



NATIONAL ASSEMBLY PROGRAMME COMMITTEE

Chairperson:
Speaker

Committee Secretary:
A Mbangwa x 3218

DRAFT MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Thursday, 16 March 2017, E249

Present:

B Mbete (Speaker)

Bhengu, F	Mente, NV
Frolick, CT (House Chairperson)	Mthembu, JM (Chief Whip of the Majority Party)
Didiza, AT (House Chairperson)	Singh, N
Ebrahim, E I (Parliamentary Counsellor to the President)	Steenhuisen, JH (Chief Whip of the Opposition)
Khubisa, Prof NM	Waters, M

Staff in attendance:

C Mahlangu (NA Table), S Tshabalala (Committees) and N Bell (Constitutional and Legal Services Office).

1. Opening remarks

The Speaker opened the meeting at 08:30.

2. Apologies

Apologies were tendered on behalf of Deputy Speaker Mr SL Tsenoli, House Chairperson Ms MG Boroto, Ms DE Dlakude (Deputy Chief Whip of the Majority Party), Dr GW Koornhof (Parliamentary Counsellor to the Deputy President), Ms NWA Mazzone, Ms HO Hlophe and Messrs NF Shivambu and NLS Kwankwa.

3. Consideration of the agenda

The agenda was adopted as proposed.

4. Consideration of draft Minutes of 16 March 2017

On the proposal of House Chairperson Ms Didiza, seconded by Mr Singh, the minutes of 16 March were adopted.

5. Matters arising

Mr Bhengu informed the meeting that consultations on the scheduling of the Multi-party Women's Caucus to meet on Wednesday or Friday were taking place. House Chairperson Ms Didiza added that that the women's caucus proposed to meet once every month during caucus time in order to allow for participation from more people, instead of women members being forced to sacrifice their lunch time on Wednesdays. Mr Singh suggested that the women's caucus could consider meeting at an earlier time on a Thursday. It was **AGREED** that there should be further consultations on the matter.

Mr Singh said that in the previous meeting of the Committee, it was agreed that there should be transfer of time between smaller parties during budget vote debates. He added that he

was

not able to attend the meeting of the Chief Whips' Forum where the matter was also raised

and

asked if that agreement would stand. The Speaker advised that the Programme Committee was not the appropriate forum to finalise the matter. The Chief Whip of the Opposition stated that there was an indication to give an additional minute to the smaller parties, thus allocating them the same time of four minutes as the EFF. He said that the essence of the discussion was that the such allocation was not fair to the EFF and that there should be further consultation on the matter. It was **AGREED** the matter would be referred to the Rules Committee for further consideration.

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 Justice and Correctional Services intended to conduct hearings on the *Criminal Procedure Amendment Bill* and *Traditional Courts Bill* on 9 March, respectively. The Portfolio Committee on Science and Technology would receive a progress report from the department on 10 May on the *Protection, Promotion, Development and Management of Indigenous Knowledge Systems Bill*. The Portfolio Committee on Public Works has adopted an interim report recommending the referral of the *Expropriation Bill* to the National House of Traditional Leaders for comment. The report had not yet been considered by the House.

The Portfolio Committee on Communications also finalised a report on filling of vacancies at the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA). The petition of the *National Coalition for Palestine* from Mr ZMD Mandela had also been finalised.

The Chief Whip of the Opposition said that the disruptions of the joint meeting of the Standing Committee on Finance and the Portfolio Committee on Trade and Industry the previous day by civil society group Black First Land First (BLF) reached new lows, citing the threat of violence meted out against the committee chairperson Mr Y Carrim. He said that Rule 184(4)(b) outlines guidelines on how members of the public who visit Parliament should behave during public hearings and added that Rule 186 which gives the chairperson of a committee the power to order a member of the public to leave a meeting should their conduct be unbecoming was applicable in the matter. The Chief Whip of the Opposition, however, also said that it would be a tight balance as the institution was seen as a people's Parliament but that the hearings could not be allowed to descend to the level that had been witnessed. The Speaker said that what happened was totally unacceptable and could not be associated with Parliament and its culture. The Chief Whip of the Majority Party suggested that Parliament should consider acting against the BLF structure which brought Parliament into disrepute and also send a message that the institution was not a playground for criminals. He added that Members of Parliament needed to be protected and could not be called names by people behaving in a racist manner. Mr Singh said that it would be appropriate to have a full report on the matter from those who were at the meeting. Ms Mente cautioned that Parliament should not be seen as too restrictive against civil societies although there were rules to be adhered to but that it should be established who was at fault. On the proposal of the Chief Whip of the Opposition that the Speaker should draft regulations on the public access to committee meetings by members of the public in terms of Rule 184, it was **AGREED** that the committee should receive a report on the matter before any action could be taken.

In response to Mr Waters' enquiry on the update on the *Medical Innovation Bill*, Mr Tshabalala explained that the Portfolio Committee on Health had agreed with the department that it should consider the regulations in order to address all the issues raised in the Bill. Mr Singh added that there was progress in bringing the processing of the Bill whilst they were waiting for a feedback from the Medicines Control Council on what submissions had been received.

Mr Waters said that he was concerned that the Portfolio Committee on Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries intended to schedule hearings on the *Liquor Products Amendment Bill*, *National Forests Amendment Bill*, and *National Veld and Forest Fire Amendment Bill* on 13 - 14 June, citing that the committee might not do justice to the three bills within that period and should be wary of malicious compliance. Mr Tshabalala said that the matter would be referred to the committee for consideration.

7. Report by Bills Office

Mr Bell reported that the *Traditional Leadership and Governing Framework Amendment Bill*, *Marine Spatial Planning Bill*, *International Arbitration Bill* and *Communal Property Associations Amendment Bill* had recently been introduced. The *Financial Intelligence Centre Amendment Bill* had been assented to by the President.

8. Consideration of draft Parliamentary programme

Mr Bhengu also presented the Parliamentary Programme for the Second Term and highlighted the following:

Committees were scheduled for Tuesday, 9 May. Questions to the Economics cluster and Deputy President were scheduled for 10 and 11 May, respectively. The Deputy Minister of Environmental Affairs would answer questions on behalf of the Minister, who would be attending the Indian Rim Ocean conference. Second Reading debate on the *Border Management Authority Bill* was also scheduled for 11 May.

Budget Votes debates in the form of mini-plenaries were scheduled for 16 May – 2 June. Vote 1: Presidency and Vote 2: Parliament were also provisionally scheduled for 30 and 31 May, respectively.

Consideration of Votes and Schedule to the *Appropriation Bill* were provisionally scheduled for 8 June.

Consideration of the reports of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Filling of Vacancies in the Commission on Gender Equality and the Interim Report of Portfolio Committee on Justice and Correctional Services on *Courts of Law Amendment Bill* requesting for permission to inquire into amending other provisions of Magistrates' Courts Act would also be scheduled.

With regard to questions to the President, Mr Bhengu explained that consultations were still taking place on a suitable date and that there were tentative dates being considered.

9. Announcements

There were no announcements.

10. Closure

The meeting adjourned at 09:05.