



NATIONAL ASSEMBLY PROGRAMME COMMITTEE

Chairperson:
Speaker

Committee Secretary:
A Mbanga x 3218

DRAFT MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Thursday, 2 February 2017, E249

Present:

B Mbete (Speaker)

Bhengu, F	Mthembu, JM (Chief Whip of the Majority Party)
Frolick, CT (House Chairperson)	Steenhuisen, JH (Chief Whip of the Opposition)
Hlophe, HO	Tsenoli, SL (Deputy Speaker)
Mazzone, NWA	Waters, M
Mente, NV	

Staff in attendance:

Mr M Xaso (NA Table), Mr S Tshabalala (Committees), Mr N Bell, Adv. Z Adhikarie and Adv. C van der Merwe (Constitutional and Legal Services Office).

1. Opening remarks

The Speaker opened the meeting at 08:34.

2. Apologies

Apologies were tendered on behalf of House Chairpersons Ms AT Didiza and Ms MG Boroto, Ms DE Dlakude (Deputy Chief Whip of the Majority Party), Dr GW Koornhof (Parliamentary Counsellor to the Deputy President), Mr N Singh and Prof NM Khubisa.

3. Consideration of the agenda

The agenda was adopted as proposed.

4. Consideration of draft Minutes of 1 December 2016

On the proposal of Mr Bhengu, seconded by Mr Waters, the minutes of 1 December were adopted.

5. Matters arising

With regard to the issues raised about the processes in the Ad Hoc Joint Committee on the Appointment of Board Members to the National Youth Development Agency, the Chief Whip of the Majority Party reported that the meetings of the committee were proceeding without difficulty.

6. Report by the Committee Section

Mr Tshabalala made a presentation on Bills and other matters before committees and highlighted the following:

The Portfolio Committee on Rural Development and Land Reform intended to finalise the *Extension of Security of Tenure Amendment Bill* on 8 February. The Portfolio Committee on Justice and Correctional Services had adopted an interim report on the *Courts of Law Amendment Bill*.

The Ad Hoc Committee on the SABC Board Inquiry adopted an interim report on 27 January and intended to adopt its final report on 22 February, once all the responses had been received from parties cited in the report. As a result, the Portfolio Committee on Communications would not be considering appointments to the SABC Board until the Ad Hoc Committee had finalised its processes.

The Ad Hoc Joint Committee on the Appointment of Board Members to the National Youth Development Agency intended to finalise its report on 7 February. The Ad Hoc Committee on filling of vacancies in the Commission for Gender Equality would shortlist on 7 February, conduct interviews on 16 and 17 February and deliberate on 22 February. The committee intended to adopt its report on 28 February.

The Standing Committee on Finance intended to deliberate further on the *Financial Intelligence Centre Amendment Bill*. The Bill had a Constitutional Court deadline and had been returned by the President on the grounds of constitutionality. The Portfolio Committee on Home Affairs intended to finalise the *Border Management Authority Bill* on 7 February.

The Portfolio Committee on Telecommunications and Postal Services had finalised the international agreements on *The Final Acts of the Plenipotentiary Conference of the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) – Guadalajara 2010* and *Constitution and Convention of the African Telecommunications Union*.

Mr Waters enquired about the progress of the Portfolio Committee on Health as it did not have a date for finalisation of the *Medical Innovation Bill* although it was introduced in 2014. House Chairperson Mr Frolick explained that Mr N Singh, who had since taken ownership of the Bill, had been consulted on the progress of the committee and that there was an understanding with the Department of Health on how the process should unfold.

Whilst acknowledging that the Portfolio Committee on Communications was awaiting the outcome of the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on SABC Inquiry, Mr Waters stated that there was currently no board in the SABC. He suggested that a legal opinion be sought on the legalities of appointing an interim board. Adv. Adhikarie explained that there was nothing specific in the Broadcasting Act on the matter and that the Portfolio Committee on Communications was the relevant structure to consider whom to appoint. She added that it was correct for the committee to await the outcome of the process of the ad hoc committee so that it was fully informed. The Chief Whip of the Majority Party clarified that the Chief Whips' Forum did not have the authority to play a role in the appointment of an interim board, and asked whether the Speaker had received any formal notification for the dissolution of the board so that the committee could start its processes. The Speaker advised that the matter not be considered any further as it belonged to the Portfolio Committee on Communications and indicated that she would pursue the matter with the relevant authorities.

7. Report by Bills Office

Mr Bell presented a report on Bills currently before the National Assembly and indicated that they were in contact with the Office of Leader of Government Business in order to establish if there would be a list of legislation to be prioritised in 2017.

Mr Bell also reported that the *Traditional Courts Bill* and *Criminal Procedure Amendment Bill*, which had a Constitutional Court deadline, had recently been introduced.

Adv. Van der Merwe presented a report on the list of legislation passed before 1994 and indicated that, so far, 1850 laws had been identified and that legal services was trying to ascertain the ministries administering the different Acts. She explained that not all the Acts could be repealed as they were still relevant. She said that it was important that the departments be given an opportunity to provide their inputs before a decision was made on whether to repeal or not. Adv. Van der Merwe added that a similar exercise was being undertaken by the South African Law Commission.

8. Consideration of draft Parliamentary programme

Mr Bhengu presented the parliamentary programme for the First Term and highlighted the following:

The President's State-of-the-nation Address was scheduled for Thursday, 9 February at 19:00. On 14 – 15 February, a Joint Sitting was scheduled to debate the President's State-of-the-nation Address, with the Reply by the President on 16 February.

Plenaries were scheduled for 17 February to 17 March, with the Budget Speech scheduled for 22 February.

From 22 – 31 March, a committees/oversight period was scheduled.

Mr Bhengu informed the meeting that the Deputy President was available to answer questions on 1 March. Mr Xaso indicated that since the Deputy President had up to three hours during a question session, that would be potentially problematic as questions to Cluster 3: Governance were also scheduled for that day. It was **AGREED** that the programming whippers should consult on the scheduling of the Questions to the Deputy President and Cluster 3: Governance. Furthermore, as the Deputy President is required to answer questions once every calendar month, the Speaker requested that consultations on another date be undertaken.

Mr Bhengu also indicated that the Office of Leader of Government Business advised that the President would be available to answer questions on 16 March, subject to The Presidency confirming that in writing. The Programme Committee would be advised about items that would be revived as they had lapsed at the end of parliamentary business the previous year. The scheduling of mini-plenaries was also a matter under consideration. Mr Bhengu indicated that there were consultations with the National Council of Provinces (NCOP) on the finalisation of the parliamentary programme framework in preparation for the Joint Programme Committee.

It was **AGREED** that 3 March would be reserved for the commemoration of the 20th Anniversary of the Constitution and the NCOP.

The Speaker informed members that there was a plan for a conference on International Women's Day which would involve participants from other parts of the continent and that more information would be made available in due course.

9. Announcements

There were no announcements.

10. Closure

The meeting adjourned at 09:05.