We agree with the theme that, for our development to be fast-tracked, to be strengthened and to be deepened, we need to deepen our mother-tongue instruction in schools. And we must use technologies like radios for teaching, so that one can teach Mathematics on a Sesotho medium or a IsiZulu station in IsiZulu, because we are teaching concepts and not the language.

So, it means we must use all the different media, but also that we have to develop the material, as the member from ... [Inaudible.] ... the appropriate language, the appropriate terminology. So, if you want to say that something is bacteria, ...

IsiZulu:

... awuthi yigciwane ...

Sesotho:

... kapa o re ka Sesotho ke kokwanahloko.

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IsiZulu:

Akusiyigciwane i-bacteria. Uma ungenalo igama elifanele lokuthi yini i-bactria uzothi i-bacteria kuphelele lapho.

English:

... but then we really have to use technology to make sure that we can streamline and strengthen, because the advantage of technology, as they use it in the Eastern Cape, is to be very scientific. So, it is a major programme that we are embarking on. So, you need to scientifically and systematically ...

IsiZulu:

Ngiyabonga. Ngiyaxolisa ukuthatha isikhathi eside.

Question 109:

The MINISTER OF BASIC EDUCATION: Chair, if you go to our website and look at the education realities, we have these figures: In 2011 we registered 1 177 089 learners to Grade 1. We can’t give you the 2012 statistics for Grade 12 because we only release statistics in September when we have verified information from first term and second term and we are only able to give you clean information data around September. I

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will then share the 2011 data for Grade 11 and not 12 as the member had asked.

So, for Grade 11 in 2021 we had 954 069 leaners, and the question was what is the cause for the fall; where are the others? Indeed, as a country, up to Grade 9 we have almost 99% school attendance. In Grade 10 we see a huge dive and we were quite fortunate that Statistics SA conducted research for us and say what the challenges are. Some were challenges that we were aware of but some of the challenges surprised me.

One of the challenges that came up are cognitive challenges of the Further Education and Training, FET, curriculum that when learners go to Grade 10 they are expected to specialise and there is only one narrow curriculum which is why we now have a three stream curriculum that caters for children's gifts, interests and abilities. That is the first thing that we have done. We have also picked up that, because at that age there are teenagers and there are social difficulties in our communities, we experience unwanted pregnancies and teenage juvenile delinquency. Hence, we see lots of kids trapped in drugs and others going to prisons. This is also one of the problems that we have and it is also why we are strengthening our social support programme to learners.

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What surprised me was that some learners leave because of poverty. It surprised me not so much that I am not aware that there is poverty, but I had thought that as government we have done some work in terms of no fee schooling, teaching, scholar transport, free books, to help us protect quite a number of learners. But Statistics SA tells us that when they become conscious of themselves they start to feel too embarrassed to come to school with broken shoes and torn shirts and as a result they leave school. That is why we are working with Social Development.

We have identified the different reasons why we see this dive after Grade 9 and we are trying to deal with it in different ways, including curriculum support and strengthening our teaching at senior phase before they go to the FET phase where they drop out in big numbers. We are also starting them young and investing so much in Early Child Development, ECD, to set out very solid and strong foundations for them to be able to continue their education. Thank you very much, Chair.

Mr K CEZA: It's hon Ceza, Chair, taking a question on behalf of hon Mashabela. Minister, over the past decade we have observed consistent high rates of school dropouts in this country. It was reported last year that the lockdown had

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contributed to the highest rate of dropouts in history with over 500 learners who were meant to be in school not in school. This is a crisis, Minister. What factors have contributed to these abnormally high rates of dropouts and what intervention have you, Minister, made to ensure that all those who must be in school do attend school? Thank you very much.

The MINISTER OF BASIC EDUCATION: Chair, I do not want to argue statistics but I can say that as a department I am not sure if there is anybody who is able to collect statistics better than us, because we take attendance registered every year. We are the ones who register learners and so we are the first to know if children this year have not come and what has happened. So, any statistics outside education realities I treat it with doubt because it's a sample of whatever methodology people used to get samples. So, I do not want argue statistics.

I am saying that in education realities if you go into our system, every year in September we issue statistics of how many learners we registered, how many learners have been in the system until the fourth term and that is it. In terms of where the member is right and our fear and our anxiety is around the impact of COVID-19 on learners returning to school.

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We will only see the impact from statistics. We have to see how many learners — because up to last year some parents were not comfortable and we saw a huge growth of home schooling, and now learners are coming back into the public sector in numbers.

In my previous reply, so that I do not take time, I explained what it is that we do as a sector to deal with dropout rates, repetition rates and in fact I will explain on what other interventions we have. We have, as I have said, support programmes so that if it is curriculum difficulties that forces them to go out it is ... [Inaudible.] ... We even have a progression policy so that if learners keep on failing Grade 11 then we don't allow them to fail because sometimes it is that which discourages them from attending school. We then give them extra classes as progressed learners. So, these are the different things we are doing. We are not arguing but we are equally concerned and for us, in any case, it would be an indictment if after 11 years of investing in these children we lose them to the streets. We are doing all we can to make sure that we don't lose that investment.

Ms N G ADOONS: Chairperson, to the Minister, what mechanism is the department implementing to track dropouts and how will the

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Basic Education Laws Amendment, BELA, Bill amendments respond to this problem in a sustainable manner as highlighted in the President's input to the Bill which will soon be undergoing public hearings? Thank you, Minister, and thank you, Chair.

The MINISTER OF BASIC EDUCATION: Chair, as I said, the question of dropout rates is an old problem; it is not a new problem. But what we can say as a country is that we are very encouraged that we are increasing our retention rates, which is why even last year we had the highest numbers of learners writing matric. This means that our efforts to really deal with dropout rates are paying dividends, and the member will know that we have done quite a number of things.

But I think as much as we must be concerned as South Africans, we should not be alarmists because as a country we are one of the few countries in the third world which is able to retain as many learners as we are retaining in the schooling system, which is not a consolation because we shouldn't lose any one of them. So, we are putting in place different measures.

Schools also do follow-ups and send people to check where learners are, have they moved houses, are they unwell, are they still alive? They are also human beings and you will

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think they have dropped out when the Maker has called them. So, schools do follow-up and even ourselves are doing all things through the curriculum and support according to what we have identified.

Our curriculum changes are meant to address some of the problems that we have identified. The three-stream curriculum is supposed to help kids — because the dropout is at Grade 10, 11 and 12 — in terms of curriculum, career choices, the support that they get. Also, strengthen the social support so that if it is depression, kids have lost parents to COVID, there is adequate safety net to protect them against other things that might have confronted them socially which are not necessarily educational. Thank you, Chair.

Mr B B NODADA: Chair, to the Minister, according to your own department's food basket of reporting, for the 2021 matric results the Free State was the province that achieved the highest pass rate. However, if you consider the number of learners enrolled in Grade 10 in 2019 to the same cohort who actually passed matric in 2021, the dropout rate was one of the highest in the country. This reporting may be encouraged by the leaked table reporting which encourages provinces to

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drop low performing candidates to improve their own pass rates.

Despite the fact that some learners might have failed or some might have gone to TVET colleges, this dropout rate remains very high with 3,3 million youth not in education, employment or skills training, and the department recently reported that there is over 160 000 learners that did not return this year.

The reality is that these learners don't have skills to participate in the economy and might end up living a lifetime of poverty. Minister, will you consider the DA's proposal that the President acknowledged in his reply on his state of the nation address as a workable suggesting for the department to work with Department of Social Development and the Department of Higher Education and Training and provincial education departments to develop a learner tracking and tracing and retention mechanism for learners who actually dropout? Thank you.

IsiZulu:

UNGQONGQOSHE WEZEMFUNDO EYISEKELO: Baba u-Nodada, uthatha izinto ozizwe ngathi uzilethe kithi kube ngathi zivela kunina.

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English:

That is sometimes my problem, but let me leave that ...

IsiZulu:

... ke mhlawumbi yinto yepolitiki ukuthi into enhle uyazithathela ube ngumnikazi wayo.

English:

What I am saying is that it is not possible to really ... It is only March and we are still dealing with registrations. Anybody is going to come with statistics and say that here is the learner dropout. As I said, it is simple, you will hear from us ...

IsiZulu:

... baba u-Nodada ngoSepthemba sinitshele ukuthi bangaki abantwana ababuyile nokuthi bangaki abangabuyanga kanye nokuthi baphi abanye ...

English:

... where are the others who might have gone to home schooling and all sorts of problems. For now, let us not play with figures, as I said, we just give us unnecessary problems. We are the best place to give you the correct figures. We have no

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reason to hide. We are collecting them because it is in our interest to know where our learners are.

In terms of different methods, we are currently guided, correctly so, by partners in Parliament because indeed it is important for us to get what other parties are saying. But we are also guided by our own structures as the ruling party and by researchers, academics even Statistics SA. So, if you have any fresh idea which ...

IsiZulu:

... okuyivelakancane la kunina, kuletheni ...

English:

... and we will consider it. Any other thing that will protect our children is in our interest. We are not that irresponsible not to appreciate the dangers of learner dropout and repetition rates and that is why we are putting whatever measures in place to protect our children against the same things that you are saying. So, we are just as responsible, Tata Nodada, if not more, around the lives of our children. Thank you very much, Chair.

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Mr A M SHAIK-EMAM: House Chairperson, to the Minister, I think you must agree with me and I think you have alluded to some of the problems which we have in the schools which is resulting in learners staying away from school and then very importantly, the number of them that dropout from school. Further to that is the fact that a great percentage of them that go to TVET colleges from basic education also drop out there as well. Now, the question is, and I think you have just given us the answer a short while ago, what can we do differently Minister?

I want to say to you, Minister, can we introduce things in schools that will encourage and entice these learners to stay in school? I will give you one good example, when we went to school we had interclass, interhouse, interschool, interzone, interprovince sporting activities, music and whatever it is. This encourages learners to stay in school.

Very importantly, many of these vulnerable children are coming from dysfunctional homes. Now, will you consider talking to our Minister of Sports, Arts and Culture together with the Minister of Social Development to introduce this so that we could have a vigorous programme to encourage them and keep them at school? Thank you very much.

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The MINISTER OF BASIC EDUCATION: Member Emam, I will not disagree with you, sport, music and talent search has to happen. These are the things we are doing. When I said that we have strengthened our social care and support programme, it looks at questions of sport. We have a vibrant sport programme in our schools. You can go to Eisteddfod it even produces professionals. We have music in our schools, but we are also having the care and support on things like violence, bullying and unwanted pregnancies. We have tried to work with the sectors to identify where the threats are and develop a programme around all those threats.

When we were saying we even want to have a comprehensive sexuality education it was basically to deal also with some of the problems that force children to drop out of schools which is unwanted and unplanned pregnancies. We have programmes where we deal with youth criminality because some of these kids end up in prisons. So, all these number of things that you are raising, as I said, are the reason why we have gone out of our way to make sure that we strengthen our care and support programme which deals with all those activities. Thank you very much.

Question 125:

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The MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND INNOVATION: Hon House Chair, thank you very much and thanks to hon Letsie, for the question. My answer is that currently, Higher Health, which is our implementing agency assisting us with all matters related to health and wellness in our post school institutions has finalised guidelines that institutions should follow in determining various matters around vaccination. I am currently studying these guidelines before I can release them for implementation by all of our institutions.

However, in the process of the finalisation of these guidelines in relation to vaccine mandates and management of the academic year through Higher Health I have urged all our institutions to ensure that the policies and procedures they put in place have been widely consulted on campus because whilst Higher Health comes with guidelines this have come a little bit later when institutions had already started making consultations. I have said that they continue to consult but to ensure that they reach the widest possible consultations also being guided by the Constitution – by the way - which says that no right is absolute.

Those who are pushing their right not to vaccinate they do have that right but also those who have vaccinated they have a

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right to feel protected so that we don't have an imbalance. At the moment though I am very pleased to say that there are a number of education awareness drives that are being conducted by Higher Health. My department working with Higher Health will work very closely with universities and colleges management and Student Representative Council, SRC, to ensure that we encourage staff and students to get vaccinated because vaccination is safe and saves lives.

There is also a ministerial task team that is engaging all our stakeholders which is chaired by our Deputy Minister, hon Buti Manamela, which is also meeting to discuss with the stakeholders on how best to deal with the challenge of vaccination so that we make sure that we have inclusive discussions. Thank you very much, hon House Chair.

Sesotho:

Mong W T LETSIE: Ke a leboha Modulasetulo. Ke leboha Letona ka ho araba potso ya di ente hantle tjena.

English:

Minister, I am one of the very few people I think in this House who are very happy that your Ministry, the department through Higher Health are in the process of finalising these

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guidelines in relation to vaccine mandates and management of the academic year. In my view, hon Minister, we cannot allow the universities to have their plans in isolation. Over and above those guidelines, hon Minister, what are we doing to ensure that students are not excluded to access higher education by these vaccination policies in different institutions? What are you doing about institutions now with that are refusing students access to higher education? Thank you very much.

The MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND INNOVATION: Thank you very much, hon House Chair. Thanks to hon Letsie for an appropriate follow-up question. I want to say that whilst we encourage everyone in the post school education system to be vaccinated – as I have said – this must be balanced also with the constitutional right to education. Otherwise, we must protect both rights of those who are saying that they will not vaccinate, which is unfortunate. However, we must also protect those rights of those who have vaccinated to remain safe. We cannot be focussing only on the rights of those who say they will not vaccinate.

Therefore, that is why - as I have said - we are encouraging an inclusive discussion and an inclusive debate. The way that

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the institutions have been operating make sense because whilst they have been pushing and insisting rightly so that students and staff must vaccinate, they have not turned some students down. That is what I am saying they should not do in order to ensure that they get admitted to academic programmes.

However, hon Letsie, this does pose a problem. How do you balance these rights when you have in the same lecture room those who have vaccinated and those who have not vaccinated and be able to actually cater for both? That is why Higher Health has assisted us by coming with guidelines that will ultimately help us to overcome this. I don't think that there is any institution which want to deprive any student his or her right to actually access academic institutions. I will not tolerate any unfair discrimination whilst understanding that institutions have rights to protect everybody. Thank you very much, hon House Chair.

Dr N V KHUMALO: Thank you, hon House Chair. Since South Africa does not have a policy on mandatory vaccination as stated by the Minister and given that some higher education institutions have implemented mandatory vaccination policies which do allow for exemptions for religious and medical reasons, in your own words, Minister, no right is absolute, what has your

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department put in place to ensure that the rights of those who are exempted or are protected don't get excluded from accessing facilities that vaccinated students and staff have access to including access to resources related to online learning? Thank you very much.

The MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND INNOVATION: Hon N V Khumalo, thanks for the follow-up. I should have said by the way already but your question then requires that I say this, government is looking into this matter of vaccine mandate because the decision must be a decision by government as a whole. It can't just be a decision that gets taken by higher education sector. So, for this reason, that is why the President has assigned the Deputy President, hon D D Mabuza, to actually undertake a process of consultation with a variety of stakeholders and society which is what the Deputy President is doing at this point in time in order to be able to determine what needs to be done, what position should government adopt with regard to vaccine mandate.

In addition, also, my own Department of Higher Education, Science and Innovation through the Human Sciences and Research Council, has been conducting surveys just to establish what the attitude of South Africans is towards the vaccine mandate

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issue. Those studies are now finalised and we will be releasing some of them not long from now. Together with the guidelines of Higher Health that will then ensure as to how we will manage this situation in a manner that balances everybody's rights.

Indeed, institution are using blended methodologies of online as well as physical contact whilst at the same time seeking to assure the safety of everybody. I hope you will appreciate that. This is not an easy matter because we are actually balancing rights that are in this case are often conflicting. That is why the guidelines by Higher Health and the ones I have already issued are important to have discussions because the institutions that are following certain policies now have had fairly wide consultations. Some of the policies that they have been adopted have actually been accepted by their own universities and colleges councils. Thank you very much.

Ms M D HLENGWA: Thank you Chairperson. I am asking this question on behalf of hon Zondo. Hon Minister, vaccination be set aside, has your department considered the operational and logistical requirements that would have to be first implemented nationally as well as time delays inherent in meeting such requirements? Should a directive be issued which

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require mandatory vaccination, this will surely delay such processes and render such mandate if it were to be issued, unimplemented. I thank you.

The MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND INNOVATION: Thanks, hon House Chair. Sorry, I did not hear who the member was, other than saying that she is asking on behalf of hon Zondo.

IsiZulu:

USIHLALO WENDLU (Mnu M L D Ntombela): Umama, ilungu elihloniphekile uHlengwa.

The MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND INNOVATION: Oh! Hon Hlengwa ...

IsiZulu:

... Mahlahla.

English:

Oh! Thank you very much. I just want to assure you that were we to adopt mandatory vaccination policy, as the higher education sector we are more than ready to deal with that because Higher Health has actually long been rolling out

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vaccination programmes in our post school education and training institutions. By the way, even in rural areas we have got mobile clinics that have been visiting Technical and Vocational Education and Training, Tvet, colleges and university campuses that are in rural areas pushing this thing of vaccination.

Higher Health has long been ready and working together with the Department of Health. Were we to go the route of vaccine mandates, I am actually confident that we would be able to meet that with the capacity that we have built with Higher Health. Hon Hlengwa, in addition to that, some people have their own methods and ways to go and vaccinate. Some use their medical aid schemes to vaccinate with their own medical practitioners or go to particular clinics, to chemists to be able to do that.

However, on our side I want to assure you that there will be no any insurmountable challenge in terms of vaccinating or ensuring that everybody who comes in our campuses is vaccinated if were we to go the route of vaccine mandate. That is why we have this huge campaign of encouraging everyone in our sectors staff and students to be able to go and vaccinate.

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We are quite comfortable that we will be able to do that through Higher Health. Thank you very much, hon House Chair

Mr W M THRING: Thank you, hon House Chair. Hon Minister, section 12 subsection 2(c) of our Constitution grants all South Africans the right of not to be subjected to medical or scientific experiments without their informed consent. The Nuremburg Code and the Universal Declaration of Bioethics and Human Rights of United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, UNESCO, to which South Africa is a signatory both inform that preventative and medical interventions can only be carried out with the prior free and informed consent of the person concerned based on adequate information.

Additionally, science had revealed that COVID-19 vaccines lose their efficacy about six months and those who have been vaccinated are still able to contract and transmit the virus. Now, knowing these and other indisputable scientific facts and that mandates negatively discriminate against students, will the Minister call for all educational institutions of higher learning who have instituted mandates to have these mandates unconditionally removed in keeping with the President’s

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promise to the nation in February 2021, that vaccine mandates will not be instituted on South Africans? I thank you.

The MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND INNOVATION: Thank you very much, hon House Chair and hon Thring. Hon Thring, as I have said that we are calling for everyone to vaccinate because vaccines are scientific. You, yourself, hon Thring, you would not be sitting in Parliament today being alive even asking me this question were it not for the fact that you were vaccinated right when you were born. The fact that you do not have polio is as a result that at some stage as a child you were actually vaccinated. Your body is carrying vaccination.

I actually find that some of your arguments actually is anti-vaccine. You are part of the anti-vaxxers. Now, you have a right to adopt that. However, anti-vaxxers also have no right to prescribe to those who want to vaccinate and be safe as to what actually needs to be done. That is why the route that government is following is the correct route. To say firstly ... [Interjections.] ...

Mr W M THRING: ... on a point of order, Chair ...

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The MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND INNOVATION: ... let the Deputy President ... [Interjections.] ...

Mr W M THRING: ... on a point of order, hon Chair.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): ... hon member, just hold your horses. Hon Minister, you still have time to answer.

The MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND INNOVATION: Let the Deputy President lead the consultations processes because we are ... [Interjections.] ...

Mr S N SWART: ... sorry, hon Chair, hon Thring was raising a point of order.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): Hon Minister, can you hold? Hon Swart, what is the point of order?

Mr S N SWART: The hon Thring was raising a point of order but I presume it related to the hon Minister casting aspersion against his character and labelling him as being an anti-vaxxer. Let it be a known fact that we are not anti-vaccine. Thank you.

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The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): Hon Swart, I don't think that is proper. Hon Thring cannot begin to go into an argument with the Minister. Hon Macphersson! Please. He cannot go into a debate with the Minister while he is answering the question.

Mr S N SWART: Sorry, Chair. He was a raising a point of order though.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): I don't have a problem with him raising a point of order, but remember that the Minister is responding to his question. Now, he goes into a conversation with him. I won't allow that.

Mr S N SWART: Thank you, Chair. Chair, may I then raise the point of order from my side?

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): Yes, what is your point of order, Sir?

Mr S N SWART: In terms of Rule 85, it is my assertion that the Minister is casting aspersions against the hon member and I would ask you to look at the Hansard in this regard and make a Ruling at an appropriate time. The basis is that he said that

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Mr Thring is an anti-vaxxer, when our position on this issue is very well known.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): Okay, thank you very much. I will look at the issue and come back to you, Sir. Minister, you still have some few seconds. If you are done it is fine. You can still continue if you still have something to say further. Thank you.

The MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND INNOVATION: Thank you very much. I just want to say quickly, hon House Chair, I am willing to amend my position and say the hon member, Thring, is not an anti-vaxxer. However, his argument is similar to that of anti-vaxxers - if that is actually going to help. All what I wanted to say is that the reason why we are emphasising consultation is to balance everybody's right. Scientifically, vaccines do work. I want to say in my capacity as the Minister of Science in this country that vaccinations do work, it is not today's thing. Much as there are challenges to the future of epidemiology of this particular virus we cannot say with certainty. However, already we have learnt enough to know what actually needs to be done and how can that be done. We urge all South Africans to vaccinate. I urge consultation within our institutions whilst campaigning for

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vaccination to be done by everybody. Thank you very much, hon House Chair.

Mr W M THRING: May I raise my point of order, hon House Chair?

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): Who is raising a point of order?

Mr W M THRING: Is hon Thring.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): Hon Thring, what is your point of order?

Mr W M THRING: Chair, my point of order is, I understand the dilemma that the Minister faces in the position that he holds, but when members within the House like myself, who have been vaccinated who are very clearly and continuously stated that we are not anti-vaccination ... [Interjections.] ...

An HON MEMBER: ... Chairperson ...

Mr W M THRING: ... for the Minister to cast out aspersions is uncalled for, Chair.

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The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): Hon Thring, hon Thring, the session that you have now is for the Ministers to respond to the questions that you put forward. The Rule of the House has it that, you have to be happy or satisfied or understand the answer from which the Minister comes from. If you are not happy with those responses, then, there are particular Rules to follow ... [interjections.] ...

Mr W M THRING: ... it is not the Minister's responses, hon Chair, but the aspersions he is casting ... [Interjections.] ...

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): ... but you cannot go into a debate, hon Thring. Even the point of order that has been raised on your behalf by the hon Swart, I am tempted to say, that was a political statement. However, because we have already promised that we will come back to that, we will definitely come back to hon Swart about that.

Mr W M THRING: I think my point is made. Thank you, Chair.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): Hon Thring, thank you very much.

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Question 87:

The MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND INNOVATION: Hon House Chair, thanks to hon Zondo, Mthiyane, for the question. I would like to say that I appointed a Ministerial Task Team to look at the functionality and the operating model of the National Skills Fund, NSF, because I was concerned, even before I started the forensic investigation, that there are certain serious capacity issues and operational deficiencies in the manner in which the NSF is operating. That is only been underlined by the audit disclaimer that they actually got.

Now, the Ministerial Task Team gave me, two weeks ago, an interim report on progress that they are making and we have agreed that by the end of June they must give me a final report on the operations, strengths and weaknesses that will determine all these issues that are being asked by hon Zondo on internal checks and balances.

There are clearly serious weaknesses on internal checks and balances of the NSF; I have no doubt about that. The interim report has said there's such but they said that they still want to go deeper to actually do a complete analysis and also so that they will come with very concrete proposals on how to

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strengthen this important entity such that it is able to do its work.

Lastly, the total cost of the forensic investigation services is going to be R2 019 142,77. Thank you very much, hon House Chair.

Mr K P SITHOLE: Hon Minister, there is the likelihood of maladministration within this department as the sum of R5 billion cannot just be completely unaccounted for.

I would like to know whether you are willing to commit to date upon which this forensic report will be made publicly available?

And further, upon such publication if any persons are found to have been acted unlawfully, what immediate sanction will you commit to the department to impose on these individuals? However, if you are saying no to sanctions, please provide your full motivation. Thank you, hon Chair.

IsiZulu:

UNGQONGQOSHE WEZEMFUNDO EPHAKEME, EZESAYENSI NEZOKUSUNGULA IZINTO EZINTSHA: Ngiyabonga kwilungu elihloniphekile ubaba

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uSithole, Jobe! Yiloku engifuna ukukusho. Zivumelena nabaphenyi ababheke lolu daba luka-R5 billion yale mali engathi ayisetshenziswanga ngendlela eyiyona ukuthi bazonginika umbiko ekupheleni kwale nyanga esikuyona. Kusho ukuthi emuva kokuthi baqede ukunginikeza lokho, sesiyowubuka-ke lowo mbiko bese siwuphindisela ekomidini lelo okuthiw i-Scopa lePhalamende. Sesiyobanika. Sithembe ukuthi lokho sizokwenza kungapheli inyanga kaEphreli uma sibambeka kancane noma kanjani ngoMeyi ngoba kuyofuneka siwuhlole lowo mbiko.

Kodwa enye into engifuna ukuyisho ukuthi la kukhona khona ubugebengu bokudliwa kwezimali ngendlela engafanele sizozithatha izinyathelo. Kodwa enye into, Jobe, okufunakala kubuye siyibheke, lezi zimali ngesinye isikhathi azisetshenziswa ngendlela eyiyona hhayi ngoba kukhona amasela ngokuthi kutholakala umphakathi uzocela, ucela ukuthi sicela ukufundisa intsha yethu ukupenda nokubeka isitini kodwa sibone ukuthi abanalo abantu ulwazi lokuthi izimali ziphathwa kanjani. Bese ziphathwa budedengu ngalolo hlobo. Nalokho kumele sikulungise, Jobe, masingagcini ngokujezisa kuphela. Masikwazi ukuthi futhi zigqugquzele ukuthi imiphakathi yakithi ehluphekayo siyilekelela kanjani ukuthi uma inezidingo esizibonile, uma siyinika uxhaso, yenza iziqiniseko ukuthi imali bayiphathisa okwezikhali zamaNtungwa.

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English:

In other words, corrective consequence management, yes, must be taking harsh action against the corrupt, but consequence management can't be only that. We come from very poor communities who have legitimate needs for training in this regard, but they don't have the capacity. Sometimes programmes do not go well because of lack of capacity rather than ill-intentions for corruption.

So, consequence management must also be about corrective action at the same time. Thank you very much, hon House Chair.

Ms D P SIBIYA: Hon Chairperson ...

IsiZulu:

... baba Ngqongqoshe usushilo ukuthi kuzokwenzekalani kwi-NSF sicela ukwazi ukuthi kuyobe sekwenzekani ngalezi ezinye izinhlangano ngoba kwi-NSF sekukhona okwenzekayo kuyo? Ngiyabonga.

UNGQONGQOSHE WEZEMFUNDO EPHAKEME, EZESAYENSI NEZOKUSUNGULA IZINTO EZINTSHA: Kwilungu elihloniphekile umama uSibiya, ngiyabonga ngombuzo wakho. Ubalulekile lo mbuzo owubuzayo kodwake bekuyoba kuhle sixoxisane ukuthi mhlawumbe yiziphi

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lezi ezinye izinhlangano obuzisho bese ubuya sibonisane. Ngingakujabulela futhi ukuthi ukulethe lokho noma sesiqhubeka sihlangana ekomidini. Kodwa engifisa nje ukuthi ngikwenze ukuthi ukhululeke emoyeni, uma zonke izinhlangano ezingaphansi kwami ukuthi zonke izinto ezitholwa nguMcwaningimabhuku Omkhulu ezingalungile ngenze isiqiniseko ukuthi ziyalandelwa.

Ngiqala mina nje ngokuthi la emnyangweni uma ngibambe umhlangano wami nomqondisi-jikelele ngithi kubona abangitshele ukuthi kuleyo naleyo nhlangano okuthiwe kunezinto ezingahambanga kahle sizokwenza kanjani ukuthi lezi zinto ziyaqondiswa babuye bazobika imibiko.

Uyabona nje cishe ngihlangana kathathu noma kane ngonyaka nomqondisi-jikelele wami namasekela mqondisi-jikele akhe. Nginento nje emile, ngithi ...

English:

... standing item: corrective actions for the Auditor-General support ...

IsiZulu:

Ngobe yiyo into leyo engigadile ukuthi sonke isikhathi ngazi ukuthi kumhlangano nomhlangano sesihambe kangakanani

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ukulungisa izinkinga la sibona khona ukuthi zikhona njengokukhomba koMcwaningimabhuku Omkhulu. Ngakulolo hlangothi ngicela siqiniseke. Uma kukhona okunye mama uSibiya, ukhululekile nje ukuthi-ke uze kumina njengelungu elihloniphekile ungithinte uthi, Hhayi Ngqongqoshe kukhona engingakuboni lana. Siyokwazi ukuthi sihlale phansi ngikwazi ukukuchaza sibambisane ngendlela vele esihlale sibambisene kahle ngayo. Ngiyabonga kakhulu ngalowo mbuzo wakho.

English:

Ms C V KING: Minister, for two consecutive years the Auditor-General raised concerns about the internal financial controls of the National Skills Fund and of National Student Financial Aid Scheme, NSFAS, which prompted you, as you rightfully said, to set up a Ministerial Task Team to investigate and for Standing Committee on Public Accounts, Scopa, to call for forensic investigation to be conducted by the Special Investigation Unit, SIU. And not merely have the SIU involved in issues that relates to its mandate, from the private investigators' funding, which then questions your confidence in the ability of the SIU.

Minister, why then did you sought to embark on a plus R2 million contractual agreement with a private forensic

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company whereas NFSAS investigation was conducted by the SIU during the same period?

The MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND INNOVATION: Hon King, thank you very much. But I'm really thanking you halfway because your questions, they become – I'm sorry to say this – very convoluted and mixing a lot of thing that do not mix. It's a pity one doesn't have time to fully explain what I'm saying.

But let me quickly say this, that the forensic investigation by the NSF was done by myself and I had appointed private investigators because forensic investigators, mostly, are private. By the time Scopa said 'why don't you ask the SIU?', I'm not against working with the SIU, but I had already contracted a private forensic investigator to do the work. I wasn't running away from the SIU, as some people often claim, I had already signed an agreement.

And I've said if there are any things from this forensic investigation that would require the SIU to look into, I will consider that. But if there's no need, I will be able to act on the basis of that report. There is nothing that stops me directly to act, either I hand over things to the National

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Prosecuting Authority, NPA, or I hand over things to the Hawks and so on, I will do that.

NSFAS got an unqualified audit this last financial year. So, don't come here and give an impression that everything is just going haywire at NSFAS.

What was being investigated by the SIU at NSFAS was a matter raised more than three years ago by the Administrator on what he had found out when he arrived as the Administrator; that's already more than three years ago. And we have said 'let the SIU continue to then find out what actually happened during that time'.

But as of now NSFAS got an unqualified audit and NSFAS also has come to explain both at Scopa as well as in the portfolio committee on additional actions they are actions over and above the corrective measures that were taken by the Administrator.

This thing of casting aspersions ...

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON: (Mr M L D Ntombela): Thank you very much, hon Minister.

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The MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND INNOVATION: ... to our institutions, hon House Chair, is just not good ...

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON: (Mr M L D Ntombela): Thank you very much, hon Minister.

The MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND INNOVATION: ... let’s talk on the basis of facts. Thank you very much.

Mr M N PAULSEN: Minister, the Auditor-General noted that this money could not be accounted for in the last two financial years; this is the National Skills Fund. We are not speaking about five rand or five thousand or five million; and this money can’t just disappear like this “shhhh”, it happens over a period of time.

Why did it take you this long to be concerned about the missing funds?

And also, Minister, can you take this House in to confidence and tell us that this money did not find its way into that ailing stokvel [saving scheme], the SA Communist Party?

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The MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND INNOVATION: Hon Paulsen, I'm not going to be tempted by your diversified, by trying to divert my attention. To actually try and throw stones at a political party that is not represented here in Parliament is opportunism in the worst form.

You want me to also start asking about the EFF [Interjections.] and the Venda Building Society, VBS, Mutual Bank money?

Let's go and have a proper discussion so that also the EFF must start answering question about its relationship with VBS. [Interjections.] A matter that we are actually still going to continue.

I do not want to be diverted, hon House Chair. [Interjections.] All what I want to say, I never delay ...

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON: (Mr M L D Ntombela): Order! Order, hon members! You are drowning the speaker. We can't hear what he's saying. Order!

The MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND INNOVATION: I did not, House Chair, take long. The moment there was first

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time a qualified audit by the NSF I appointed a Ministerial Task Team to say 'What is wrong with the NSF such that it got these problems?'

By the time the audit disclaimer came, already the Ministerial Task Team process was underway and I have appointed a forensic investigation on time; I have not wasted time in order to be able to do that. Even before the next audit I had already appointed this. And – as I have said – this forensic investigation is going to be completed by the end of March.

Let's focus on real issues and not be diverted by this opportunistic posturing of the EFF. Thank you very much.

Question 126:

The MINISTER OF HEALTH: Hon Chair, I didn't hear that it was my turn. I will deal with the question asked by hon Harvard. Our vaccination programme is able to administer more than 250 000 vaccinations a day, actually up to 300 000 and more, and is sustainable. We do have adequate stock to reach our target of 70% and beyond of the adult population. At the current moment, we are approaching 50% of at least one dose for all adults. We still have more than 20 million doses of both the Johnson and Johnson and Pfizer vaccine combined.

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The challenge we face is to attract more South Africans to come forward to receive their jabs, so that they can all be protected. This is very important. We understand that because people feel that the fourth wave has not been very severe, with fewer admissions and fewer deaths, some feel that they are now safe. However, we know that all scientists and experts are telling us that in another eight to 10 weeks we may be experiencing a fifth wave as we get closer to winter. So, I just want to alert South Africans that it's not yet over.

As you will be aware, we are working with all our provinces and also the private sector ... a number of private-sector participants, pharmacies, other providers and also nongovernmental organisations, NGOs, to make sure that our facilities for vaccinations remain in place. We also have a project management unit in the department which is focussing on this. Just over two and a half weeks ago, with the leadership of young people, we launched the KeReady programme, which is run by young people, to attract more young people to come forward to receive vaccinations.

As Minister Nzimande indicated earlier ... working very well with higher health, especially with Deputy Minister Manamela. We were together, also with my neighbour here, Minister Zulu,

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when we launched this youth programme two and a half weeks ago. We are also doing a lot of outreaches to schools with Basic Education. In some of the provinces there are agreements between our district health ... and Basic Education to visit schools and to provide vaccinations. Many businesses are also providing facilities for vaccinations. We have reduced the interval for boosters and we have also added the mix and match, where, if you had the one dose Johnson and Johnson ... or even with a booster, you can now have a Pfizer ... If you had two Phizer ... you can have a Johnson and Johnson ... as a booster.

So, we are all ready to make sure that we reduce the restrictions and lift ... as the President will at some stage announce the replacement of the state of disaster. These facilities will remain ready so that South Africans can get vaccinated and be protected. Thank you very much, hon Chair.

Ms X HAVARD: Thank you, hon House Chair. What support is the department providing for different socioeconomic sectors in developing vaccination policies to increase the vaccination roll-out?

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The MINISTER OF HEALTH: Hon Chair, our unit which is managing the vaccination programme is very agile and very responsive. At any time that we get requests for partnerships and assistance, we are always there with the private sector, with government departments, with public entities. At any time that we get requests for co-operation and support, we are always there. There is a wide range of experts out there that we always rope in, in case there might be a particular matter where we may need additional expertise. Just to give an example. When there was an issue in Basic Education about the opening of schools and improving vaccinations, we brought in paediatric specialists to make sure that we could add even more information in terms of safety in that sector. So, any time any sector wants assistance, private or public, we always make sure that we provide the necessary support. Thank you.

Ms M D HLENGWA: Thank you, House Chair. Hon Minister, according to a recent press statement by your office, only 29,3% of the 18 to 34 age group is fully vaccinated and apparently another five million of this group will need to be vaccinated in order to achieve 60% coverage. What specific action has the government taken to target this age group, considering their very low vaccination status?

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The MINISTER OF HEALTH: Thank you very much, hon Hlengwa. Hon Chair, indeed that information is correct in terms of at least one jab for young people of 18 to 34. We are at just under 30% of full vaccination and in terms of at least one jab just under 35%. So that's the lowest in the age groups in the country in terms of adults.

One of the major interventions is what I mentioned. Two and a half weeks ago, with hon Manamela and my neighbour here, hon Zulu, we launched this KeReady campaign. In fact, I shouldn't say we launched it because we supported. This is a programme that is run by young people – young health professionals. They are also recruiting other young people outside the health profession and they have made it very clear that they want to run the campaign. The messages must come from them. They have a number of initiatives that we are supporting.

We are also working with them to encourage various industries to provide relevant incentives. In this case, we want to welcome the contribution by the network companies. At this stage, Cell C and also MTN are providing data as part of the incentives for young people. We are talking to the other network providers to also provide data because data is

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important for young people who are looking for work, for education, for various opportunities, for business and so on.

So these are some of the initiatives run by young people. Also in the media, we are encouraging many media houses to continue, and I must admit here that many media houses have come to the party. With regard to radio and TV, you know, if you listen to many of these stations, from time to time they do broadcast messages encouraging vaccination. Also, my other neighbour on the left, the Minister of Sport, Arts and Culture, is working with us in promoting a return to sporting activities and spectators by encouraging vaccinations. So, these are all the interventions that we are involved in.

Ms A M SIWISA: Minister, what scientific information is the government relying on that ... ending all COVID restrictions will not further endanger our society from future variants of this virus? Taking into consideration that there are some companies that already have a mandate of vaccination, which is a mandate for them, what implication will this have on the vaccine mandates that some of these companies have already adopted? Thank you, Chair.

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The MINISTER OF HEALTH: Thank you, hon member and hon Chair. I think, just to add to what my colleague, Minister Nzimande said earlier on, we want to balance on the one hand opening up society, opening up social activities, opening up businesses ... at the same time encouraging people to vaccinate. So, that's why our approach is not going to be reckless in terms of opening up. There will be no contradiction in terms of those companies that, in protection of their own workforce, have the right to develop policies. They have determined the policies which say that in this institution the workers need to be vaccinated or otherwise provide reasons why not. This will hopefully ensure that more and more people get vaccinated because if we are able to reach that 70% of coverage of all adults and even of younger people between 12 and 17 who are also eligible; if we can reach a bigger coverage, then even as variants come – that's the information determined from research by various scientists – there will be fewer variants because fewer people will transmit the virus even if they do get infected. So we will even be able to open up more activities and even drop some of the current protections because then a larger portion of the population will be protected.

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So this is not either or. We want to keep encouraging people to vaccinate. Companies which have particular occupational health and safety policies, amongst which they have included vaccination ... we want to encourage that so that more people can get vaccinated and then it helps us to open up more activities in society.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): The hon P V Staden? Van Staden? Hon Staden? It's written P V here. There's no Van Staden. If it is Van Staden then it's the hon Van Staden. If it's not Van Staden then it's hon P Staden. Do we have such a member here? I will pass. The next question ...

Mr D W MACPHERSON: Sorry Chair, can we take that follow-up question if the hon member is not going to take it?

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): The question of Mr Van Staden?

Mr D W MACPHERSON: Yes, if she is not going to take it, then the DA would like to take the question. [Interjections.] Chair, if the question is not utilised, it can be distributed on a first come first served ... So, the DA would like to take the question. [Interjections.]

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The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): Okay. Is it a DA member?

Mr D W MACPHERSON: Yes, can we take it? [Interjections.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): Should I ... Just wait. Just wait. It's not clear who Mr van Staden or Mr Staden is. Is he FF Plus?

IsiZulu:

... kwenzenjani manje? Usuyi-FFPlus manje?

English:

Mr D W MACPHERSON: Chair, if I may? If the hon member is not going to take the question, it can be distributed to ...

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): Hon Macpherson, please ...

Afrikaans:

... moet asseblief nie kanse vat nie.

English:

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The party is not here. You do not represent that party. Can we go to Question 100?

Mr D W MACPHERSON: Sorry, Chair, on a point of order.

Dr W J BOSHOFF: Hon Chair?

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): Oh, the hon member from the FF Plus. Yes, hon member from the FF Plus, not you, Mr Van Staden.

Dr W J BOSHOFF: Hon Chair, may I just say that hon Van Staden has a problem with his signal but I'm not ready to do a follow-up question.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): Okay, thank you very much.

Mr D W MACPHERSON: Sorry, Chair, on a point of order. [Interjections.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): Hon members, order! [Interjections.] Order, hon members! Order, hon members! Hon Macpherson, what's your point of order, sir?

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Mr D W MACPHERSON: Chair, you will recall that before the House ... [Interjections.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): Hon members!

Mr D W MACPHERSON: Chair, could you ask her to shut up if she's asking me to shut up? [Interjections.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): Hon Van Staden? Okay, hon members.

IsiZulu:

Uma ngabe efuna ukubuza ehlezi, hlala. Qhubeka Macpherson njalo.

English:

Mr D W MACPHERSON: Chair, may I suggest that before COVID, if there was no-one to ask a follow-up question, it was then at the Chair's discretion to reallocate the question to another party that wanted to take it. So, I would ask for your discretion in reallocating the question.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): Hon Macpherson, thank you very much. Hon Macpherson, it is at the discretion

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of the Chair. Thank you very much. My discretion in this particular regard is that we could not go ahead with that question. Unfortunately, the member of the FF Plus stood up to acknowledge that he is their member. Thank you very much. We will deal with that later if we have a problem, but for now, can we go to Question 100?

Mr S N SWART: Sorry, House Chair, may I rise? I understand that Mr Van Staden is on the platform.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): Hon Swart?

Mr S N SWART: He is now on the platform.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): Who?

Mr S N SWART: Mr Staden from the FF Plus. He just said he’s there.

Mr P A VAN STADEN: I’m here, Chair.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): But where is Mr Van Staden?

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Mr S N SWART: He is there.

Mr P A VAN STADEN: Chair, I was thrown off but I'm back. My signal was dropping.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): Okay.

Afrikaans:

Dankie, Mnr Swart.

English:

Hon Staden? Is it hon Van Staden?

Mr P A VAN STADEN: It's hon Van Staden, thank you, Chairperson.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): Thank you very much. Go ahead, sir.

Mr P A VAN STADEN: Hon Minister, with the President's announcement during the state of the nation address ...

[Interjections.]

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The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): Order please! The hon Minister cannot hear what the other member is asking. He has my indulgence. Hon Van Staden, again, go ahead.

Mr P A VAN STADEN: Hon Minister, with the President's announcement during the state of the nation address that government must first amend the National Health Act before the state of disaster can be lifted, can you indicate why should the National Health Act be amended first? Does the government plan to make vaccinations and vaccination passports compulsory through this amendment? And, don't you think that compulsory vaccinations and vaccination passports will ... South Africans ... revolt? Thank you, hon Chairperson.

The MINISTER OF HEALTH: Hon Chair, I think the hon Van Staden must go and read the President's speech of the state of the nation address. He will not find any line there which says that the Department of Health should amend the National Health Act. What the President said was that the Department of Health will provide regulations, using the National Health Act. So, what we have been working on are regulations under the National Health Act in terms of the management of infectious and notifiable diseases to specifically respond to COVID. That process is virtually concluded. We have already made

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presentations to the relevant structures in government and that matter is being considered as we speak. Just to confirm what Minister Nzimande said earlier on, the Deputy President is consulting with some of the public structures in line with those regulations, so that we can then migrate from disaster management to a health managed pandemic.

In terms of what those will contain, hon Van Staden must just be patient. The regulations will be made public. They will be published for public comment and from there he and his party will judge whether we are talking about mandatory vaccine passports. He must just be patient. It will be in the public in the next few days in the *Government Gazette*. When that happens, he can comment together with his party. Thank you, hon Chair.

Question 100:

The MINISTER OF HEALTH: Thank you, hon House Chair. This relates to the question of what the Department of Home Affairs has published in terms of the critical skills, and there has been a concern from various stakeholders, and this is what the hon member is relating to. Now, let me explain this, the Department of Home Affairs has used specific kind of benchmark in terms of determining which skills are actually critical

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skills. So, it's not in relation to whether these skills may be in short supply.

In some institutions that as a country, they look at whether these are the skills which falls under the category, for instance, of hard to fill. There are also lot of vacancies which are not been able to be filled for at least six months in that category, whether there is vacancy growth, in other words, there is an increasing number of vacancies in that area and whether there is vacancy pressure amongst others.

Now, the reality in the health sector is that, in the generic professions of health, in most of these medical, nursing, pharmacy, physio and so on, we are producing sufficient numbers overall, in terms of being able to can fulfil the public good, but the problem is the distribution. In many of those skills, you will find out that they migrate into private sector, also into urban areas and there is also a struggle in the rural areas to attract some of those skills.

Also, in terms of that therefore, you find situations where, because of budget stress, even where some of these professionals like doctors are available, but some of the areas where they get posts, there are not enough resources to

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attend the public. So, when they balance all these on the various health professions, they find that, it's not an absolute shortage of many of these skills, it's more of distribution, financial resources and attracting those skills into relevant places rather than absolute scarcity.

Historically, because of that situation, especially in rural areas, I worked in a rural hospital where 80% of my medical staff were foreign doctors. So, that is the situation that exists. So, we are engaging with Home Affairs to address that anomaly, but even though absolute, you may not have the shortage of certain skills. Some of your most specialised skills might be in adequate numbers, but to get them where they should be, it's a problem.

So, those are the challenges that we are addressing, and we hope that with our engagement with the Department of Home Affairs, we can be able to find an amicable solution, so that, where we are able to attract foreign graduates, we should still be able to do so, even though there might be 10 South Africans actually who can be attracted in Nkambule, hon Chief Whip, but it may be difficult to bring them back. So, those are things which we wanted to discuss and see how we deal with those anomalies. Thank you, hon Chair.

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The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): Thank you very much, hon Minister. Hon members, the time allocated for questions ... [Interjections.] ... I have been advised to take the question now and her follow-up, and thereafter, we will go to the first order, and I will be welcoming Chair Boroto to the front. Over to you, hon H Ismail.

Ms H ISMAIL: Thank you, Chair. Minister, let me remind you, during the COVID-19 pandemic, hospitals had to postpone elective surgeries, as healthcare workers fell ill at some of existing shortages of critical care nurses in theatres and intensive care unit, ICU. Now, South Africa currently has 1,1 nurses per 1000 people as compared to China, that has a 3,1 ratios per 1000 people, and the UK, that has 8,4 ratios per 1000 people. Further to this, Minister, South Africa currently spends R83 million a year on Cuban doctors. Now, it’s a sad reality that government values political connections over the health and wellbeing of its own people. It is clear that, we need medical practitioners ... [Interjections.] ...

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: I held my hand up, Chairperson.

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Ms H ISMAIL: ... but we cannot exclude these skills from the critical skills list.

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: Chairperson.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): Hon members, hon Ismail, can you hold for a minute. Hon members, I've got time right in front of me.

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: No, it's not about time, Chairperson.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): But members should be given a chance to pose a question that they want. Hon Zulu, what is the point of order?

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: Chairperson, it will be helpful to assist because you know as Ministers as we sit here, when members do not give us the question properly and read it very fast, it's difficult to answer the question. It is just my request to the hon member not to go too fast, so that we can hear the question.

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The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): Thank you very much, hon Minister, but for the sake of the smooth running of this House and the decorum of the House, I would request that members should not be disturbed when they are on the floor. If the Minister did not hear the question properly, in his or her response, he or she will indicate that. At times, members do not pose questions, instead, they make statements, then it is at the discretion of the Minister to respond to either that statement or the question.

So, let's allow members to pose questions. Members are also requested to give Ministers a chance to respond. If they are not happy with their responses, they know what route to follow.

Mr D W MACPHERSON: Thanks, Chair. The reason why the Minister can't hear, is because their own members behind make a noise continuously.

IsiZulu:

UNGQONGQOSHE WEZOKUTHUTHUKISWA KOMPHAKATHI: Uyabheda ke wena.

Mr D W MACPHERSON: So, if you correctly have asked them to allow the speaker to pose this question, then the Minister can

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hear. So, you can ask her own colleagues to thula [keep quiet.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): Hon Macpherson, hon Macpherson, hon Macpherson, please. Hon Ismail, I will give you a chance again.

Ms H ISMAIL: Chair, do I have all my time?

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): You have your time, hon member. Go ahead.

Ms H ISMAIL: Thank you. Minister, I hope you can hear me now.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): Hon members, just give her a chance. Hon members, what we also need to consider is that, we come from a large House where we could not hear such big noise. So, we have to moderate our voices in order to suit this environment which is rather too small, please. Over to you, hon Ismail.

Ms H ISMAIL: Thank you, Chair. Minister, during the COVID-19 pandemic, hospitals had to postpone elective surgeries, as healthcare workers fell ill at some of existing shortages of

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critical care nurses, most especially in theatres and intensive care unit, ICU. Now, South Africa currently has 1,1 nurses per 1000 people, as compared to China, that has a 3,1 ratios per 1000 people, and the UK, that has 8,4 ratios per 1000 people. Further to this, Minister, South Africa currently spends R83 million a year on Cuban doctors. It's a sad reality that government values political connections over the health and wellbeing of its own people.

It is clear that, we need medical practitioners, but we cannot exclude these skills from the critical skills list, while importing selective groups with political connections, as we have seen with the Cuban doctors. Now, instead of funding countries like Cuba, these funds could have been more adequately used to develop medical skills training centres locally, thus increasing our critical skills input. So, Minister, what are the reasons that Cubans get preferential treatment over other international medical practitioners because of the exclusion of the critical skills list? Is not that because we have so many Cuban doctors ...

[Interjections.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): Hon members, order. Order, hon members. Hon Ismail, we have rules to consider.

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Your question was supposed to be only a minute, and you have gone well beyond that.

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP OF THE MAJORITY PARTY: Thank you very much, hon Chairperson. A follow-up question should be one minute. You don’t make a statement ... [Interjections.] ... no, sit down, I am on the floor.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): Just hold on. Hon Macpherson, if you behave this way, I’m going to request you to leave the House. You are disrupting these proceedings. Hon Macpherson, order please. Hon Macpherson, you were asking questions while you were seated there. Now, I do not know what is happening with you, you are on your feet now to continue with the disruption of the House. I am asking you, please do not do this, otherwise, I will request you to leave the House if you go on with this, please. Over to you, hon Deputy Chief Whip.

The DEPUTY CHIEF WHIP OF THE MAJORITY PARTY: Thank you very much, hon Chairperson. Hon House Chair, as I was saying, a follow-up question should be one minute, and you don’t have to ask more than one question. The hon member asked three questions. The other thing, hon House Chairperson, the follow-

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up question should emanate from the original question, not a new question. Thank you very much

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): Thank you very much, hon members.

Mr D W MACPHERSON: Hon Chairperson, I have my hand up.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): Hon members, order. I will not allow you, hon Macpherson. Hon members, in response to what the hon Deputy Chief Whip has raised, I would like to read this to you. A member who asks for a supplementary question, may make a statement or express an opinion, but the time allowed for the first supplementary question is limited to two minutes. The first and for subsequent ... [Interjections.] ... hon members, I am not yet through. Hon members, ...

IsiZulu:

... lalelani, lalelani, bakithi!

English:

... and the subsequent supplementary question is one minute. So please, hon members, these are your rules. So, let us not

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make the work of the Chairperson so difficult, let us respect our own rules. Also, the time allocated for questions has expired, outstanding replies received will be printed.

Mr D W MACPHERSON: Chair, I am standing on a point of order.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): The Secretary ... [Interjections.]

Mr D W MACPHERSON: Chair, on a point of order, please.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): Hon Macpherson, what's your problem?

Mr D W MACPHERSON: Chairperson, the question has been posed to the Minister, and the follow-up question was posed by the member. The response has not been forthcoming, and the supplementary follow-ups have not been answered. You have to complete the entire sequence and stop the entire session ... [Interjections.] ...

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): Hon Macpherson, there are certain things that should happen before you become the Chairperson. You cannot go on like this.

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Mr D W MACPHERSON: Chair, on a point of order.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): Regarding what you are looking for, the Minister is at liberty to give a written reply. So, what is your problem?

Mr D W MACPHERSON: Chairperson.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): Hon members. Hon Macpherson, could you please give the House a chance.

Mr D W MACPHERSON: Chairperson, can I please address you, Chair?

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): The Secretary will read the order of the day as we call upon hon Maswanganyi who will speak virtually.

CONSIDERATION OF 2022 FISCAL FRAMEWORK AND REVENUE PROPOSALS AND OF REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE ON FINANCE THEREON

Xitsonga:

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Ttn M J MASWANGANYI: Muhlonipheki Mutshamaxitulu, vachaviseki va Huvo yo Endla Milawu ya Riphabuliki ra Afrika-Dzonga, vaholobye ...

English:

... Minister of Finance Mr Enoch Godongwana tabled the 2022 Budget before Parliament on 23 February 2022, in terms of section 27 of the Public Finance Management Act, PFMA, and section 7(1) of the Money Bills Amendment Procedure and Related Matters Act, Act 9 of 2009. The Minister together with the director-general, DG, and senior officials of the Treasury briefed the committee on Finance on 24 February 2022. The committee received the post-Budget inputs from the Parliamentary Budget Office and the Financial and Fiscal Commission on 03 March 2022.

The Standing Committee On Finance acknowledges that the consolidated revenue is expected to increase from R1,7 trillion in 2021-22 to R1,77 trillion in 2022-203 reaching R1,98 trillion in 2024-25. Furthermore, the committee acknowledges the R32 billion increase in the National Student Financial Aid Scheme, NSFAS, funding for existing bursary holders and new entrants into institutions of higher learning as well as R24,6 billion allocated to hire teachers. The

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committee also acknowledges the R15 billion allocated to small businesses for the loan guarantee allocation. We further also acknowledge on the positive note the R90,00 increase on the special grant.

The global and the domestic economic outlook and recovery has improved since 2021 mid-term Budget. As a result, there has been additional tax generated. The additional R61,7 billion collected is above projections. The upward revision shows an improvement in personal income tax, corporate income tax and VAT. It was estimated that the global output would increase by 5,9% but it is expected to moderate to 4,4% in 2022. Inflation is expected to continue rising in 2022. Price pressures will average about 3,9% in advanced economies and 5,9% in emerging and developing economies.

It is unclear whether the 2022 Budget's microeconomic and fiscal policy assumptions took into account the conflict between Russia and Ukraine. This conflict will affect the global and the domestic economic outlook and pose significant risk to the 2022 fiscal framework. In essence, the microeconomic assumptions and considerations underpinning the 2022 fiscal framework will change in the current year. South Africa, Zimbabwe and Russia are major global producers of

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platinum group metals, PGMs. Economic sanctions on Russia may lead to increased demand for South Africa's PGMs at a higher price. However, there is a looming food price inflation with Ukraine being a key agricultural producer amongst other things, maize, wheat, soya beans and sunflower oil. The price of these produce have gone up significantly. By last week Friday, 04 March 2022, Brent Crude oil price was nearly US$115 per barrel, that is 17% higher than on 23 February this year, the day before the conflict begun.

These adds up to the already mounting energy price inflation pressures. Recently, we have witnessed the skyrocketing increase of petrol prices. Energy and commodity prices shocks will have an impact especially for poor households for whom food and fuel are a higher proportion of expenses. The Russia-Ukraine conflict might create complex policy trade-offs further complicating the economic landscape as the country recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic crisis.

This fiscal framework is presented against the backdrop of shocks brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. COVID-19 has led to the contractions in the gross domestic product, GDP, increased debt levels, higher unemployment and income losses,

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all of which have served to further entrench inequality and poverty.

Another challenge was the July 2021 unrest which has placed additional strain on government as public resources had to be marshalled to extend the provision of income support as well as to aid the recovery of businesses.

The gross fixed capital formation private sector declined by -1,2% while public corporations fixed capital formations increased by 9,5%. The unemployment recovery also continues to be sluggish,

Chairperson, the official unemployment rate rose by 0,5% from 34,4% in the second quarter of 2021 to 34,9% in the third quarter of 2021. According to the expanded definition of unemployment, the rate increased by 2,2% to 46,6%. Narrowing tax base due to rising unemployment may put pressure on public spending, increase the Budget deficit and increase borrowing requirements. High unemployment, inequality and global financial volatility are destabilising constraint growth and deter investment.

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A consolidate Budget deficit of 6,5% of GDP is projected for 2022-23 narrowing to 4,2% of GDP in 2024-25. The SA Reserve Bank continue to tighten the monetary policy increasing the repo rate by accumulative 50 basis points to 4% in January 2022. The debt servicing costs will increase to be higher than R300 billon per year from 2022 to 2023 becoming of the fastest growing expenditure or a spending item.

However, over the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework, MTEF, period the learning culture will decrease by -1,1% and the social development decreases by =2,5%. These Budget adjustments disregard the effect on employment. A balance between employment preservation and Budget cuts must be maintained. By their own admission government is unlikely to realise many of their National Development Plan, NDP, targets.

The committee held public hearings on 02 March 2022. The committee received written and oral submissions from stakeholders. Stakeholders raised a number of issues. Amongst those is that they express concern about the SA Revenue Service's, Sars, conduct during VAT audits by withholding off VAT refunds. To this effect, we recommended that Sars and the stakeholders concerned should meet within three months to deal with these issues.

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Stakeholders also raised the issue of planed or looming retrenchment of almost 6 000 SA Post Office workers which they believe can be stopped. Furthermore, they raise the issue of the bailouts to the state-owned enterprises, SOEs, and recommended also that the Road Accident Fund, RAF, should be done away and be replaced by the road accident benefit scheme. That Bill should be brought to Parliament. In return the National Treasury and Sars responded on the issues raised by stakeholders on 04 March 2022.

Regarding the committee observations, the committee welcomes the 2022 Budget and acknowledges that it strikes a difficult balance between growing the economy ensuring fiscal sustainability, maintaining expenditure over the medium-term and providing tax relieve to individuals and companies. The committee appreciates the productive environment in which the 2022 Budget was discussed between the National Treasury, Sars and civil society. The committee further welcomes the National Treasury and Sars' comprehensive response to the issues raised by stakeholders.

On microeconomic issues the committee expected the real GDP growth of 1,8% over the medium-term on average will not be sufficient to reduce poverty, inequality and high rates of

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unemployment. Furthermore, the committee acknowledges some progress made in addressing structural constraints growth. The committee recommends that the National Treasury should report progress made every quarter on structural reforms including managing he electricity crisis that negatively affects consumers and the small and medium-sized enterprises, SMEs. The committee recommends that for policy certainty, the National Treasury should clearly articulate the government's economic policy on growth from which the economic recovery and reconstruction was derived in the upcoming 2022 Medium-Term Budget Speech, MTBS. As indicated in the previous report we believe that reindustrialisation and localisation should become key pillars of our national reconstruction and inclusive economic recovery strategy.

On employment programmes, the committee recommends that the National Treasury should regularly provide progress report in this regard. There are many programmes that government had come up with including the Presidential Youth Employment Initiative. So we will expect from the side of the Treasury to report progress on a regular basis. The committee further notes that it will remain difficult for the labour market to absorb new entrants particularly the youth and the unskilled

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with economic projected economic growth over the next three years.

Given the phenomenon of high level of unemployment the committee urges the government to seek to avoid job losses spending in various entities and negotiate with trade unions, management and other stakeholders in this regard within the relevant regulatory framework and norms. The committee notes the proposal to decrease the corporate income tax by 1% part of which is the government's intention to restructure the tax system by reducing avoidance opportunities, expanding the tax base and encouraging investment. However, we believe that the committee is not convinced that a reduction in the corporate income tax, CIT, necessarily will lead to investment of this saving into the economy. Therefore, the committee recommends that the Treasury should encourage the private sector to reciprocate in return to stop holding the money and invest their money in the economy

On expenditure related to debt issues, the committee observed that gross loan debt is now expected to stabilise at 5,43 trillion or 75% of the GDP in 22024-25, a year earlier than projected in the 2021 Budget. The debt level as a percentage of GDP nonetheless remains high and the country

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might face a debt trap. The committee recommends that the National Treasury report quarterly as we have reiterated before. [Time expired.]

Mr M J MASWANGANYI: In conclusion, we also recommend that government should ... [Time expired.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (MS M G Boroto): Hon member, your time has expired.

Mr M J MASWANGANYI: The committee recommends that government should procure locally assembled cars that in itself ... [Time expired.]

Xitsonga:
Ndza khensa, Mutshamaxitulu.

Dr D T GEORGE: Thank you, House Chairperson, the fiscal framework is the national budget for the next three years. It estimates how much money government will receive in revenue, how much it will spend and the difference between the two.

Since 2008, government has spent more than it has received and the deficit has ballooned to R386 billion for next year.

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Interest repayments will be more than R1 trillion over the next three years.

Many South African households know the burden of debt and how difficult it can be to break the debt cycle without taking decisive action to earn more, spend less or both. Unlike struggling households battling to make ends meet as inflation rises and the cost of living spirals upward, government has the luxury of access to other people's money in the form of tax, and this has made them lazy.

Year after year, Standing Committee on Public Accounts, Scopa, hear how billions of rands paid by hardworking taxpayers have been irregularly and wastefully spent and nobody gets held to account. This is the culture of corruption that has taken the grip around the throat of our public finances. Taxpayers won't pay tax when they know that their money is being wasted. Money is already tight enough.

The tax base continues to shrink as skilled South Africans head abroad to escape a debt trap created by a government increasingly out of touch with the reality that South Africa has run out of money and no amount of borrowing can fix what the ANC has broken.

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The fiscal framework is a powerful reflection of the choices that government has made. Government has not been able to lift the revenue numbers; it has not earned more because our economy is not growing. Yes, it is true that COVID-19 smacked our economy really hard at a time when we could least afford it, but we were already on our knees before the pandemic reached our shores because government chose the wrong road for our economy.

It chose to position an incompetent government as the primary economic growth enabler. The vehicle for this growth was to be the state-owned enterprises, SOEs. Year after year, while the state-owned enterprises under delivered, yet overpaid the cadres deployed to loot them. One Finance Minister after the next, bailed them out to the tune of nearly R200 billion and counting. The opportunity cost of this has been the economic growth that we never had and the exponentially higher revenue we never received, the jobs that never resulted, the poverty cycle that never got broken, the house for the homeless that never got built or the school to feed eager young minds or the hospitals to heal the sick. Enormous damage was done.

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Instead, the public sector wage bill grew bigger and bigger, bloated with millionaire managers while the frontline got depleted.

The so-called broad-based black economic empowerment, BBBEE, meant to redress past injustices just made a few people rich and left everyone else behind.

It was refreshing to hear President Ramaphosa talk of the business sector generating jobs that the government knows it cannot deliver. It was also refreshing to hear the new Finance Minister speak in the same direction. I hope, Minister, that you would break the mould that your predecessors wouldn't or couldn't.

The DA would not support this fiscal framework because it would look much better if the Minister was going to do what he and the President said they will do.

We need to attract capital into our economy for it to grow. As our economy grow, gross domestic product, GDP, will rise and revenue will increase. Investment will come from local and foreign business from domestic savings. There was nothing in the budget to enthuse business.

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A much stronger signal from government is needed. Reduction of the bloated, unaffordable public sector wage bill, changes to labour regulations to encourage employment, and an actual stop to the SOEs bailouts, tax holidays and tax exemptions for start-ups, removing tax barriers to saving and a cut in the tax on fuel. All of these are possible but none of it happened and that shows on the fiscal framework.

The silence on the new state-owned enterprise to oversee the others must end. Hard-pressed taxpayers want to know if any of their hard-earned money would be thrown into this madcap idea. They know a swimming pool when they see one, no matter how hard government argues that it is a fire pool.

Our energy crisis, with rolling blackouts again, today and the looming water crisis will never be solved if there isn't any tangible action. The problem is credibility.

The ANC government spoke for itself when it abstained as the UN voted against the Russian federation's illegal invasion of the Ukraine. In the likely event that this war drags on, sanctions against Russia will impact on its allies as well and the ANC has painted us firmly into that corner.

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As financial pressure piles up on Russia, its ANC government friends who celebrated with cocktails while its tanks rolled across the Ukrainian border, who put their own interests first and drive our economy further into the red. Our economy knows what pariah status can do and we are already on the financial action task force watch list for not fighting money laundering and terrorist financing strongly enough. Punitive action aside, our economy will not grow if our major trading partners are at war.

The Minister is unable to commit to a Basic Income Grant because he is not confident that he can fund it. If GDP rises, and revenue with it, and expenditure is better managed by making the hard choices, then it is possible and support for vulnerable, unemployed South Africans can increase as more jobs are generated on a rising growth rate. That is the pathway out of the current unemployment and poverty trap that the ANC has walked us into, one misstep after the other.

We now face the real prospect of stagflation – low growth and rising prices - and that is going hurt every South African unless urgent action is taken to unlock the private sector and reduce the fuel price. Do what you say you will do, Minister,

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and in October the picture can look a lot better. Thank you, Chairperson. [Applause.]

Mr N F SHIVAMBU: Thank you very much, House Chair, the EFF rejects the proposed fiscal framework as introduced by the Minister of Finance during the Budget Speech last week.

We know that after the budget, there were talk shops called public hearings, which under balanced circumstances were supposed to interrogate the budget and present superior alternatives, otherwise, the neoliberal and right-wing budget whose aim is to consolidate, deepen and strengthen the white capitalist establishments on a supposition that such will in the future trickle down to ordinary people.

We take note that for the first time since 1994, the biggest expenditure item on the budget is debt service costs, meaning that the state will spend R301 billion paying the interests of the more than R4,7 trillion that the South African government owes to domestic and global financial institutions, which regrettably, include the International Monetary Fund, IMF, and the World Bank.

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Many other countries in the African continent including Ethiopia, Angola, Tanzania, Egypt, Kenya and many others are borrowing money and entering into developmental partnerships with financial institutions from different parts of the world. What is markedly different about these loan partnerships is that they result in significant and impactful infrastructure development programmes and building of new industrial zones which in turn create jobs and reduce poverty. On the contrary, the South African government borrows billions of rands to pay salaries and to pay the multinational corporations that are frog-marching South Africa into an evidently unjust energy transition.

The trillions of rands the South African government borrowed from domestic and global capitalists bank are not adding any significant value to the development of the productive forces, they are not creating additional jobs and are not reducing poverty. These trillions of rands borrowed by the South African government come with conditions and are certainly an instrument undermining South Africa’s policy, political and strategic sovereignty. The most perfect illustration that South Africa’s policies and sovereignty is undermined is witnessed through the so-called structural reforms, which if you read closely are not different from the structural

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adjustment programmes that seek to privatize South Africa' state-owned assets. The SA Airways has already been privatized to a consortium that is linked to the dominant white capitalist establishments here in South Africa, and not to a strategic equity partner who would have added the much-needed value into the airline.

The mutilation of Eskom into three different divisions is a direct privatization of energy generation which will evidently soon lead to the privatization of both energy transmission and distribution. Despite the ruling party's resolution five years ago to create a state-owned bank, which they said is a matter of urgency, and the repeated commitment by the Ministry of Finance in this Administration, a state-owned bank is not yet created. The Minister of Finance said during the budget briefing that he does not have a mandate from his own President to create a state-owned bank.

Despite the ruling party's resolution to discontinue the private ownership of the SA Reserve Bank, SARB, the central bank remains in private hands and is currently at the forefront of irrationally and unlawfully destroying black-owned insurance companies.

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The 2022 fiscal framework announced the reduction of corporate income tax by 1% despite lack of any empirical lack of evidence that such will lead to increased investment and job creation. Since 2020, South Africa has lost more than two million jobs and almost all these jobs were lost in the private sector, yet this government still insists that jobs must be created by the private sector. There is currently more than 11 million people in South Africa who need jobs and cannot find them, yet the budget does not say anything concrete and believable to create jobs for the people of South Africa.

The reality is that almost everything else that the National Treasury does is not leading to stimulation of the economy, not leading to the development of productive forces, not leading to job creation, and not leading to poverty reduction. There is continued refusal to accept that you can use fiscal and procurement policies to drive industrial local expansion. The National Treasury is not utilising that instrument much more meaningfully.

We reiterate our demands as the EFF that we must stop all forms of privatization. All forms of privatization of all companies must stop, whether it is Denel and others. They can

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play a strategic role if they are given clear direction and meaning. We still demand for the creation of state-owned bank and the nucleus of that state-owned bank must be the African Bank, which already has the infrastructure to roll out that particular programme.

We call again that the Bill we have introduced as the EFF to discontinue private ownership of the central bank must be passed by this Parliament before the end of 2022 so that we can join more than 90% of banks in the world that are owned by central governments.

We demand that there must be a clear plan with regards to industrial expansion, but also we should explore developmental partnerships, not just burdening the South African fiscus with loans from ... [Inaudible.] ... multinational banks and domestic institutions without any meaningful contribution to the South African economy. We reject the budget with contempt and we know because it is not going to create anything. Thank you very much.

Mr E M BUTHELEZI: House Chairperson, during the Minister's opening remarks of the 2022 Budget Speech, he stressed that and I quote:

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> The 2022 Budget was designed to strike the delicate balance between growing the economy, fiscal sustainability and supporting livelihoods.

The Minister further advised that economic growth will be subdued and that over the medium term it will not be sufficient to reduce poverty and inequality in South Africa.

Hon Chair, at the outset, the Minister told the country that there has been no high level arrest and prosecution for those who have stolen money from the state while/whether this was from corruption related to COVID-19 or state capture.

When communities ask why there have no electricity while the water has been cut for months, whether they can provide better for their families through tax relief? The answer is simple; the government has done nothing.

On taxes, the Minister instead of increasing excise duties on products such as cigarettes which affects the day to day running of our hospitals and place a heavy burden on our primary health care facilities. When heart disease, cancer and lung infection make up long ques at clinics, the Minister

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chose to increase the taxes on much healthier alternatives to smoking cigarettes which is vaping.

It's our view as the IFP that this needs to be reviewed as imposing taxes to vaping would discourage the industry from growing. The government should instead be increasing policing and clamping down on illicit trade of cigarettes which is killing companies that are operating legally within our borders. I am certain that fewer teenagers would get hooked on smoking if there were less and cheap illegal cigarettes available.

While we welcome the increase in revenue allocation to local government, we are of the view that this money is not enough. When we say this, we mean that councils who serve the people directly require the requisite revenue to do so. This calls for an increase in funding. – it is not so that it may be pocketed by officials and politicians, but it is meant for delivery of services and building capacity within the state.

Furthermore, we must note government's inability to retain skills in local government. This sphere of government, as we all know, has been around for 22-years now. How is it that this sphere has been and is still neglected?

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One does not see the 22-year experience in this sphere of government hence our municipalities are falling apart. Lastly, our state-owned entities continue to fail us as a country. Eskom has grown into a bottomless pit for state resources. The amount of R88 billion to further bail-out Eskom is travesty. Denel is a shadow of its former self and many other SOEs are crippling our economy.

Hon Chairperson, it's plain and simple, the government must do better and it must change the course to focus on the needs of our people. The IFP supports the report. Thank you so much.

Mr W W WESSELS: House Chairperson, I don't think that any member in this House on any side of the aisle can disagree that South Africa is in trouble. That this ship is sinking and that we are in an unsustainable fiscal position. That we don't have enough money. That 40% of South Africans are hungry currently. That 40% of South Africans are dependent on social grants and that we don't have enough money.

Whilst we spend 60% of the budget on social services there will not be enough teachers to provide the necessary education. There will not be enough doctors, there will not be

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enough clinics, there will not be enough social grants. That is the unsustainable position that South Africa is in.

... [Interjections.] ...

IsiZulu:

USIHLALO WENDLU (Nk M G Boroto): Nkosi uButhelezi! Baba uButhelezi! Baba uButhelezi, ngicela ucime baba.

English:

Mute. You may not be aware that you did not mute and you are now in another conversation. Please mute. Proceed, hon Wessels.

Mr W W WESSELS: ... Thank you hon House Chair. Whilst the ANC is blind to the reality the fiscal framework will remain inadequate. Whilst there is no implementation of structural economic reforms, the fiscal framework will be inadequate. Chairperson, whilst members of the ANC regard big business as the enemy we will not get out of this crisis. Whilst business are regarded as being the holy cows that will be provide the taxes regardless of what is being done and the services been provided, we will not get out of this situation.

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Chairperson, the government should earn tax. The government can't just collect tax. Whilst the government only collects tax and does not provide services in exchange, we cannot expect businesses to have confidence in this government. Whilst members of the ANC think that it is wrong for businesses to build up reserves and save money, we have a problem. We have a problem in the thinking whilst the ANC does not understand the economy.

Chairperson, history will repeat itself, we will lose business confidence if there is no real structural reforms, if there is no actual addressing such as the energy crisis. Voltaire said and I quote:

> History never repeats itself. Man always does.

Stop with your failed policy directions. Stop giving Cubans money whilst the people of South Africa are suffering and unemployed. Whilst you do not have money you spend money because of your historic loyalties and also because of the fact that you don't know what the reality is. Whilst 40% of the people of South Africa are hungry, you give money to Cuba. That the problem with this government. You keep on doing the same thing.

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Businesses out there provide services. They even fix the potholes which are the responsibility of this government because you failed to provide adequate services and business do it. Businesses provide and contribute to social relief programmes whilst the government fails to do it. That is what you should recognise. The role that big business can play in this country and start acknowledging that. Start acknowledging the reality and stop implementing failed policy. We need to get this ship going again. We all have the potential to get South Africa going. There are businesses that can create jobs and get South Africa out of this situation. But then, you must start playing your role and you must start doing your job. Thank you.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G Boroto): Thank you. Hon Shabalala, I'm giving you a warning, if you do that again you will be out of this platform. You don't just press the button and speak. Are you proceeding to speak?

Ms J TSHABALALA: I'm sorry, Chairperson.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G Boroto): But the warning is given. Thank you for that.

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Mr S N SWART: House Chair, the ACDP believes that the Minister did relatively well under very difficult circumstances to strike a balance between growing the economy, ensuring fiscal sustainability, and supporting livelihoods.

The Budget Speech was broadly supported by markets. And it is clear that the Minister is attempting to stick to the much needed fiscal consolidation path by allocating part of the R182 billion tax windfall to debt reduction but also addressing much needed social support in extending the COVID 19 Social Relief of Distress grant.

The question is to what degree would you be able to implement these proposals? We, from the ACDP believe as many do that what is much needed is much faster economic growth for job creation and revenue increases.

The committee report refers to various organisations that made presentations. PricewaterhouseCoopers, PWC, interestingly enough states that Treasury's tax revenue estimates for the next two years are too conservative and that for this financial year that we are in, the revenue could be R40 billion higher than projected. The ACDP welcomes this because we need to reduce the high levels of government debt, which

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has reached almost R4,3 trillion and debt service costs of R330 billion. But PWC as many others they premised their projection upon their first 10-months of last year. And those are the most recent tax figures that were available.

However, as we know the situation has changed dramatically, globally with the Ukrainian invasion by Russia. We see that the fiscal risks, - hon Minister maybe you can touch on this. The fiscal risks identified in your budget risk as well as the Budget Review look like they are going to materialise.

At the same time consumers are facing sharp increases in consumer inflation driven by rapidly escalating food and fuel costs. And this arising from disrupted global supply chains. Electricity prices also set to rise and the markets are pricing in the prospect of the Reserve Bank being forced to accelerate interest rates hike. And this, of course, places further pressure on many South African households who are already struggling to make it on month to month.

It is against this background that the ACDP welcomes the fact that not only it was Personal Income Tax and Value Added Tax, VAT, not increased but tax brackets and rebates will be adjusted to provide R5,2billion in tax relief.

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We would urge, hon Minister that you announce in your Budget Review, a review of a petrol price. Please expedite this. There is room to reduce the fuel price and the tax that is raised in that regard. This can be balanced with the commodity price windfall that is set to continue as a result of the European, Russian and Ukranian crisis.

From that perspective, we ask you hon Minister to urgently look at that aspect. Our house holds need some relief and that can be done by reducing the fuel price. I thank you.

Mr N L S KWANKWA: Thank you House Chair

IsiXhosa:

Ndiyaziqhwabela izandla mhlekazi.

English:

South Africa's economic growth rate used to be around what 4% during the mid-2000s, now it is at around 1,9%. In fact, it has been forecast to be at about 1,8% over the medium term. The forecast rate of growth is not enough to ensure that we're able to reduce unemployment, reduce inequality as well as poverty in South Africa. Whilst plans in the past have been put in place to try and industrialise the South African

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economy, not enough has been attended to or done to address the challenges that are faced by those who are supposed to benefit from the programme.

We welcome the government's decision to use a portion of revenue windfall to reduce the borrowing requirement as well as our debt. However, we do not support the government's decision to reduce the corporate income tax rate. We want to cite statistics in support of our argument. Between 2003 and 2012, the number of personal income taxpayers grew by 7%. However, since 2012 some of these gains have been eroded with a decline of 2% in the number of taxpayers according to SA Revenue Service, Sars data.

The decline is very worrying, as you might admit. It is a direct result of the weak economy and its failure to grow, which has reduced the ability of firms to grow and increase salaries. This most or in tandem with the increase in the high unemployment rate or there is a direct correlation between this and the increase in the unemployment rate. Even worrying is that, in 2020 there were only approximately 5,2 million individual taxpayers. This 5,2 million of individual taxpayers represent about 10% of the population, and they contribute

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anything between 40 and 60% of the tax revenue for the country.

In other words, over the past few years, a smaller proportion of state taxpayers has become responsible for an increasingly large proportion the total personal income tax rate. In other words, the challenge is that the burden for tax in order for us to increase revenue falls squarely on the shoulders of personal income taxpayers, while there is no credible evidence or ... [Inaudible] ...evidence to show that reductions in corporate income tax rates in the past were able to get the private sector to invest in the economy, to forget about the investment strike, create jobs and do exactly what is expected of them. In other words, we keep on rewarding the private sector for its mediocrity and its failure to play its part

High income taxes as you know, economic growth theory is very simple - high income taxes result in lower levels of consumption and savings. These in turn translate into a lower economic growth. I want to also make an example of the question about Corporate Income Tax, CIT. Instead of having a blanket reduction in the corporate income tax rate, we should follow the examples of what is done in some parts of the world such as Germany, where if companies for example, invest in

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rural economies, such as BMW that is based in Bavaria, which is considered to be a rural province, they pay a lower income tax rate in order to incentivise them ...[Interjections.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G Boroto): Please check your monitor.

IsiXhosa:

Mnu N L S KWANKWA: Seliphelile eli xesha? [Uwele-wele] Anifuni sithethe. Ndizakuthula ke Mama uSihlalo weNdlu.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G Boroto): I tried! I tried hon Kwankwa. [Interjections.]

Mr B N HERRON: House Chair, yesterday Statistics SA released the gross domestic product, GDP figures for 2021. Growth topped out at 4,9% falling just below projections, but leaving us about 2% below where we were in 2020 before the pandemic struck. The July 2021 violence and insurrection robbed us of achieving over 5% growth. Those who instigated it need to be held accountable. We are yet to see consequences and prosecutions.

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The select committee's report laments that domestic savings especially those that arise out of the reduction in the corporate income tax rate, are not being reimbursed into the economy to create jobs. It is important to remember that the environment conducive to private sector investment in our country, economy and jobs is a stable one, where law and order is maintained and where there are consequences for the kind of distraction that we saw last year.

The alarm bells in the GDP results of the sectors which have not recovered, especially those that are labour intensive. The report before us is consistent about inclusive and job creating growth being our most pressing priority, but there is something going horribly wrong for the construction sector. The construction sector has seen a steady decline since 2016. This is alarming for a number of reasons. The construction sector and decline means public housing is not being built. It means the private developer, residential, commercial buildings is not investing and infrastructure has not been built. A construction sector and decline means a labour intensive sector is losing the jobs that we need, low skilled, semi-skilled and skilled. The construction sector and decline is a force multiplier of decline. For every job in the construction side, seven jobs are lost in the supply chain.

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The public sector's commitment to infrastructure led growth is critical to preventing the total collapse or exit of the sector, before we find that our infrastructure developments can only be built by foreign players. We agree with the standing committee that, the projected economic growth of 1,8% over the medium term is not sufficient. We encourage our government not to settle for this. We need at least 3% growth to have an economy that is creating enough jobs to start to see the impact on our unemployment numbers.

Finally, we support the report's call a National Treasury to plan for and implement a basic income. This morning I read an article on basic income. It made a number of points about the positive impacts of basic income, which has been implemented or piloted in other parts of the world. I leave you House Chair with this comment on the article:

> Humans are the only species on earth who have to pay to live here. Basic income is the recognition that if we're going to make everyone pay to live, we should provide everyone with money to live.

Thank you House Chair.

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Mr A M SHAIK EMAM: [Inaudible] ... today 28 years later, we still have a very unequal economy. The economy is still in the hands of a few. When I say this let me give you an example: One particular commodity which is supposed to have created jobs in South Africa is in the sugar industry. But what did we do? We made sugar imports from Eswatini, imports duty free. Who owns this company? Business leaders in South Africa. Okay, so they are making the profits through Eswatini. What is the impact on local production? It has dropped, which means we are losing more jobs. We are not creating jobs. We are losing jobs.

We have such beautiful fertile land in South Africa to grow wheat, but we are importing them from Russia and Ukraine. Now the price will shoot up, the cost of living will increase. So, are we actually creating jobs in South Africa to boost economic growth? No, we're not. Let's look at Eskom, level four from today. level six shortly. How you going to expect businesses to thrive and succeed? So they can't be economic growth. Let's talk about the state of the municipalities alone. They can't even provide you with water. How are you going to get economic growth in the country? Now, we talk about poverty alleviation in this country, but our policies do not talk to reducing the levels of poverty in this country.

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The debt service cost alone is going to be equivalent to R333 billion a year in the medium term, which is going to be R1 trillion. Most of that money is not used towards economic growth or infrastructure development. It is used for consumption. How are we going to boost economic growth in South Africa? If you look at the fuel cost rise now which is expected to go to R40 per litre, I am told, what is it going to do with the cost of living? Even the 90 or 100 an increase we gave for social relief, is not going to help, we need to put additional measures in place.

We speak about manufacturing industry and local industry. Yes, indeed, that is where we can create our jobs, but yet we rely on imports on almost every other product. Have we created a conducive environment for manufacturers to thrive to be successful? No, we have not. So it means we need to relook at our policies, particularly with our imports and things ... [Inaudible] ... the country. You have reduced your social grants over the medium term by two and a half percent. The NFP will support the report tabled here. Thank you very much.

Ms Z NKOMO: House Chairperson, hon Ministers and Deputy Ministers, hon members, as we debate Budget 2022 it is important to always be conscious of the historical

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significance of the moment we are living in. Our economy is still emerging from the devastation of the COVID-19 global pandemic. Today we are faced with the prospect of unprecedented inflation owing to skyrocketing oil prices.

Yesterday we celebrated International Women's Day. It is important that the history of this special day ... especially nowadays when the history of the world is being rewritten by some countries' media and some political parties in this House. The 8th of March was first celebrated when women gained suffrage after the 1917 socialist revolution in Soviet Russia and subsequently celebrated as a public holiday in communist countries. It was only decades later that it was adopted by the feminist movement in the West.

While the economy and fiscal outlook of our country remains bleak, there is a glimmer of hope and evidence of much-stronger-than-expected revenue collection. The ANC supports the government's commitment to charting a course towards a higher level of growth and fiscal sustainability. We also support government's efforts to ensure that our country does not descend into debt prison as we know that perils of losing sovereignty we have witnessed with many countries.

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We share government's concern about the proportion of money that has been spent on supporting some of the large ailing SOEs. However, the ANC calls on government to develop a clear policy guideline on its decision to support SOEs instead of leaving this to the discretion of the Minister of Finance. There is a need for consistent application of the policy because the consequences of losing some of the critical SOEs, such as the SA Post Office, could be dire for millions of South Africans.

The government did not increase taxes on individuals and this should restore consumer confidence and support economic growth. Despite there being no substantial tax hike, there is still room to improve the efficiency of collection. The lowering of corporate income tax to 27% has been welcomed by the business sector, with substantial subsidies and exemptions afforded to various sectors in the economy. We believe that there should be enough incentives for long-term investment and growth. However, as the President said in his state of the nation address last month, South Africa needs a national social compact in which we, the social partners and government commit to building our country together.

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As we ask this House to accept this Fiscal Framework and Revenue Proposal, we call on the SA Revenue Service to focus on collecting tax on noncompliant individuals and companies. We congratulate Sars on their recent successful search-and-seizure operation, particularly those targeting the illicit economy.

As the elected representatives of the people, we have the responsibility to ensure that the revenue collected through taxes is used to uplift our people and transform our country from the ravages of apartheid and colonialism. We note that the recent improvement in revenue collection cannot be attributed to economic growth. Rather, we are reaping the rewards of the global commodity price.

However, the downside of this is that as a net energy importing country, the record-breaking oil and gas prices are likely to wipe away some of these modest gains. Government must therefore ensure that it drives the negotiation at the National Economic Development and Labour Council, Nedlac, on the social compact to a successful conclusion. The social compact must provide sufficient protection for the most vulnerable members of our society. The ANC welcomes the

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extension of the COVID-19 social relief grant for the distressed.

We want to ensure the civil society organisation who came and made presentations to a joint committee of Parliament that the ANC has listened to your submission and we have heard you. The report of the Judicial Commission on State Capture makes for sobering reading. The numerous loopholes in our procurement system that make it possible for some corrupt state officials and their private-sector partners must be closed immediately. In this regard, we call upon the Minister of Finance to expedite the introduction of the public procurement Bill, which will be tabled before Parliament this year.

Hon members, we must work together to strengthen our oversight mechanisms to ensure that we do not react after terrible things have occurred in government departments and entities. We must ensure that every rand and cent collected are used only for the purpose for which they are allocated. The oversight work of all committees must increasingly focus on identifying the inefficient government programmes and quality of expenditure. We must be unapologetic and speak out to the executive and accounting officers in various government departments in that the quality of spend of public funds

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directly impacts the tax morality of South Africans. We can no longer accept the fact that a portion of our hardworking citizens are consigned to second-grade infrastructure provision and poor government services. If government, at all levels, is able to guarantee the delivery and maintenance of quality infrastructure and reliable public services, our citizens and businesses would be happy and pay a little bit more tax in order to raise the quality of life for all South African compatriots who are in this together. I thank you. [Applause.]

Mr S M JAFTA: Hon Chair, in a post-Budget interview, our leadership described the 2022 Budget as both anti-poor and incompetently constructed to be able to respond to the basic conditions of our people. The leadership highlighted the declining allocations to education, health and social services, which are regrettably crowded out by our debt-to-GDP ratio.

We also reflected in our meeting that our debt service costs, which saw an allocation of R1 trillion over the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework, or MTEF, is a recipe for social decay. This is made worse by the fact that these costs are expected to rise from R268,3 billion in 2021-22, to R301,8 billion in

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2022-23, reaching R363,5 billion which is 5% of our GDP in 2024-25. This means our resources do not reach the poorest of the poor, but are streamlined to pay our debts. This trajectory, if not managed, will inflame massive social unrest in the country.

We are equally unmoved by government's failure to tap into corporate income tax. This neoliberal and market-fundamentalist approach will not rescue our ailing economy with its challenges of unemployment, inequality and poverty. The state has to perform its vanguard role to advance a people's revolution. Our people are entitled to basic services. They are entitled to access quality health care services. They have a right to social welfare services. In this regard, the state cannot sleep on the job when there are pressing priorities worthy of its attention.

Hon Chair, our fiscal framework must project the lived experiences of our people. It must project an environment where policy certainty and investor confidence are not in doubt. To achieve this, there must be a paradigm shift in terms of policy coherence, structural reforms and ability to punish acts of corruption.

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After all we have highlighted, hon Chair, we will support the report. [Applause.]

Mr M G E HENDRICKS: Thank you very much hon House Chair. Hon House Chair, R10 billion funds under question to be condoned is a request by the water and sanitation department in its report this week which was accepted.

[Inaudible.] must not willy-nilly just write off these billions. It is so bad that there was also a call for Ministers and Deputy Ministers since 2012 to be fired or face consequential management for many more billions gone down the drain. Water must go down the drain not billions of rands. The previous Minister agrees with this a 110%

If Cuba did not help bring down apartheid, the hon Wessels would not have been part of this August and hon House. Cuba has done more for South Africa than hon Wessels' constituency did when they governed.

Hon House Chair, we are very concerned that the zero based budgeting has not been used by the fiscal framework despite of the fact that the previous Minister of Finance gave such an undertaking and that there was support from the current

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Director General for this. So, there is 30% of fact in all the line items in our budget. We've heard that because of the war between Ukraine and Russia that this budget may not be relevant.

So Al Jama-Ah would like to call for an earlier review of the budget because we know that this budget is built on parameters that we did not take into account because of the war.

We can't have a budget that is flawed and the Chairman of the portfolio committee starts of by saying please support this budget but this budget has been affected dramatically by the war.

Hon Chair, lastly rural villages have been ignored in the budget. It cannot be that 10 000 villages in South Africa still live in the stone age. We need to do something special about it. Thank you very much.

Mr A N SARUPEN: Thank you very much Madam House Chair. The ANC Chief Whip is not my friend to. I don't what I did to her. Oh, there we go, she loves me, we're back to normal thank you very much.

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The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms G M Boroto): Hon Sarupen, I will always protect you from the Chief Whip.

Mr A N SARUPEN: I appreciate your protection very much hon House Chair.

I want to start my speech today by doing what I thought the governing party's MPs would do but failed to do so. And that is to thank every South African household and business for despite the lockdowns and enduring the irrational regulations and some terrible economic policies from the government in general, doing their best to start their businesses or keep their businesses afloat to get South African goods to new markets and because of their efforts, let me repeat this, because of the efforts of the South African citizens and businesses and not the government a revenue overruns more taxes than the government anticipated of a R180 billion was possible and we owe the South African people a great deal of gratitude for this. This made the fiscal framework possible.

But there's somewhere we heard in the debates today, it's clear that some governing party members need a reminder that government has no money. It generates money from its citizens. It is the activities and work of the citizens that determines

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the success of the economy and government can either facilitate that or hinder that.

What I heard from some of the ANC members today, condemning businesses in particular shows that this government is determined to hinder the people of South Africa as they try raise their living standards.

The other thing that hinders the economy is the massive amount of government debt, R4,3 trillion at the moment which is nearly 70% of our GDP, gross domestic product. This deficit has ballooned to R386 billion in this financial year. That's the difference between what the government will get in and what it'll have to borrow, R386 billion and interest cost are going up. We are now spending more on interest more than we do on education. I'll put it another way, we spend more on interest than we do on peace and security and public works combined.

By this government's own assessment, the biggest risk to digging South Africa out if it's economic hole which is being dug by the ANC over the last decade is from this administration itself and the first risk is unfunded programmes.

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I was alarmed to learn that the eight ANC run provinces in the last financial have overspent by some R20 million. It's only the Western cape that has remained within their budget and that shows what big risk is these unfunded programmes.

The second risk is higher borrowing costs and the Russian invasion of Ukraine that some members of the ANC proudly supports guarantees there will be higher borrowing costs for emerging markets.

The third risk is of course the debt of state owned enterprises. I was also alarmed in the last two weeks that South African Airways has already spent half a billion more than budgeted, mainly the bailouts.

The Post Office has asked for R22 billion and the taxpayer is doomed to carry the burden of these bailouts. So what we see in this fiscal framework is that the good intentions of some in the state and even some in the governing party isn't enough to get South Africa working again when you've got a compromised Cabinet and those who mean well cannot go into the Cabinet meetings and say, no you can't to the colleagues who insist on bankrupting the country.

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So, to quote the Chinese ambassador, let me repeat this. To probe the Chinese ambassador from 2019, South Africa needs more than [Inaudible.] articulation of ambitions, it needs concrete tangible plans. It needs to protect investment and property rights and it needs to put a lid on corruption. That was the Chinese ambassador who said this not some neoliberal capitalists.

So, until the state can demonstrate a commitment to and the implementation of concrete plans for protection of the investment, property rights and putting lid of corruption, the DA cannot support the report tabled before this House. I thank you.

Setswana:

Rre I K MOROLONG: A ke go leboge Motlotlegi Modulasetulo.

English:

Mr I K MOROLONG: From the very outset, the ANC wishes to remind all in this debate, that the February state of the nation address, provides the strategic framework and direction in which we debate the Fiscal Framework and Revenue Proposals.

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The test for the ANC is whether the Fiscal Framework and Revenue Proposals, speak to the poor and vulnerable, advance ANC and government policy, bring about required reforms in the economy for growth, is redistributive, provides for a comprehensive social wage and promotes inclusive growth.

The Fiscal Framework and Revenue proposals, address the social wage making it 59% of total noninterest spending. The impact of this is that it directly addresses poverty and unemployment and provides individuals with choices to engage in the economy. These are the poor and vulnerable for whom the social wage is the difference between destitution and the ability to make choices about their lives.

On advancing ANC and government policy, the structure of these proposals and the budget, are designed to support economic recovery and development, a matter that the ANC has been seized with since 2018. One of the key indicators of whether the proposals address policy mandate, is to look at the budget against the Medium-Term Strategic Framework. One of the key output indicators of the MTSF is the correlation between proposals that address the immediate needs of low income households by providing short term assistance and how the

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proposals finance the Medium-Term Policy Priorities of government.

If we examine the evidence of Budget 2022, it points out to the reality that it addresses Medium-Term Fiscal Policy focus through the allocation of the social wage, supports youth employment, supports the creation of short term jobs, provides additional allocation in higher education for *National Student Financial Aid Scheme*, NSFAS, creates the ability for teacher retention in basic education, supports a health budget for hiring of new staff, continues to respond to COVID-19 in all its forms. All of which reflect that the budget speaks to Medium-Term Fiscal Policies. Proposals focus on fiscal sustainability, economic recovery and reconstruction. Spending on learning and culture, social development and health continue to dominate Budget 2022.

House Chair, these are the facts and evidence we provide to this debate not slogans and rhetoric that take us nowhere. Given the appalling levels of unemployment and poverty, the special COVID Social Relief of Distress Grant is extended for 12 months until March 2023. The policy priorities of the budget are to be found in its attempts to achieve a level of sustained economic growth through infrastructure investment

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over the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework, accelerated implementation of structural reforms and support for small businesses. In this regard, the additional R15 billion allocation to support Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises, SMMEs, is a positive development.

For the ANC, the budget responds to the state of the nation address in its targeted allocations to economic development, social development, health, peace and security. Essentially for the ANC, is whether the Fiscal Framework and Revenue Proposals support redistribution of wealth, the social wage and inclusive growth.

For this to happen, economic recovery and reconstruction has to be inclusive. The economic growth path must be built on increasing the wellbeing and buying power of the poor who are the majority and defined in terms of race, class and gender. This will enhance the ability of millions of unemployed South Africans to effectively contribute to the economic future of the country. This is fundamental and should inform redistributive plans going forward. This in turn will stimulate the demand side of the economy and provide the critical economic growth that is needed.

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Budget 2022 assists in this regard by ensuring that the general fuel levy is not increased and a R5,2 billion tax relief for individuals and businesses has been provided for, aimed at supporting economic recovery.

Hon members, our economic reconstruction and recovery plan and in particular the sector master Plans, have got to be well aligned to the composition of economic expenditure as the Fiscal and Finance Commission has pointed out. This is a function of Parliament, and going forward the ANC will push in Parliament, that we move towards an outcome and impact assessment model of oversight, qualitatively different to how we currently conducting oversight. This will address the quality of expenditure which in general terms is not good and result in far better expenditure against policy intention.

In particular, localisation through industrialisation, and industrial policy support, acts as a strategy for building capacity and capability in the manufacturing sector as well as in the agricultural sector where food security is a crucial driver for job creation.

As the committee noted the expected real gross domestic product, gdp growth of 1,8% over the medium term, on average,

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will not be sufficient to reduce poverty, inequality and high rates of unemployment. This means that the infrastructure-build programme, re-industrialisation and localisation must be the key pillars of our national reconstruction and inclusive economic recovery strategy, supported by the *buy local campaign* for the state, private sector and consumers.

Our concerns remain with the South African Reserve Bank tightening monetary policy especially since we are moving into extremely uncertain times. At such a time, the loosening of monetary policy will far better serve the country interests. Further we remain unconvinced that a reduction in corporate income tax necessarily leads to the investment of this saving into the economy. This is not borne out by evidence. Rather, there are sufficient domestic savings that have not been re-invested into the economy to create jobs and our discussions must continue to be focused on this.

In conclusion the proposals are positive and take the country forward. We need to ensure that the financed commitments receive the dedicated oversight required in order to ensure that our people benefit from the budget and that their quality

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of lives are fundamentally changed. We vehemently support this report.

Sepedi:

Ke a leboga.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE: Thank you, House Chair, hon members and Cabinet colleagues, when we tabled the budget we highlighted amongst others reduced global economic growth projections owing in part to elevated inflation, withdrawal of the USA fiscal support package and the consequences of volatility in China's troubled real estate sector.

On the domestic outlook we projected real economic growth of 4,8% in 2021 and 2,1% in 2022. We said we expect real economic growth to moderate at 1,7% in 2024. On the revenue side we reflected on the better than expected revenue collection, mainly from elevated commodity prices. We indicated that although the revenue gains are expected to dissipate in the short term, some of the improved revenue collection is expected to continue over the medium term period.

Hon members, since then there has been significant global developments that will have an impact on our economy, notable,

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the conflict between Russia and Ukraine. The conflicts carry with it significant risk for a well economy that is yet to fully recover from the shock of the COVID-19 pandemic. The longer the conflict lasts, as well as imposition of further sanctions could lead towards bad global inflations, higher interest rate and ... [Inaudible.] ... global economic recovery.

On the positive side, we expect that the rally in export commodities applies, starting from supply concerns brought about by the conflict. We provide added support for the local mining sector and possible wing fall to revenue collection. However, the rising oil price, the potential weakening of the rand against the us dollar and supply constraints around wheat and other agricultural products, pose outside risk to food and headline inflation.

Yesterday, Statistics SA released Gross Domestic Product, GDP, numbers for the fourth quarter of 2021. Our economy grew by 1,2% after shrinking by 1,7% in the third quarter of 2021. This is a common percentage lower than Treasury estimations in the budget. Overall, South Africa’s economy grew by 4,9% last year, compared to the COVID-19 driven construction of 6,4% in 2020. This represent a slightly better growth than estimated

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by National Treasury. Although, from a lower base, there are improvements in the number of sectors, namely agriculture, manufacturing service and transport. Of concerns, our declines in mining production, construction, electricity, government and financial services.

Hon Chairperson, we must act with speed to accelerate the pace of inclusive economic growth and job creation. I must make a point that in tabling the budget, although we had a focus of 1,8, we made a point that 1,8% is not a satisfactory number from our side. We are presenting a number where we are saying that if anything remains the same, the economy will grow by 1,8%. However, structural reforms are intended to change that ... [Inaudible.] ... that is why we are making a commitment to do structural reforms.

We must therefore trap all our micro and macro-economic policies and interventions. It is all through sustained economic growth that South Africa will be able to significantly reduce unemployment, poverty and inequality. As outlined in the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan and emphasised in the state in the nation address, as well as in the budget speech, we must act urgently to deepen social

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combat and broaden consensus around the needs to be done to pull our economy out of its worse state.

In this regard, work has begun to finalise the series of social combats with various ... [Inaudible.] ... partners. Efforts to grow our economy will not only depend on micro economic interventions. We must continue with our reform agenda, particularly in the network industry of energy, telecommunication, rail, ports, water and sanitation, as well as goods and tourism attracting rare skills in our economy.

We are encouraged that the spectrum auction began yesterday and will be completed by the end of this month. This will support lowering the cost of data, improve broadband coverage, including in rural areas, increase broadband speed and the rollout of 5G. Equally, we also need to get the basics' rights. This entails reducing regulatory constraints providing effective services as well as co-ordinating and sequencing economic interventions.

Our citizens in provinces has an important role to play in creating and ... [Inaudible.] ... environment for investment. In the City of Tshwane for example, we are at the risk of losing a potential multibillion rand as investment by Ford, in

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an electric vehicle plant. Ford has already invested R16 billion on Tshwane Automotive Special Economic Zone, where it is producing its Ford range model. This is the largest foreign direct investment project our country has seen in the recent times and has already created around 8 000 jobs.

Ford intends to invest further in bringing its electric vehicle production in South Africa, worth about 10 billion other investments. This, however, has been put at risk because the City of Tshwane has been unable and perhaps unwilling to secure electricity the new plant needs. The Tshwane example reminds us that a deficit of political will at municipal level makes it massively harder than it should be to create conditions for jobs reach growth.

As part of addressing this public sector wage Bill, a public sector labour summit is scheduled to take place at the end of this month. This summit is an important opportunity for stakeholders to engage honestly and transparently, and chart a path towards a more sustainable public service and remunerations guidelines. Much has been said and made about the 750 million us dollar loan that we took from the World Bank. Let me repeat what we said before, the World Bank loan has no conditions attached. It does not in any way threaten

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the sovereign of our country. We considered all forms of consensual and non-consensual fund necessary to address the shortfall between how revenue ... [Inaudible.] ... We then chose an affordable option available to us. This is part of our debt reduction strategy.

I invite the hon Shivambu to read a publication. It says: How China Lends: A Rare Look into 100 Debt Contracts with Foreign Governments. That is ... [Inaudible.] ... an important point that China itself does not provide loans without any conditions. Quoting an important read for the hon Shivambu. I am giving that as homework to him.

In the state of the nation address the President announced the extensions of the social relief distress grants to March 2023. The President further indicated that in this period, a detailed technical work in the engagements will take place to identify the best option to replace the grant. In this regard, work is underway to resume the grant system. We ... [Inaudible.] ... developing an optimal support mechanism for grant recipient. The risk review will also inform our approach for debate and discourse about a comprehensive social security for South Africa.

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The key elements of which are social assistance and social insurance. In this regard, we want to make sure that all the social insurance debates are co-ordinated in one way. Whether it is National Health insurance, NHI, whether is the review of Unemployment Insurance Fund, UIF, whether is the review of Road Accident Fund, all of those constituents as social insurance. I mentioned those three. So, three of these elements I am saying, of which is social security, social assistance, social insurance, active labour market policies. These three components are part of what we want to call a comprehensive social security.

IsiZulu:

USIHLALO WENDLU (Nk M G Boroto): Mhlonishwa uGodongwana, ngiyaxolisa isikhathi siphelile.

UNGQONGQOSHE WEZEZIMALI: Ngiyabonga.

Debate concluded.

The Chief Whip of the Majority Party moved: That the Report be adopted.

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Motion agreed to (Democratic Alliance, Economic Freedom Fighters and the Freedom Front Plus dissenting).

Report accordingly adopted.

The House adjourned at 19:37

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