**QUOTE**

### NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

# QUESTION NO: 3994

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**3994. Mr S Mokgalapa (DA) to ask the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation:**

(1)   Whether the former President of the Republic of Zimbabwe, Mr Robert Mugabe, has submitted an application for political asylum and/or refugee status in South Africa; if so, what are the relevant details;

(2)     What is the official position with regard to granting political asylum and/or refugee status to former political leaders once ousted;

(3)    What are the details of the roles that (a) South Africa and (b) the Southern African Development Community will play in the transition period in the Republic of Zimbabwe?  NW4540E

**REPLY:**

1. No application has been received from former President Mugabe seeking an application for political asylum and/or refugee status in South Africa.

(2)    The Government of the Republic of South Africa has an obligation to grant protection to refugees and other persons in need of protection under a number of Conventions such as the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees.

(3)     To date, the Republic of Zimbabwe has not requested assistance from South Africa or the SADC during this transitional period.

**UNQUOTE**

**Additional information**

However, following the developments in Zimbabwe, His Excellency President Jacob Zuma in his capacity as Chair of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) issued a press statement on 15 November 2017, in which he noted with great concern the unfolding political situation in the Republic of Zimbabwe, and called for calm and restraint, and expressed hope that the developments would not lead to unconstitutional changes of Government as that would be contrary to both SADC and the African Union Principles.

President Zuma, in his capacity as Chair of SADC, dispatched a Special Envoy to Harare, Zimbabwe on 15 November 2017, and the Special Envoy met with President Robert Mugabe and the Army Generals on 16 November 2017.

Following these developments, a meeting of the Organ Troika Plus Chair of the SADC Ministerial Committee was convened in Gaborone, Republic of Botswana on 16 November 2017 to consider the unfolding political situation in Zimbabwe.

The Organ Troika Plus Chair of SADC Ministerial Committee Meeting reaffirmed SADC’s commitment to the African Union (AU) Constitutive Act and the SADC Democratic Principles as they relate to the unconstitutional removal of democratically elected Governments. All stakeholders were urged to ensure the observance and respect of the constitution of the Republic of Zimbabwe and the rule of law.

The Organ Troika Plus SADC Chair Summit was held in Luanda, in the Republic of Angola on 21 November 2017 to deliberate on the unfolding political situation in the Republic of Zimbabwe, and resolved that President Zuma, in his capacity as SADC Chairperson, and H.E João Manuel Gonçalves Lourenço, in his capacity as Chairperson of the Organ on Politics Defence and Security Cooperation will immediately undertake a mission to Zimbabwe on 22 November, 2017 to assess the situation.

On 21 November 2017, His Excellency, President Robert Gabriel Mugabe, stepped down from his position of Head of State and Government of the Republic of Zimbabwe. Following this, the mission to Zimbabwe on 22 November 2017 was cancelled. SADC is confident that Zimbabwe, as a member to both the AU and SADC, will continue upholding Democratic Principles enshrined in the Constitution of Zimbabwe**.**