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MINI PLENARY SESSION – COMMITTEE ROOM E249

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PROCEEDINGS OF MINI-PLENARY SESSION – E249 CHAMBER

Members of the mini-plenary session met in Committee Room E249 at 14:04.

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

APPROPRIATION BILL

Debate on Vote No 6 – International Relations and Co-operation:

Ms M S KHAWULA: I wish to rise on a point of order, Chairperson!

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G Boroto): Have a seat, Sisulu. On what point are you rising, hon member?

IsiZulu:

Nk M S KHAWULA: Ngiyabonga baba, besifuna ukukwazi ukuthi yini indaba singanikezwanga thina iphepha elishoyo ukuthi sizokwenza

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inkulumo-mpikiswano ngani. Okwesibili, ayikho i-gallery lapha ngibona sisonke la. [Uhleko.] Kwenzakalani [Uhleko.] Ake nisitsheleni phela.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G Boroto): Okay, the service staff will assist you mma. I think that she talking about the Speaker's List. Please assist members with Speaker's List. I am sorry hon Minister. Can we talk about that, help you, and then as she speaks?

IsiZulu:

Nk M S KHAWULA: Kodwa i-ANC inawo wonke!

HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G Boroto): No, it won't happen again. Okay! Hon Minister, we apologise for that inconvenience. Please, continue and open the debate. Thank you. [Interjections.]

The MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND COOPERATION: House Chair, hon members, invited guests, Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, Madam Khawula, may I proceed. Ngiyabonga! This year marks a centenary of Nelson Mandela, a world icon that we have produced. This is one year in which we should once again use a space created by Nelson Mandela to leapfrog into a future that we all dreamt of. It is an especially important year for us as we invite the world to focus on the example that we have set for the rest of mankind.

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We need to drive the celebration of this man, who not only led us into this democracy, but one who captured the world's imagination on what is possible. We had the most fertile ground on which to build on further and work on the immense work of Oliver Tambo in our international relations. Mandela picked up the baton from Oliver Tambo and chartered our foreign policy in the new dispensation. We remember him for what he bequeathed to us: Freedom, peace and forgiveness. And, the world opened its arms to us.

We once were a giant in the world and our reputation was very well known because of what we represented. The world was richer for giving us the support that they gave us, and it was richer for what we gave them in the miracle of 1994. In Mandela's memory, in his honour, we have a responsibility to regain the stature that he left us – the stature that allowed us to punch above our weight and succeed.

We will regain that stature and put all our efforts in making sure that we make a world a better place for its entire people. We should not be in a world where our children inherit/inhibit the rings of Syria.

Our children should not live in fear of extremist militants. Our children should not die in the hands of heavy-handed soldiers. Our

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children should not die in poverty. We are faced with major external challenges: Poverty – where an Oxfam report of this year indicates that 8 billionaires own the same wealth as half of the poorest countries in the world.

We live in the world where one of the other challenges is extremism, resulting in an increase in defence standing, abuse or disregard of international law. We live in a world where there is an unravelling of global governance systems and the weakening of diplomacy – the increasing tendency of some countries to reduce the complex and interrelated problems of the world to narrow national interests.

A global crisis of leadership and governance resulting in corruption, abuse of power and state resources. We in South Africa are now in the fifth dispensation or administration, whichever way you look at it, ushered in by a painful but typically South African – very peaceful transition to the transition of President Ramaphosa.

This new era is colloquially known as, The New Dawn. It is a period of renewal, of change, of adherence to good governance and responsiveness to our people. It is a time for re-energising our foreign policy which is anchored in our Constitution and driven by our domestic policy. The two – as you know – have a symbiotic relationship.

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Our domestic policies are changing very rapidly and we have to respond by reconfiguring our foreign policy. We want to usher in a new world where South Africa can lift itself out of poverty, inequality and regain its stature in the world as a model of what can be achieved in our lifetime - when you stretch human endeavour and make possible that which seems unattainable. We want South Africa to be once again a moral compass and a voice of reason in a world increasingly overcome with selfish, narrow interests. We want to be the hope for all in times of despair.

Our foreign policy has evolved over many years, crafted by Oliver Tambo, as I indicated, as he sensitised the world during our struggle for a liberated South Africa. It was crystallised and given expression by Nelson Mandela as he put South Africa firmly ... [Interjections.] ... With your permission, Chair, you will be back the time. Thank you. [Interjections.] We will come to that, hon Ma Khawula.

Our foreign policy has evolved over years and Nelson Mandela put it firmly on the international stage. What Madame Madikizela did was to make sure that we put women at the centre of that particular policy. All of this is summarised very aptly in the 54th National Conference Declaration of the ANC, and I quote, it said, "We remain committed

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to the founding values of the struggle for a humane, just, equitable, democratic and free world".

We have over time been consolidating it and it boils down to this: A better life for all; a better life for all of us equally as South Africans – black and white; a better life for our continent – rich and poor; and a better life for the world – rich and poor, embedded in a desire to create and preserve peace at all times.

Our Constitution determines that our foreign policy must be driven by seven major principles: One, fundamentally transform and achieve sustainable growth of the economy to empower the people and create a better life for all; two, deal with the legacies of apartheid colonialism; three, maintain the stability and security of South Africa, including its constitutional order and institutions; four, develop a peaceful and prosperous integrated Southern Africa; five, develop a stable and prosperous African continent, which is not marginalised in world affairs; six, resolve conflicts by negotiations – I want to repeat that – resolve conflicts by negotiations; and seven and last, develop a multipolar, just and equitable world order. This is what our Constitution enjoins us to do.

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South Africa's approach to and implementation of our foreign policy must be based on an understanding of the current regional and global politics and economic realities at all times. This defines our response to the United States of America when it undertook a unilateral decision to withdraw from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, JCPOA, between Iran and the P5+1. The JCPOA is of great significance in that it upholds the integrity of the international nonproliferation regime and eliminates the prospects of a nuclear attack across the Middle East.

Essentially, this plan limits Iran's nuclear capability by restricting uranium enrichment, the stockpiling of enriched uranium and the technology that may be used in its facilities, and it imposes strict international monitoring by the International Atomic Energy Agency, IAEA, in exchange for lifting multilateral and unilateral economic sanctions. We, in South Africa, have been particularly active in creating this environment around Iran and have expressed our deep displeasure at the possible erosion of the work that has gone into creating this environment.

We believe in a global system that has been developed and structured to ensure that never again will we experience a war. This system is established to ensure that we never again slide to the levels of destruction that we have had for so many years. The fundamentals of

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our foreign policy are based on human rights, peace, equality, freedom from oppression and racism and freedom from poverty. This is our focus; first and foremost on the African continent. We remain an important player on the African continent and our role has been aptly described as pivotal, and we intend to keep it that way.

The renaissance that we dreamed of is still possible in our lifetime. In fact, the African Renaissance remains a key objective of the ANC, confirmed at its 54th National Conference. However, our importance as a role player depends on getting ourselves out of the problems that surround us right now. A country mired in its own problems can hardly expect to make any impact on the world stage.

Our potential to influence for good is enormous, based on our history. We can continue to be the moral compass of the world, because we need to. We continue to fight against injustice, because we have to. We, who have suffered so much, can ill afford suffering of anybody in any part of the world.

Our global reality throws up unpredictable dangerous environments. An eminent US opinion-shaper, the Atlantic Council predicted in 2016 that, between 2020 and 2030, the world will be characterised by spiralling inequality, perpetual war and insecurity. This world will be:

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Marked by breakdown of order, widespread violent extremism and aggressive larger states. The world situation will be driven by unpredicted and unpredictable events including the possibility of a nuclear exchange.

This lays the foundation of what we should avoid, at all time!

Today we are witnessing manifestations of such predictions: The growing tensions between the US and China; the growing tensions between North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, Nato and Russia; the escalating war in Syria; the growing tensions with Iran; and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. All could lead to a nuclear confrontation between major powers which threatens the very essence and existence of humanity as we know it.

It is within this unpredictable, highly volatile environment that we have to constantly ask to recalibrate our foreign policy, but never lose the central thrust of peace, human rights and equality. Driven by this desire to moderate extremes, we have opted to stand for the nonpermanent seat of the United Nations Security Council, through which we hope to collaborate with all countries committed to the objective of peace and security.

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We do not do this out of vanity, but pure rugged brutal necessity and the willingness to lend a hand to keep peace in the world. The track record we hold speaks for itself in our request to hold this position.

We have already been informed, I am sure, of the establishment of the International Relations and Co-operation Review Panel, whom I hope you will have invited – and I recognise him there. These are all eminent experienced diplomats produced by the ANC and produced by this government. I am told that some uninformed journalist recently asked: How many times there should be a review of our policies in this department?

The basic premise of our foreign policies remains, as is articulated above, endorsed in the National Development Plan and confirmed by the African National Congress, but it needs intermittent review because the world is not static. It is ever changing, characterised by periods of potential crisis and power dynamics. In this turbulent world, we need to sharpen our tools to ensure that we respond to this from the basis of our own conviction to ensure a better world to live in. In short, we will review our policies as, if and when the world changes.

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The International Relations and Co-operation Review Panel has already started working on the review of our policies and will be assisting me in various forms. They have the requisite experience and it will be our loss not to use what we have invested in them. I thank them for coming forward to assist me.

The President has chosen as a focal point, for both domestic and foreign policy, the issue of economic revival. South Africa has one of the highest unemployment figures in the world. The number of unemployed is estimated at just 6 million, even though over the past decade, the public sector has invested R2,2 trillion in economic and social infrastructure.

Government's consolidated spending in 2018-19 for social development alone is R259 billion up from R234 billion in the previous year. That goes to show how much we are investing in assisting the poor. However, we remain with this big problem of huge unemployment.

Our unemployment figures remain stubbornly high and have the potential to derail socioeconomic stability, making it nonnegotiable that South Africa needs to create jobs to fight high unemployment. To stimulate skills development and entrepreneurship requires us to simultaneously ensure that people outside the economy are brought

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back into productive activity and empower people to help themselves out of poverty.

Out of this realisation the President has decided to host an Investment Summit, to which he will invite major trade partners, major investors and heads of state. We intend to make this the defining feature of this administration.

The trust that South Africa has enjoyed as an investment destination has been eroded over time. This has been seen in the decline in ratings by two prominent ratings agencies to subinvestment grade, or 'junk' status. However, over the past few months, we have made great strides to create an environment in which our investment partners feel and able to depend on us as dependable partners. Ratings agency Moody's in March 2018 revised ourselves upwards and the outlook now is positive.

The President's target is to raise R1 trillion in investments over five years, which we will not only see South Africa get itself out of poverty, but will also benefit the continent. We believe that if we can create a stable Africa, we can unleash a huge potential. The resources of this continent are enormous and, properly tapped, will change the fortunes of the whole continent for generations to come.

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We continue to be committed to peace. We stand for peaceful solutions whenever there is conflict. Our track record of keeping peace on the African continent is unchallenged by any country in the world. Our efforts in creating dialogue are a hallmark of our foreign policy. We have had great successes in the past on the continent and we will continue to put this at the apex of our interventions.

South Africa adheres to the general principles of international law, including amongst other things, respect for territorial integrity of other states, especially in resolving interstate challenges. We take a cautious approach on country-specific issues in respect of matters of human rights, preferring rather to promote dialogue in resolving disputes, including in situations of human rights violations.

The President will be co-chairing a meeting of the High-level Global Commission on the Future of Work of the International Labour Organisation with the Prime Minister of Sweden this week. They want to send a specific message to the world that we should endeavour at all costs to keep peace in our lifetime.

Destruction of life and property that has been the hallmark of human interaction at odds with each other does not define us and should not define our time. For, against all provocation at the height of

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our struggle in South Africa, we chose peace and we'll use every resource and space available to us to preach peace.

I now turn to matters of the department. Hon members of the Portfolio Committee on International Relations and Co-operation have raised issues with me about their concerns and with the department as well. My department operates within an ever-changing environment that compels us to be responsive to that. Because of the cost-containment measures, the organisational structure is a key mechanism that we have to target, concentrate on and restructure.

I have recently interacted with the Auditor-General and it was an unfortunate interaction. He revealed to me that in a month's time he will be giving us a qualified audit. This will be the first time in the history of the Department of International Relations and Co-operation, Dirco, and it will be the first time in my lifetime too. I have vowed that it will not happen while I live. I therefore want to ask members of the committee to please give me three months to sort the matters that the Auditor-General has brought to my attention so that we avoid a qualified audit.

The Auditor-General's findings range from lack of proper oversight over the bidding processes, to what he thinks is abuse of resources, and it goes on. The list is long. He goes on to quote the fact that

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in the department we act with impunity and there are repercussions for anything that we do wrong. Our international work is based on a strong administration and I believe that we can get this. We can put this structure right and get the department at a different level.

We have asked our Heads of Mission to come down so that we can have a meeting with them between 2 to 5 June 2018, and will inform them how we are restructuring the department to be responsive to their concerns – both, of the portfolio committee and the Auditor-General's. We also want to show our Heads of Mission that we are responsive to them.

Our diplomats need to feel that this transformation that we are about to undertake, that they have been yearning for a while could stem at the centre of everything that we do. Every diplomat wants to know that their position is important for the department.

After we have met the Auditor-General's timeframe, I am hoping that I will be back to the portfolio committee to share with them my views on how we need to restructure, to do what we need to do and to right the wrongs that had been pointed out to me.

I have had opportunity also to interact with the department at the level of the DDGs, both myself and the present, and on my own. I

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have encountered a situation where those people who regard themselves as career diplomats feel overlooked every time there is a posting abroad. I want to say to them, if they are listening: We have a posting in June and this will be dedicated in good faith to them alone.

So, we are posting only our career diplomats in June to make sure that they feel included in the work they do, and to make sure that we take them on board and they are catered for in their concerns.

The December posting of course will be the prerogative of the President.

In conclusion, we meet in the month of May that has been designated as Africa month. It was in this month in 1963 when the Organisation of African Unity was born on 25 May. On that occasion, African countries came together to craft a strategy for the liberation of Africa. This month resonates with the deep-seated quest to bring to the fore issues that still plague Africa. I wish to remind you of the advice that Haile Selassie gave in his address to the inaugural conference of the OAU in 1963, and I quote in closing:

If we permit ourselves to be tempted by narrow self-interest and vain ambition, if we barter our beliefs for short-term advantage, who will listen when we claim to speak for conscience.

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We stand for conscience in this country; we stand for conscience in the Department of International Relations and Co-operation, and we want to be recognised for that. I thank you. [Applause.]

IsinDebele:

Mr M S A MASANGO: Akhe ngiyilinganise nabantu, Sihlalo.

English:

Hon House Chair, hon Minister Sisulu, hon Deputy Ministers, Landers and Mhaule respectively, hon members, distinguished guests in the gallery, fellow South Africans, it is instructive to recall that on 9th of May, 1994, right here in this People's Parliament, our mother, ANC stalwart and stoic freedom fighter, Nontsikelelo Albertina Sisulu nominated Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela as President of South Africa and Mandela was inaugurated on 10th May, 1994 as President.

The ANC has dedicated 2018 as the year to celebrate the indelible contributions of both Nelson Mandela and Albertina Sisulu, both of whom were born in 1918. We shall forever cherish the fond memories of both Mme Sisulu and Nelson Mandela who pursued relentlessly the principal objectives of the Freedom Charter that: "The People Shall Govern."

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Isizulu:

Unwele olude Xhamela!

Unwele olude nakuwe Madiba!

IsinDebele:

Sithi kini, inarha zona zisabhala nayo iimpurelani ezatlhagisa amaqhegu.

English:

Lest we forget the terrible crime of apartheid, which was exposed to the international community by the likes of Peter Magubane, Alan Paton and the veteran photojournalist Sam Nzima who captured the picture of Hector Peterson after being shot dead during the 1976 Soweto Youth Uprisings. Our condolences to the Nzima family and may his revolutionary soul rest in perfect peace.

The ANC supports the budget of this department because it continues to deepen the seminal internationalist tradition so deftly crafted and so tirelessly worked hard for by President OR Tambo. South Africa's progressive internationalism on the international political firmament and our role through this department in the United Nations; the African Union; Pan Africanist Parliament; Brazil Russia, India, China, South Africa, Brics; G20; G77; and others, are widely recognised. We are truly an active global citizen.

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Over the last 24 years we have contributed through this department in no small measure in the peacekeeping and mediation efforts as well as the observance of human rights and good governance initiatives in the continent and the world.

Hon Minister, the ANC fully supports your stated intention to reimagine, recalibrate and reboot South Africa's influence in Africa and the world through Pan Africanism and the African Renaissance. As a nation, we do not want to be a passive political passenger on the global stage, whilst human civilisation evolves. Our missions abroad are in full patriotic service of our national interest and Agenda 2063.

To realise your vision hon Minister, there are institutions and outstanding South African thought leaders who can be your resource. For instance, SA Council on International Relations, SACOIR, Institute of Global Dialogue, IGD, and the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes, Accord, and Mr Kgalema Motlanthe, Mr Thabo Mbeki, Mr Max Sisulu, Mr Pallo Jordan, Dr Eddy Maloka, Dr Sydney Mufamadi and Ms Sanusha Naidu, to mention just but a few. All of us, who are serving South Africa in the international, continental and domestic front, should support President Cyril Ramaphosa's clarion call articulated in the state of the nation address 2018 of 'Thuma Mina'.

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Recently, our president emphasised the importance of investment into South Africa, and accordingly we need to deploy more trade attaches economic diplomats in strategic countries and create an aggressive Pan African trade negotiating team in the World Trade Organisation, WTO, to offset the continuous trade deficit against Africa. We need to increase the intra-African trade. The intra-African trade is essential as an important driver of development and regional integration in Africa as is the case with other regions of the world like the European Union and Asia. We welcome the launch of the African Continental Free Trade Area, AfCFTA which was launched in March 2018, Kigali in Rwanda.

Western Sahara remains one of the last bastions of colonialism on the continent and our Parliament calls on Morocco to end its illegal occupation. The Saharawi people rightfully demand self determination and national sovereignty like all the nations of the world. The recent admission of Morocco to the AU must not diminish this goal.

With regard to Palestine, history will once again prove that the ANC is on the right march of history in calling for a peaceful co-existence between Palestine and Israel. Today, 15th May 2018, our Parliament stands in unwavering solidarity with the Palestinians who are commemorating the 70th Anniversary of the Nakba. The Nakba refers to the ethnic cleansing after the creation of the state of

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Israel in 1948. Today, there are approximately 4.5 million Palestinians living in exile.

It was reported yesterday that over 50 people have been killed and 2 700 maimed and injured for participating in a peaceful protest march of the opening of US Embassy in Jerusalem. The right to march is a normal civic and political activity in the whole civilised world. Hon Mokgalapa, for the record, this Parliament is neither anti-US nor anti-Israel but simply calls for peaceful coexistence amongst all nations. It is thus incumbent upon the international community to recognise the plight of Palestinians and call upon Israel to comply with International law and conventions including the UN General Assembly Resolution 194 of 1948, the 1951 Geneva Convention, which relates to the Status of Refugees. Our Parliament calls for the cessation of hostilities and a resumption of negotiations to find a durable solution.

Hon Chairperson, as always, our Parliament calls upon the USA to hand over the Guantanamo Bay back to Cuba, lift its trade embargo and not reverse the diplomatic entente started by Presidents Raul Castro and Barack Obama. In our recent discussion with the department, it was reported that South Africa's foreign policy is implemented within a highly dynamic and challenging global environment that is often volatile, unpredictable, complex and

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ambiguous. This is evidenced by the recent US's withdrawal from the Iran Nuclear Deal, which will affect our MTN operations in Iran.

In addition to the incessant civil war in Syria, there are many other troubled and muddied political waters as in the DRC, Burundi, Central African Republic, CAR, South Sudan and the terrorist machinations of the Al-Shabaab and Boko Haram. The Committee noted that the foreign currency fluctuations always short change the budget of this department which is R 6 552 billion in 2018-19 financial year.

We welcome the hosting of the upcoming Brics and Indian Ocean Rim Association IORA Summits in South Africa this year, as they deepen the developmental, economic and trade initiatives within the South-South nation-states. Hon Minister, in our interaction with the Department, we noted that: The ICT infrastructure and asset management in the missions abroad still needs attention; the committee recommends that the department reduces the leasing of property abroad by building its own chanceries; and the Committee further recommends that all consequence management cases be finalised.

As a new Minister, we advise that you look at the expeditious migration from the African Renaissance Fund to the SA Development

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Partnership Agency, Sadpa. The Committee has finalised all the stakeholder consultations regarding the Foreign Service Bill including undertaking a study tour to Canada in September, 2017. Hopefully this Bill will be tabled for debate in the NA in August this year.

IsiNdebele:

Sihlalo, angiswaphelise ikulumo ngokuthokoza uNgqongqotjhe nabosekela Ngqongqotjhe bakhe, begodu nennkhulu zoMnyango wezeeNdaba zeeNtjhabetjhaba nokuBambisana. Ngingakhohlwa njani amalunga ahloniphekileko, nabasebenzi bekomidi le na, lapha ePalamende. Umbutho wabantu uyasidekela isabelomali saka-2018-19. UZimu atjhudubaze i-Afrika. Inarha ayilale, innhliziyo zipharumelane. Ngiyathokoza. [Iwahlo.]

Mr S MOKGALAPA: Hon Chairperson, Minister and guests, I would like to begin this afternoon by conveying our deepest condolences to the families of the protestors killed in Gaza yesterday. The DA condemns the violence in the strongest terms. We join with the rest of the world in calling for the peace to be restored. We reiterate our commitment to the two-state solution, and ask that the parties commit themselves to finding a peaceful resolution through dialogue. This year marks the 70th celebration of the universal declaration of human rights and also this month is the 55 anniversary of the

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formation of the Organisation of African Unity, OAU. Yet, what should be a time of celebration has been interrupted by the shift in world politics. Global politics today have been reduced to a zero-sum game driven by racial, nationalist and populist movements that are domestically focused. Increasingly the focus of states is turning inward with an emphasis on the sometimes real and perceived threats of immigration, global security, extremism and terrorism.

This narrow focus is steadily degrading multilateral institutions like the United Nations Security Council. Responding to the current changes, South Africa needs to vigorously and purposefully define its own national interests through a well-crafted economic diplomacy. This task requires a professional and skilled diplomatic corps committed to pursuing the nation's interests and capable of finding the balance between pursuing economic diplomacy and promoting human rights. The current deficit in global leadership offers South Africa an opportunity to occupy that space with bold and principled leadership.

Allow me to address the Minister – and I'm glad Minister that you have met with the Auditor-General – on the legacy of this department. This department had three consecutive qualified audit opinions with a recurrent emphasis on issues including: Information and communication technology, ICT; irregular tenders; irregular,

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fruitless and wasteful expenditure; lack of requisite skills; and lack of leadership. We hope you bring a fresh approach to the challenges facing your department. You must act swiftly to restore the institutional integrity of this department. Every programme in your department requires not only your attention, but also your willingness to act decisively. Let me mention a few: The Department of International Relations and Co-operation's administration requires immediate action to address the ill-discipline, nepotism, corruption and victimisation as highlighted by National Health, Education and Allied Workers Union, Nehawu. Many disciplinary cases are not finalised. There is a skills deficit, and a dire lack of both consequence and performance management. I challenge you to deal with the elephant in the room which is the disciplinary case against the chief financial officer which has now been dragging for more than two years. You must act swiftly on this matter if you are to restore the institutional dignity of this department.

Programme 2 is the main cost driver of the department. Over R2,2 billion will be spent on this program due to staff costs, property lease costs, foreign allowances and foreign currency fluctuations. The National Development Plan, NDP, and the National Treasury have called on the department for rationalisation of our foreign service. This can be done by committing to a thorough analysis of the political and economic costs versus the benefits of

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our missions. Cadre deployment and the dumping of failed ANC politicians have compromised the quality and image of our diplomatic corps and of brand South Africa. Instead, we need professional well-trained and resourced diplomats if we are to address the domestic imperatives of poverty, unemployment and inequality through effective economic diplomacy.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G Boroto): Don't drown the speaker.

Mr S MOKGALAPA: To this end, Minister, we welcome the introduction of the Foreign Service Bill in order to regulate our foreign service – and we welcome your move about the career diplomats. South Africa needs to ensure that our participation in multilateral forums is to advance our constitutional principles and values and that we are once again seen by the international community to be the custodians of human rights and democracy. Currently, our voting patterns in the United Nations, UN; United Nations Security Council, UNSC; and United Nations Human Rights Council, UNHRC, are shocking and embarrassing in contrast to our values. Minister, why do we vote with China against the victims of human rights abuses in Syria? These are some of the examples.

Our current chairpersonship of Southern African Development Community, SADC, and our leadership role in African Union, AU,

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should be to ensure regional and continental integration and development through democracy, rule of law and good governance. Instead, we protect dictators, rogue states and autocratic leaders like the Democratic Republic of Congo, DRC's, Kabilia; the Sudan's Omar Al Bashir, and the Burundi's Nkurunziza who, as we speak, is forging ahead with an ill-advised referendum to stay on power. We need to call for the strengthening of democracy for the will of the people to be respected, and for the free and fair elections in the DRC on the terms set out in the Catholic Peace Accord. We must stand for the respect for constitutional and international law.

The NDP envisions that South Africa will take up its leadership role in the advancement of development in Africa. To that end it prioritises the tripartite free trade agreement and SADC regional integration. Trade is essential to the development of Africa and the African continental free trade area is long overdue. Agenda 2063 will only be achieved through good economic and political governance. South Africa must do more than regularly attend multilateral forums; we must strive to occupy strategic position in this forum through candidacy diplomacy and asserting our influence to ensure that resolutions adopted align with our constitutional values. We must ensure that our consular services are extended to protect our citizens.

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In conclusion, the Democratic Alliance's foreign policy is focused on three pillars of constitutionalism, economic diplomacy and human rights. It is a foreign policy that is driven by principles and values. It is a foreign policy that is patriotic and inclusive, serving the interests of all South Africans. The DA's foreign policy will focus on attracting foreign direct investment, FDI, in order to create jobs and prioritise regional trade. We stand for a South African foreign policy that respects international law and its institutions in a rules-based world order aimed at achieving a global community characterised by freedom, fairness and opportunity for all. I thank you. [Applause.] [Time expired.]

Ms N R MASHABELA: Hon chair, we must from the onset state our anger and disgust at the murderous actions of the Apartheid State of Israel, aided by the equally murderous government of the United States of America. In the light of the killings of the people of Palestine yesterday by the evil Israel regime, we must take a firm stand as this Parliament and the country to register our disgust at the continuing killings of Palestinian people by these criminals. It is not enough for us to recall our ambassador from Israel; we must also send their ambassador back to Israel.

As the EFF, we stand in solidarity with the persecuted people of Palestine, and ask them to continue their fight for the reclamation

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of their occupied land. In the spirit of progressive internationalism, we lend our support and ask all progressive forces in the world to fight for the liberation of Palestine. The best solidarity we can give the people of Palestine as the world is to isolate Israel. The crisis in the Middle East, the collapse of Libya as a result of unwarranted foreign invasion, the perpetuation of the suffering of the people of the Democratic Republic of Congo and the absence of a strong Pan African voice and intervention in these cases are indications of just how misplaced our foreign policy priorities have been.

We have lost both our moral voice and our strategic influence role in the continent, which would enable us to provide leadership on matters of Pan African interest. It is not in our interest that we do not have a properly functioning government in the Congo. It is not in our interests that despite the wealth in resources of this continent, the African Union continues to depend on foreign aid to function. It is not in our interest to maintain unequal trade relations with countries who seek to bully us to support their wicked international agenda. However, with a weak thinking of our foreign policy imperatives as we have now, we are bound to go to whichever direction the wind goes to, with no due regard for our national interest.

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For this reason, we ought to stop fiddling while Africa is burning. We need to stop playing around vague terms such as Agenda 2063 sponsored by Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma. The only radical plan for African integration and development remains the Abuja Treaty, which had clear economic and political goals for integrating Africa's development, to ensure that Africa benefits from the wealth of its natural resources, and that there is a deeper entrenchment of freedoms across the continent ... [Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: Chairperson, on a point of order. Hon member knows very well that hon Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma is a member of this House. She must address her accordingly.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G Boroto): That is Rule 85. Can we do that, hon member?

Ms N R MASHABELA: Okay, hon Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma. Are you okay now? [Laughter.] [Applause.] Let us agitate for a unified Africa, as Kwame Nkrumah once said: Africa must unite, or perish. We must start by giving the Pan African Parliament proper legislative framework. However, we are aware that it is not possible to do so while Pan African Parliament is led by a corrupt leader who does not want to account. We reject this budget. Thank you, hon Chair. [Applause.]

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Mr M HLENGWA: Thank you very much hon House Chairperson. Hon Minister Xhamela and your Deputies, from the outset the IFP would like to wish you well in your new responsibilities and hope that you will execute them to the best of your ability.

South Africa has increasingly become an integral part of the global agenda through participation in numerous forums exerting pressure and influence wherever we could pursue trade, justice, freedom, peace and global social cohesion to advance our domestic interests and the African agenda. Along the way we have had some serious and grave mistakes but also achieved significant successes.

We, in South Africa understand the burden of oppression having had to bear the brutality of colonialism and apartheid for over 300 years. What we went through we do not wish on anybody anywhere in the world and justly so whenever the violations of human rights manifest or where a people are denied their universal suffrage we, in South Africa, must stand on the side of the people and not the side of the oppressor.

In this regard, Chairperson, I rise today in solidarity with the oppressed people of the world and importantly to challenge the South African government to not sacrifice human rights and social justice at the altar of trade expediency. The opportunity cost of our

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international diplomacy, friendship and comradeship cannot be the oppression of people.

I rise today, in solidarity with the people of Tibet and Taiwan who are at the receiving end of Chinese intimidation and oppression through the illegitimate One-China Policy. The absence of democracy in China grinds against the grain of the core tenets of our Constitution, which must be the yardstick measure of our global co-operation.

We can never proclaim freedom in its wholesomeness here at home when we actively cosy up to those who perpetuate oppression elsewhere in the world. The instability and absence of lasting peace in the Middle East is of grave concern, and we must not escalate tensions with antagonistic policies. We must be a nation of solutions and not a nation of problems.

Without condoning the violence that we witness yesterday hon Minister, we believe that the call to downgrade the South African mission in Israel is regrettable. Rather, we must more aggressively advocate for the realisation of the Two-State Solution wherein Israel and Palestine live in peace side-by-side.

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Equally, our pending withdrawal from the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court is myopic and selfish in the face of gross human rights violations around the world. The People of Sudan for an example – deserve our solidarity and not with Omar al-Bashir. We dare not stand on the side of those who repeat the actions of those who oppressed us.

We must seek to give the African Union teeth to bite and ensure that its decisions are binding and build up the capabilities of the Pan African Parliament towards legislative powers and functions. In the same spirit, we must continue exerting pressure on the United Nations to reform its structures, including the Security Council, to reflect the world of today and not that of 1945.

As the world changes whether through Brexit or the revised United States inward looking agenda or through the progress we are witnessing in the Korean Peninsula or the increase of leadership and the government changes on the continent, South Africa must carefully identify its strengths and opportunities in these changes and exploit them constructively to take this country and the world forward.

Chairperson, the pragmatic diplomacy approach, guided by our Constitution and National Interest, will enable South Africa to

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capitalise on the promises of the Fourth Industrial Revolution and fundamentally, we must use our international relations as a jobs driver, particularly for young people. We must work with our global partners to grow our economy and create jobs for South Africans here at home and abroad.

Ultimately Chairperson, our international relations, co-operation and global diplomacy must not be history centred but must be more future driven. The IFP support this Budget Vote. I thank you.

[Applause.]

Mr A M SHAIK EMAM: Thank you hon House Chair. The NFP welcomes the... [Interjections.]

Ms M S KHAWULA: Thanks very much, Chairperson.

IsiZulu:

Njengoba silapha sizosebenza, angazi noma kuvumelekile ukuthi uMhlonishwa okunguyena ophethe la ePhalamende ilunga elihloniphekile uJackson Mthembu udlala umdlalo [game] la phakathi eNdlini.
[Uhleko.] Kusho ukuthi kusasa uzodlala amaphepha la. [Uhleko.]
Ngiyabonga.

USIHLALO WENDLU (Nk M G Boroto): Akukona ukukhalima ophambukayo.

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English:

Before you start hon Emam, can we have the translation services working? Can we have them working. People can you assist us with that service. I have been told that the interpreting is not taking place.

Mr A M SHAIK EMAM: Allow me to welcome your intervention hon Minister in terms of the challenges that the department are facing and I'm quite certain that with your intervention the department will perform much better in the years to come.

Minister, one of the challenges we have is our role that we play in regions like SADC and Pan African Parliament, I must admit that very little is achieved particularly in the SADC region. As Members of Parliament go there, we live in five star hotels but very little or nothing happened. I think it calls for your intervention to see that it can be more meaningful. I think the sentiments with the Pan African Parliament have to be the same thing.

Hon Chairperson, allow me to condemn with the contempt it deserves the brutal slaying of over 59 Palestinians by the Israelis; including an eight month old baby. According to doctors without borders, the exit wombth are as big as the size of a fist, and the bones of more than half the people that came to hospital are

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pulverized into dust. That is the scale of atrocities that the people of Palestine are facing by the apartheid Israel.

I want to add, that apartheid Israel is no difference to the apartheid South Africa pre 1994. That's exactly what our people went through in the event hon Chair.

Hon Chairperson, allow me to congratulate the government of the ANC for withdrawing our ambassador from Israel. It is indeed commendable that you have taken such a decision. Allow me to also say that the ANC conference held in December 2017 resolved for an immediate and unconditional downgrading of the South Africa embassy in Israel to a liaison office. Hon Minister, Deputy Minister, Chairperson Mahlangu all of you were there. Over 75 of you that spoke unanimously agreed that we will downgrade it into a liaison office.

IsiZulu:

Nk M S KHAWULA: Ngibone sengathi kukhona iphutha elenzekile lapha ephepheni lapho besithi kubizwa ilingu le-NFP manje sisabona ele-ANC angazi noma ... [Ubuwelewele.] [Uhleko.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G Boroto): Take your seat it is not a point of order. Continue hon Shaik-Emam.

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Mr A M SHAIK EMAM: Hon Chairperson, as the NFP in light of your resolution we are saying, we want an immediate and unconditional downgrading of the South African embassy in Israeli to a liaison office.

We are also calling for an expulsion of the Israeli ambassador to South Africa. We are also throughout to stop the importation of all Israeli products; and further calls to prevent any Israeli companies doing business in South Africa until the issue of the Palestinians are resolved in terms of the Two-State-Solution. Let us not forget about them.

Let me quote what our former icon Madiba once said:

We know too well that our freedom is incomplete without the freedom of the Palestinians. Apartheid was wrong in South Africa and it is wrong in Palestine. Free Palestine.

The NFP support the BRR report tabled here today. [Applause.] [Time expired.]

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND CO-OPERATION (Mr L T LANDERS): Hon House Chairperson, it is an honour for me to

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address you on this important occasion which takes place during Africa Month. [Interjections.]

Ms N P SONTI: Chairperson, I'm standing on a point of order!

Setswana:

MODULASETILO (Moh M G Boroto): Mme Sonti, a ke ka go thusa?

Setswana:

Moh N P SONTI: Ee mma, o ka nthusa! Ke kopa go botsa mme gore a go fedisitswe go fetola makoko? [floor crossing]

IsiXhosa:

... iphelile Okanye yaphela?

IsiNdebele:

USIHLALO WENDLU (Kkz M G Boroto): Oho, iye. Sizokufunela iminininingwana ezeleko ayiqedisa. Mma, ungahlala phasi. Asikhulume ngaphandle.

Nks N P SONTI: Ndiyacela Nkosi yam, ndiyacela mama nokuba ngaba yaphela mayibuye sifune utata awele torhwana.

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The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G BOroto): Thank you, very much!

IsiNdebele:

USIHLALO WENDLU (Kkz M G Boroto): Kodwana umotjha isikhathi soMhlonitjhwa, akakangeni!

Nks N P SONTI: ndiyabulela.

IsiNdebele:

USIHLALO WENDLU (Kkz M G Boroto): Ragela phambili, Sekela Ngqonqotjhe!

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND CO-OPERATION (Mr L T LANDERS): Chairperson, the year 2018 is an auspicious year.

On 25 May we commemorate the establishment of the Organisation of African Unity, OAU, which is now the African Union, AU. This year we also celebrate the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the milestone document in the history of human rights. The Declaration sets out fundamental human rights to be universally protected.

Sadly, whilst we are celebrating this document, there are numerous countries who continue to violate the human rights of its citizens.

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In 2018, South Africa assumed the Chair of the Southern African Development Community, SADC. We will continue to focus on building our political and economic integration of SADC states. We will continue to strengthen peace, security, democracy and development.

South Africa's membership of and role within international organisations, that include India, Brazil and South Africa, IBSA, Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, BRICS, and the Indian Ocean Rim Association, IORA, which comprise an integral component of securing South Africa's foreign policy objectives. They serve as a force multiplier in positively influencing the global economic and governance structures. They place people at the centre of the global development agenda and focus on addressing the triple challenges of poverty, inequality and unemployment.

South Africa assumed the Chairship of BRICS on 1 January 2018 and will conclude this role on 31 December 2018. As such, the 10th BRICS Summit will be chaired by President Ramaphosa from 25-27 July 2018 in Gauteng under the theme: "BRICS in Africa: Collaboration for Inclusive Growth and Shared Prosperity in the 4th Industrial Revolution."

South Africa's approach to its Chairship is grounded in the intention to ensure programmatic continuity for BRICS, and is

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committed to executing approximately 100 sectoral meetings, reflective of the expanded BRICS architecture. It also intends to bring a specific focus to the challenges and opportunities presented by the 4th Industrial Revolution.

Furthermore, cognisant of our national interests and priorities, South Africa will once again seek to highlight the African Agenda during its Chairship. In October 2017, South Africa assumed the Chair of the Indian Ocean Rim Association, IORA, and will continue to do so until October 2019. Thus, we have been honoured to lead this pre-eminent regional body linking Africa, the Middle East and Australasia via the Indian Ocean.

Importantly, it is our intention to create and enhance the institutional mechanisms necessary to advance important priorities for South Africa and the Region, such as Women's Economic Empowerment; Maritime Safety and Security; the Blue or Ocean Economy; and Tourism. Mindful of the significance of 2018, we will renew our commitment to the struggle against subjugation and deprivation of our fellow Africans, particularly the people of Western Sahara.

Our continent cannot be free whilst these fellow brothers and sisters continue to yearn for their freedom and self-determination.

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It was anticipated that the re-admission of Morocco into the AU would expedite the resolution of this dispute. On the contrary, the Moroccans are utilising their membership to undermine the people of Western Sahara by denying them a referendum to determine whether they are in favour of self-determination in keeping with innumerable UN Resolutions.

To this end, we will continue to lobby all AU members and the broader international community to expedite the resolution of the Saharawi question. At the AU, High Level Committee meeting held in Libya on April 2018, a report was received from the UN Secretary-General's Representative to Libya. It was reported amongst others that there are at least 20 million illegal weapons and firearms in Libya that contribute to the on-going conflict in that country.

It was disturbing to receive the report that a sea vessel had been detained in Greece, carrying a cargo of weapons destined for Libya. This incident is evidence that outside forces that have absolutely no interest in seeing a peaceful, prosperous, democratic Libya emerge from the ashes of a devastating war, are determined to prolong the suffering of the Lybian people.

As members of the AU, it is our responsibility to expose and stop these forces that undermine our approach and belief of dealing with

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conflict through multilateralism. Hon members, this year also marks the 30th Anniversary of the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale which was a turning point in the struggle to free the continent and our own country from the colonialism that is called apartheid.

What comes to mind when we recall this battle, are the sacrifices of the Cuban Revolutionary Army officers and commanders who fought alongside African liberation movements and people for our cause and our freedom. Madiba himself confessed that:

The Cuban people hold a special place in the hearts of the people of Africa. The Cuban internationalists have made a contribution to African independence, freedom, and justice, unparalleled for its principled and selfless character.

Ladies and gentlemen, the 2012 Health Cooperation Agreement with Cuba has reached its conclusion. Engagements are underway towards the renewal of the agreement. Given our continued revolutionary friendship with the people of Cuba, we wish to re-affirm our solidarity with her people and call for an immediate end to the economic blockade by the United States. We will continue to explore more cooperation opportunities, particularly, increasing our bilateral trade with MERCADO COMÚN del SUR, MERCOSUR, states under the Preferential Trade Agreement, PTA, of 2016.

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These endeavours will be complementary to our on-going beneficial trade relations with countries of the North such as the United States and Canada. Irrespective of the recent tariff regime announcement, we are confident that the principles of rule-based free trade multilateralism will prevail. Equally, whilst we remain committed to strengthening our trade relations with the US, we will not be intimidated and bullied by the recent threats of the US to cut their aid to countries who vote against them at multilateral institutions.

We remain committed to an independent and principled approach to foreign policy. This year marks the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, UDHR, and the 25th Anniversary of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, VDPA.

At the recently concluded High-Level Segment Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council, UNHRC, we reiterated the call for the council to take a balanced approach to human rights.

We called for the observance of the Vienna spirit of indivisibility, interdependence and interrelatedness of all human rights. We advocated, and will continue to advocate for the adherence to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, NPT, in order to guarantee the right to life and people's wellbeing in the world. As

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such, nuclear-weapon states must honour their undertaking to eliminate nuclear weapons, rather than creating justifications for exploring further options in this regard.

In conclusion, 2018 marks the centenary of the son and daughter of the African soil, Nelson Mandela and Nontsikelelo Albertina Sisulu. This Budget Vote attempts to pay tribute to their lifelong beliefs and principles. These priorities are underpinned by the principles of Pan-Africanism, international solidarity, human rights and multilateralism as a means to deal with conflict and build a safer world.

We will continue to build South-South Solidarity, whilst maintaining North-South Cooperation and the strengthening African political and economic integration, democracy, peace and security. I thank you.

Mr W W WESSELS: Hon House Chairperson, for the past two decades South Africa's foreign policy has to a large extent been directionless and solely based on the ANC's historic loyalty rather than the current realities. The government's foreign policy is not consequential. While South Africa withdraws very quickly its ambassador from Israel, the Dalai Lama has been refused entry into South Africa on three occasions since 2009. As many as 430 000

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Tibetans has been killed by the Chinese but nothing is said about that.

The Minister says South Africa's foreign policy is based on human rights and the freedom of expression yet it does not condemn Venezuelan President, Maduro, for overseeing one of the worst human rights crises in our time because of historic loyalty, the same with regard to the misplaced loyalty towards al-Bashir. Again, the oppression of freedom of speech by President Putin and the Chinese President, Jinping, are tolerated because of historic loyalty. Do we have a foreign policy? We need sound foreign policy and a streamlined foreign mission system to restore South Africa's credibility that has been destroyed by your predecessor and by our former President, hon Minister.

The loyalty towards Brics and the misplaced loyalty towards Russia and China with no positive trade balance have significantly damaged our foreign credibility and that needs to be addressed. Hon Minister, it is welcomed that you are saying you will address the financial mismanagement of your department. The amount of irregular, fruitless and wasteful expenditure is shocking and should be addressed urgently. The number of our missions increased yet there is no strategic goal and that is what is needed. There should be better co-ordination between departments and to get positive trade

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balance at the end of the day. We cannot only get trade relations going based on what the ANC's historic loyalty is rather than what is in the best interest of the people of South Africa.

Address that and go back to what is actually needed. The hon member should learn from other countries, go and look what happened in Venezuela when property rights were lost and go look at other countries. You can have the land but you won't have the land but government will have the land and you will also not have any property rights. The same thing will happen. Chairperson, we need to address the imbalances we are facing with regard to our foreign policy, we need to get back to what is in the best interest of South Africa and not what is in the best interest of historic loyalty. The loyalty towards Cuba and the complete disregard for healthcare – where we send hundreds and thousands of students to Cuba and yet they cannot practice in South Africa because they are not actually trained, this is an example of misplaced and misguided loyalty. Address the number of missions and foreign policy to get it inline to bring the best to South Africa and its people. [Time expired.]

Mr M S A MASANGO: Oh! He has left. Chairperson, he is factually misleading the House that the Cuban doctors are not practising in South Africa.

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Ms D D RAPHUTI: Hon Chairperson, hon Minister of International Relations and Co-operation, Dr Lindiwe Sisulu, let me congratulate you for being appointed as the Minister of International Relations and Co-operation and also the Deputy Minister Makgabo Regina Mhaule you are welcomed in this committee. Hon members and fellow South Africans ... [Interjections.]

Ms M S KHAWULA: Chairperson, on a point of order.

The ACTING CHAIRPERSON (Ms N Gina): Hon Raphuti, can you stop a little bit, there is a point of order. Yes, hon Khawula, what is your point of order?

Isizulu:

Nk M S KHAWULA: Sihlalo, nginephuzu lokukhalima okuphambukayo. Mina ngenza isiqiniseko ukuthi isibongo somuntu ngisibiza kahle. Akungathi uma engibingelela angibingelele ngokungishendeza, makathi MaKhawula. Yisho!

The ACTING CHAIRPERSON (Ms N Gina): Thank you, MaKhawula. That is not a point of order. You may continue hon Raphuti.

Ms D D RAPHUTI: Fellow South Africans, the ANC supports this Budget Vote. To the people of South Africa and the world at large, the ANC

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is proudly saying that they are invigorated, renewed and it will continue to serve the people of South Africa.

The ANC came back from its national congress five months ago in Nasrec, where from there it resolved that it would continue to build a better Africa and contribute to a better world. A better Africa is about ensuring a better partnership and working relationship of the African Union, the Pan African Parliament, the New Partnership for African Development, NEPAD, and the African Development Bank.

Chairperson, South Africa in the National Development Plan is envisioned as a globally competitive economy and influenced leader of the international community, but the global competitive report at the World Economic Forum, ranked most of the African countries very high in corruption. We need to rectify this, as corruption brings instability conflicts, disruptions and unstable labour markets.

His Excellency, the President Cyril Matamela Ramaphosa, dedicated this year 2018 to two icons of the ANC and South Africa. These two icons are Mama Nontsikelelo Albertina Sisulu and Ntate Rolihlahla Nelson Mandela. These two heroes were selfless social activists who endlessly encouraged the youth to dedicate themselves to a better Africa and contribute towards a transforming Africa. Let us draw

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lessons from them with the contribution they made. With humane professional attributes they displayed at all times.

Let me take this opportunity to urge the African nations to support South Africa to get a permanent seat at the United Nations Security Council. South Africa's role in Africa is to strengthen the African Agenda by advocating and supporting organisational reforms of the African Union in order to realise Agenda 2063, which seeks to chart a trajectory for Africa towards self-determination, freedom, progress and collective prosperity.

Chapter 7 of the National Development Plan emphasises the importance of regional integration especially in the Southern African Development Community.

Chairperson, let it be known that South Africans must be mindful of the various engagements that will be taking place during 2018, which is to further discuss and resolve to realise the importance of the regional integration that will play a pivotal role to consummate the relations of the region.

Chairperson and fellow South Africans, in building the Africa we want, the African Continental Free Trade area was launched in March 2018, whereby African nations committed to cut tariffs on 90% of

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goods with the aim of increasing interAfrica trade. This has created the largest free trade zone since the creation of the World Trade Organisation. South Africa has signed the declaration but has not yet, ratified. We are urging our South African government and Parliament to speed up the ratification of this important institution.

Chairperson, let me take this opportunity to wish the following countries well in their upcoming elections: Zimbabwe, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Madagascar.

In addition hon Chairperson, His Excellency, the President Ramaphosa confirmed in his 2018 state of the nation address, where he emphasised the impetus of solidarity South Africa should have with the people of Western Sahara towards a peaceful referendum which would enable them to their carve destiny.

Chairperson, let me further encourage the youth to take heed of the opportunities in building a better South Africa and Africa in participating in the international arena.

In the spirit of “Thuma Mina” South Africans, let us think globally and act locally to tap into opportunities that are in store for us, especially for women and the youth.

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“Thuma Mina” to be a peacemaker; “Thuma Mina” to be part of the commitment made by the African Union on the roadmap and the practical steps in silencing the guns in Africa by 2020.

“Thuma Mina” to be part of building a better South Africa and Africa for peace, security and stability for sustainable economic development on the continent.

“Thuma Mina” so that we should not bring junks in this Parliament. People must vote properly in order that they must not bring people to come and haul in this House. The ANC supports this Budget Vote. I thank you. [Applause.]

The ACTING CHAIRPERSON (Ms N Gina): Thank you very much, hon Raphuti. Hon Dudley. Alright hon members, can we give the hon Dudley to present her speech.

Mrs C DUDLEY: Hon Minister, hon Deputy Ministers, the ACDP welcomes the budget as I am sure you do. However, we realise that foreign exchange fluctuations and unplanned activities will more than likely it into it. We also note the Ministers commitment and promises with regard to audit challenges and we welcome that. The ACDP takes this moment to reflect on the National Development Plan which states that the country's foreign policy should be shaped by the interplay

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between diplomatic, political, security, environmental, economic and regional dynamics that define international relations.

And this must of course take place while global trends increasingly influence the way countries of the world relate to each other and information and communications technology go above and beyond sovereignty, international boundaries and regulatory systems. The accelerated massive flow of information on ideology, ideas and capital across the world, make it impossible to expect international relations to be managed as they have been through the ages and even in recent times.

Continuous pressure is put on South Africa to take sides in many conflicts. Government is, we know, aware that all countries have their strengths and weaknesses and while we send peace missions and peacekeeping forces where needed we respect the sovereignty of these countries. Erring on the side of tolerance in the hope of influencing them regarding a culture of human rights, while providing practical assistance and encouragement with regard to good governance and democracy.

Now personally, I have saluted South Africa's cautious position regarding forced regime change and democracy by force which we know delivers certain death and destruction. What we also know for sure

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is that negotiations are going to be necessary one way or another as all wars end with negotiated settlements. Surely, it makes sense to support peace and negotiations and to stay committed to this regardless of the frustrations.

Politics does however complicate matters and even the best policies can be overridden by agendas influencing majority opinion. Minister Pandor's statement during the state of the nation address that and I quote, "The majority party had agreed, that government must cut ties with Israel...", President Ramaphosa following this by saying that diplomatic ties with Israel were to be downsized and now the withdrawal of our ambassador to Israel, are an example of this kind of pressure.

The ACDP would like to encourage government that despite the pressure they know the right thing to do is to remain committed to meaningful and positive engagement with all stakeholders in the Middle East and to reconsider the value of resuscitating and empowering the Middle East envoys, which we believe would do far more to move parties towards fruitful negotiations and a sustainable peace than taking sides does. It would also be far more in character for South Africa, whose values include both a culture of human rights and democracy. Pretending there are good and bad guys in this or any situation is futile - we all see what we see and everyone

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must take responsibility for the abuses suffered by people caught up in defense measures and intifadas under the notion that jihad is a religious duty

It is shocking however that little children are sacrificed in these practices. The ACDP regrets however, the loss of life and we grieve with all the people caught up in the Middle East conflict. Hamas has been controlling Gaza since Israel withdrew in 2005. So, the ACDP will support all government efforts to promote peace and sustainable development within South Africa, regionally and globally. Thank you.

[Time expired.]

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND COOPERATION (Ms M R Mhaule): Chairperson, hon members, hon members of the portfolio committee, esteemed members of the Diplomatic Corps, Department of International Relations and Cooperation, officials, esteemed guests, ladies and gentlemen; it is indeed a pleasure and an honour for me to address you on the occasion of the Department of International Relations and Cooperation Budget Vote.

To fittingly and appropriately celebrate the centenary year of our founding father, President Nelson Mandela, we must recommit to fight alongside all those who are yearning for their freedom, justice and prosperity. This is also the year where we celebrate Ms Albertina

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Sisulu under the theme 'A Woman of fortitude'. She was undoubtedly a woman of courage and resilience who advanced women's rights throughout her adult life.

We must also utilise the occasion of this centenary to re-energise the Pan African Women Organisation. For almost 56 years the Pan African Women Organisation has been at the forefront in mobilising people to fight for their liberation and must remain a strong voice for women in Africa and the world. I can attest that Ms Albertina Sisulu would have loved to ensure that this organisation remains relevant and championing the course of women at all times.

In this regard we take this opportunity to join Palestinians as they observe the Nakba Day which signifies the beginning of a painful journey that has entered its 70 year. It was on this day, 15 May 1948, when the creation of the state of Israel resulted in over 700 000 Palestinians being forced out of their own territories and therefore losing their birth right.

It is therefore important that when we continue to support the Palestinians in their quest for self-determination, statehood and freedom, we impress further to Israel and its allies that their continued oppression and subjugation is unjust and a human rights violations. In this context let us draw inspiration from Tata

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Madiba's stance expressed during the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian people, in Pretoria in 1997 and he said:-

"When in 1977, the United Nations passed the resolution inaugurating the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian people; it was asserting the recognition that injustice and gross human rights violations were being perpetrated in Palestine".

We believe as South Africa that the two nations, Israel and Palestine should emulate the rapprochement between the republic of Korea and the democratic people's republic of Korea which we appreciate. It is our conviction that it is only through dialogue and continued engagement that will bring differences in one understanding.

We will continue to express our displeasure in regard to the violation in the Middle East and call upon all parties to expedite the Middle East peace process. Our assessment is that prospects for peace are persistently shunned by the continued expansion of Israeli settlements in Palestinian territory. Furthermore, the decision of the United States of America to relocate its embassy to Jerusalem exacerbate the already protracted conflict and by extension further

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hindering efforts to find a peaceful solution. As witnessed what happened yesterday as all speakers alluded to.

As you are aware, in December 2017 at the 54th National Conference of the ANC, a resolution was adopted to downgrade our diplomatic representation in Israel. This is a matter that is currently receiving our careful consideration following governments' regulatory frameworks.

We also would like to reiterate our deep concern about the withdrawal of the United States from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action which seeks to ensure that Iran utilises its nuclear capabilities for human development as articulated by the President's statement as he joined other world leaders. It is our hope that the remaining four signatories to Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action will honour their commitment as this was endorsed by the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231.

In a similar vein, we do believe that international interference and aggression will never bring about lasting peace in Syria and in contrary will only further contribute towards increased loss of life and displacement. We wish to reiterate our position that the use of airstrikes conducted by the countries in the territory of the Syrian

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Arab Republic is contrary to global governance and international law.

To this end, the alleged use of chemical weapons in Syria cannot be a justification for military airstrikes in a territory of a sovereign state without the authorisation of the United Nations Security Council. We also condemn in the strongest possible terms any possible use of chemical weapons by any party in the Syrian territory. We remain steadfast in our principled position that the issue should be resolved in the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the United Nations of the Security Council.

The Middle East characterises both emerging threats and emerging opportunities. To this end, our diplomacy should promote our values and our interests, from both a political and an economic approach. Thus we attach great value to our strong economic and trade ties with countries in this region and believe that they are critical to world trade, especially in the area of energy security. This is demonstrated through the recent accelerated growth in export trade with the Gulf region. Peace and stability is required in the region so that our missions can increase their engagement with potential investors in pursuit of the investment targets leading up to the Investment Summit.

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In regard to Asia, in April 2017 we have successfully launched the South Africa-China People-to-People Exchange Mechanism, which has further added significance to the already existing strategic relations between the two countries. In addition to the already existing government-to-government engagements, this initiative will create an opportunity for non-government entities across academia, business and civil society to interact more frequently through organized structures. During the launch of the co-chairs witnessed the signing of six agreements and Memoranda of Understanding in various areas of co-operation.

Furthermore, since October 2017, South Africa became the first African country to export beef to China. You will indeed agree with me that an indication of progress in leveraging our international agreements for domestic benefits and opening markets for our products.

The Pan African Parliament has just elected new President, Vice Presidents and members of the legislature from various regions and countries including our very own parliamentarians. It is our considered view that efforts must be directed towards strengthening institutional capacity and accountability to enable this august body to discharge its mandate. We must expedite its transformation

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towards a legislative body so that the PAP can further entrench democracy, good governance and transparency in our continent.

We have a role to play to ensure that we create conditions within which our private sector can contribute to the general wellbeing of our people. The recent launch of the Japan-Africa Public-Private Economic Forum bears testimony for this undertaking. We will accelerate public-private partnerships and create more opportunities among Japanese and African companies.

We were pleased by Japan's pledged during the launch to invest 30 billion U S dollars into the continent over the next three years. While efforts are underway to integrate African markets, this is an opportunity to integrate Africa's economy into the global sphere. This was underscored by President Ramaphosa during the launch when he stated:-

"For Africa to grow and for its people to flourish, its economies need to be more effectively integrated into the global economy"

We are conscious that we shall contribute to the growth of our economy, Africa's development agenda and a better world by expending the limited resources in our disposal. In an effort to remain within

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the compensation ceiling of employees as set out by the National Treasury, the department will continue with the process of rationalising its personnel establishment at missions, where it will not affect service delivery adversely.

We have also frozen the filling of non-critical posts at head office and in missions abroad, and will continue to do so during the 2018-19 financial year as one of the cost curtailments measures implemented by the department. We are also doing our best to realise youth empowerment and capacity building. In essence we have prioritised the implementation of internship and learnership programmes since these were initiated in the public service.

Hon Chair, we have students from four universities that are here today who have won a competition on the BRICS summit and they are here with us, we need to applaud them. Thank you very much. [Time expired.] [Applause.]

Mr N T GODI: Comrade Minister, congratulations on your new responsibilities. I sincerely hope that the issues that were raised by the Auditor-General, you will attend to them. They are indeed long standing. In our last engagement, they were there, especially issues of wastage of public money and the challenges of leadership that is impunity, including the issues of the CFO. We even received

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a memo petition from the finance staff which had also been given to management. There were commitments that this will be attended to but it does appear that nothing had been done.

On this month, Africa Month, we are reminded and recommit to the sacred cause of Africa which is striving for the establishment of the monolithic giant, the United States of Africa; peace; development and the projection of the African personality

The APC and indeed all Africanists support a foreign policy that has Pan-African solidarity as its bedrock, looking neither West nor East but neutral I none that affects the welfare of Africans.

In fragmentation lies our neo-colonial subjugation. Conversely, Pan-Africanism builds our unity, guarantees our freedom and prosperity.

The APC, Comrade Minister, wish to join humanity and indeed the majority of our people in condemning the killing of unarmed protesters in Palestine, including a wheelchair bound protesters Fadi Abu Saleh. We support the principled a courageous decision by our government to recall our ambassador as a demonstration of our protest at what is happening in Palestine. There has been a pronouncement about downgrading our representation in Israel. It

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should be interesting, Comrade Minister, to know what measures have been taken. Are we there already and what the process is?

On this month, Africa Month, we remember the fighters for the cause of Africa, and especially our beloved leader, Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe, who passed away 40 years ago. We, as the living footsteps of his legacy will keep on keeping on until his teachings of Africa for the Africans, Africans for humanity and humanity for God becomes common cause. I thank you. [Applause.]

Mr D BERGMAN: Chair, I read this speech from the hon Kalyan first. Minister Lindiwe Sisulu, congratulations on your appointment as Minister of the Department of International Relations and Co-operation. I hereby tender my apology for not being able to deliver this speech in person as I am presently in the Pan-African Parliament.

Having been at Pan-African Parliament, Pap, since 2009, right now I have very grave feelings about the current state of affairs at Pap and question whether South Africa should actually be participating in the activities of Pap. The current President is largely responsible for the rot that has set in. He runs Pap like his own little fiefdom, changing the order paper at will, not being transparent about the finances, delayed presenting his annual

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activity report, ignoring Rules of Procedure and has told the current clerk that he will soon be fired.

Furthermore, he has ignored an AU decision asking Pap to apply AU rules in managing the activities of Pap, including the principle of rotation of the President and the bureau. South Africa is the largest contributor to the AU and as the host country of Pap, spends a large amount of money on the day to day functioning of Pap. I hereby request that the Parliament of South Africa calls for a forensic audit into the finances of Pap as a start to clean up the rot.

While President Ramaphosa only devoted five sentences in his state of the nation address to foreign policy, he stressed the importance of this Ministry in regard to economic diplomacy. Critical to achieving this key priority is to have a team of ambassadors and political officers who can restore Brand South Africa.

Eighty percent of South Africa's ambassadors are political appointees – many serving at the pleasure of the ANC because they have been loyal cadres of the movement or have reached their sell by dates as MP's. We need a team who are capable of increasing trade incomes, tourist traffic and the Foreign Direct Investment, FDI. Therefore, a reform of the diplomatic service is imperative.

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South Africa subscribes to many continental and international bodies but reports on what they have achieved rarely, if ever makes its way to Parliament. Are we getting political value in rand value? We have to utilise the Chairship of South Africa of SA Development Community, SADC, to pursue our foreign policy priorities.

In its current form, the UN is not a true refection of current global political and economic trends and is regarded as undemocratic and unrepresentative. We welcome the appointment of Mr Pahad to keep South Africa's bid to get a seat on the UN Security Council alive and hope that our bid will be successful.

South Africa's Foreign Policy has been through 3 Phases since the end of apartheid viz the honeymoon phase under Nelson Mandela, the African Renaissance phase under Thabo Mbeki and the drift period during the Zuma reign. During the Zuma presidency, there has been a lack of emphasis on human rights resulting in some policy reversals and international embarrassment.

South Africa is a society embedded in an international community. We must manage our relationships in pursuit of a just world order with particular emphasis on an unwavering commitment to preservation of human rights.

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In my own comments, Africa is rising but it is no thanks to South Africa or SADC but rather the progressive efforts of the Economic Community of West African States, Ecowas, region. They have formed a regional Parliament and are working together to increase intra-trade and form coherent and world class steps in engaging with the global community. Unlike South Africa, who still engage in petty politics and continue to exploit the Mandela name in forcing themselves relevant on the global stage.

The Department of International Relations and Co-operation for the longest time has been a stabiliser of our international ship whilst our executive seems to be the perineal icebergs. Our international diplomacy record makes President Trump look like Henry Kissinger compared to us. We practice lazy diplomacy by taking our queues from lobby groups that shout the loudest rather than engaging with countries and facts. If South Africa really wants to be taken seriously when Africa rises and not wants to be left behind, I suggest a less antagonistic approach to Morocco and the Middle East and rather a more diplomatic approach. Let us put South Africa back on the map as credible peace brokers that seek just resolve in a consistent approach. Through relooking our projects; our missions and our peace keeping efforts, we could have a positive impact on our budget and in turn use the money more wisely to increase the efficiencies and delivery within our own Country.

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Let me leave you with his words, those who spend their time looking for the faults in others have no time left for correcting their own.

[Interjections.] Like you. [Applause.]

Ms T E KENYE: Hon Chairperson, hon Ministers and Deputy Ministers, hon members of this august House distinguished guests ladies and gentleman, the ANC supports the Budget Vote for the Department of International Relations and Co-operation. Firstly, I must just respond to hon the Bergman on the issue of the reduction of the missions abroad. It is important for South Africa to maintain physical presence in missions abroad. The problem is not the numbers, what is important is the outreach and the country to have maximum benefit out the bilateral relations. There is a need for more missions abroad for political activity and communicate reasons so as to be able to fight the triple challenges of poverty.

Hon Mokgalapa, you talked about the disciplinary case against the chief financial officer, CFO,. I don't know even last week the department explained to us that they are addressing the issue and once the disciplinary processes have been completed the committee will get full response in writing, yes of course.

Hon Mashabela, I'm worried when you always reject the budget because it is important that we notice how are we going to make our work if

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we don't look at the budget. If you reject, it means that our international relation department will have a problem when we say they must go and work. In spite of that we know that their budget has been reduced now how do we think that if you are rejecting they are going to manage to do the work abroad.

Hon Unfortunately he is not here now but I just want to tell him in passing that we know the Cuban doctors have been here.

IsiXhosa:

Andiyazi ukuba ukhulele phi ke yena kuba oko sinabo oogqirha baseCuba apha.

English:

... especially that I am a nurse by profession, I worked with all of them, take it from me.

Honourable Chairperson, it is befitting that, as we celebrate former President Comrade Nelson Mandela and Comrade Mama Albertina Sisulu centenary, Mama uKhawula because ...

IsiZulu:

Nk M S KHAWULA: Sihlalo, nginephuzu lokukhalima okuphambukayo.

Ngiqondene nawe ngqo. Angazi noma kuvumelekile la ePhalamende yini

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umuntu ethi enamehlo amabili kuthiwe akaboni. Makaxolise uSekela Ngqongqoshe, abantu bakaMaphumulo abanawo amanzi sekuphele inyanga. Awuphenduleka. Awuxolise. [Ubuwelewele.] Uthi akaboni uvale amehlo. Akaxolise, uyabona.

English:

The TEMPORARY CHAIRPERSON (Ms N Gina): Thank you hon Khawula, can you take your seat hon Khawula Thank you so much. Surely the Deputy Minister will engage you through as you leave the House, continue hon Kenye.

Ms T E KENYE: Honourable Chairperson, it is befitting that, as we celebrate former President Comrade Nelson Mandela and Comrade Mama Albertina Sisulu Centenary – Mama Ukhawula said that I must also mention uMama uWinnie

IsiXhosa:

... kaloku Mama uKhawula . . .

English:

... we are talking about the 100-years.

IsiXhosa:

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... naye uMama uWinnie Mandela xa egqiba eyakhe iminyaka engama-100 naye sakimkhumbula. Into ebangela ukuba sibakhumbule kungokuba bagqiba iminyaka eli-100. Kwaye ukuba bebesaphila bebezakuba bagqiba iminyaka eli-100 kulo nyaka.

English:

Let me quote the President of the Republic of South Africa, hon Cyril Ramaphosa, in one of his many speeches this year when he once again reminded us about the road we travelled to achieve our democracy, he always talks about both of them. He aptly reminded us during the ANC's 106 birthday celebrations that:

Madiba was resolute that because we live in an interdependent world, we must learn from and take advantage of what is happening in other parts of the world.

He was fully aware that South Africa depended a great deal on international solidarity and was adamant that the ANC and South Africa will always stand with the oppressed and marginalised across the world.

Our friendship, neighbourliness and good relations with the rest of the continent and the world are what drive our foreign policy. This is the fulfilment of one of the Freedom Charter's declarations that

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“There shall be peace and friendship”. It is the foundation of utmost respect for multilateralism as it affords an opportunity to influence and solve issues peacefully as equals.

As we know, our road to democracy was never an easy one, even though today you have denialists, counterrevolutionaries and right-wingers who prefer not believe that apartheid was a crime against humanity. We console ourselves that ours was a selfless struggle that brought about the rights to free speech for all. The struggles of our people were never built on privilege and exclusivity which are entrenched on perceived superiority, instead they were based on the brotherhood of man, humanity and its embracing inclusivity. Such understanding of oneness of humanity drives our relations with the world as we seek not to dominate but peaceful coexistence, prosperity and harmony.

We need to constantly remind ourselves that our democracy was never manna that fell from heaven, but it is one that was built from the ashes of volcanic mountains of injustices, whose destruction was achieved through international solidarity and the will of the people of South Africa refusing to be slaves in their land, in the continent whose soils are littered with their umbilical cords ...

IsiXhosa:

... abantwana bomquba.

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English

South Africa's foreign policy has always been driven by this foresight which puts the principles of ubuntu ahead of anything else in the sphere of international relations. South Africa is committed in building a better Africa and a better world, strengthen continental and international solidarity, and participate effectively on multilateral platforms to transform global governance and to reform the composition of the United Nations, UN, which still reflects post World II era, to reflect current realities of the world. This is a critical role that is supported by the functions of the Department among many - hon Mokgalapa here is the multilateral forum. The Department of International Relations and Co-operation's programmes that are supported through this budget ensure that we give practical meaning to this commitment and vision. The budget, despite it insufficiently covering its needs, serves to support the Department and the Ministry with the necessary resources to deliver our objectives on multilateral platforms such as the UN, G20, G77, SADC, Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, Briks and so on.

We shall leverage our chairmanship of BRICS, among other things, to drive the transformation of these multilateral institutions as our fellow members such as India, Brazil and China share similar perspectives to ours and are bound by the similarity of our

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struggles to act multilaterally. We have a duty to enhance multilateralism and as President Ramaphosa reminded us again, South Africa chairmanship of Brics this year will be an important tool to advance, "South Africa's national interests and the promotion of a more equitable world order".

The department will strengthen the vision of international solidarity on supporting human rights everywhere in the world, building and strengthening relations with other countries and our renewed vigour to reclaim our position as an influential player in African politics. This Budget Vote takes place in the midst of the need, in world politics, of a voice of reason as conflicts, potential conflicts and misguided political leadership seems to ignite more tension between nations. The ANC-led government, through its long tradition of internationalism as championed by ANC's erstwhile President Comrade OR Tambo, whose name befittingly graces the Department of International Relations and Co-operation's headquarters in Tshwane, has better understanding of the importance of multilateralism in building a better world.

We need to engage more with other nations in the continent and the world as resurgence of dehumanising practices of slavery have been reported in our continent, coupled with the sickening worldwide problem of human trafficking. We support and acknowledge the

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inalienable rights to self-determination of the people of Western Sahara and will work through proper channels to support the UN in its attempt to bring the parties back to the negotiating table.

We also cry with the people of Palestine and promise to do anything possible, diplomatically, to support their cause and put them at ease. For as long as they feel pain, we shall continue to feel their misery. Political dialogue to solve political problems is road well-travelled by us a nation, as democracy was born out of that. As I would remind you honourable members and fellow South Africans that, on this day in 1992 the second plenary session of the multiparty Codesa was convened mapping the way to our current democratic dispensation.

Our engagements in multilateral organisations give us a platform to contribute meaningfully to the eradication of these evils and peacefully solve problems. We shall not spare any resources until we achieve these objectives of lasting peace, harmony, stability and prosperity of all peoples of the world, including our continent.

We have duty to continue to support the peace efforts in South Sudan and support the efforts of finding lasting solution on outstanding matters on the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and border conflicts, pledge solidarity and support the oppressed people of Palestine. Let

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us continue to strengthen our solidarity with the people of Cuba to engage the United States through the UN and other platforms to remove the illegal embargo that has crippled the economy of Cuba and tested, to the maximum, the resilience of her people.

The Minister of the Department of International Relations and Co-operations, hon Lindiwe Sisulu, her Deputy Ministers, hon Landers and hon Mhaule, our diplomats and the administration staff have raised their hands. They are calling the executive and the people of South Africa to send them serve the country, extend the dialogue for lasting peace and harmony in the world, and spread the spirit of ubuntu. We oblige by providing them with the necessary resources, amid a constrained financial environment. When they come back we shall request them to sit us down and report back and account on what they have achieved with the country's scarce resources.

IsiXhosa:

Siyanithuma ke Mphathiswa neqala lakho, hamba niye kusebenza yayele, ifuna ukuhiinzwa. Utsho nombutho weSizwe, umbutho kaTambo, kaLuthuui, kaDube, kaMakgatho, kaMandela.

Thank you, Honourable Chairperson,

The MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND COOPERATION:

Chairperson, I would like to thank all members here for their

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contribution to this debate, especially those who supported the Budget Vote. Since the dawn of democracy in 1994, South Africa has placed Africa at the centre of her foreign policy. It is true that this is largely influenced by our liberation history, I don't know if the IFP would like to find their own history and give solidarity to the people who assisted them, but those people that assisted all of us here, are those people we would like to give solidarity to.

Thank you very much for that confirmation.

I have been relieved to find that all of us here are concerned about the plight of the Palestinians. We all condemn what has happened in the Gaza. Therefore, may I then propose that we, rising out of this Chamber, can say we, who belong to the Portfolio Committee on International Relations, roundly condemn the situation that spread out on our television screens when people who were unarmed were mowed down. Can I get your support in that? [Applause.]

I would like to respond briefly to some of the issues that have been raised. Both members of the DA have accused our ambassadors as rejects of the ANC where the Department of International Relations and Cooperation is used as the dumping ground for pensioners. I want to remind them that in the last 20 years, we have been represented worldwide by some of the finest representatives of this country. Furthermore, five of them have been dumped on us by the DA.

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I want to say to the hon Mokgalapa that all disciplinary cases will be dealt with swiftly. I have confirmed that all of those that had been handed over to us by the Auditor-General will be dealt with. I have asked for three months and I will be back to report to the portfolio committee about this matter.

I also want to thank hon Kilian for sending me a message on the issue of Pan-African Parliament. I am very conscious of the fact that we may not have paid as much attention to the Pan-African Parliament as we should. I am also very conscious of the fact that they are experiencing a great deal of problems there and I will attend to them personally. I will write to all those Members of Parliament who have been deployed to the Pan-African Parliament and sit down with them so that we can assist them with their problems. We are indeed the major contributor of the resources that make that Parliament run. So, I take note of that particular matter and I want to accept that we may not have done what we should have done at the time we should have taken our responsibility.

Very often hon members, we, in South Africa are criticised for having lofty ideals defining the world as one that is driven by holy ideas and condemning a world that is driven by ambition. As though we believe that the coin of idealism still holds the currency in the cold pragmatic world that we live in. Indeed that may be true, but

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our answer to that is there is no harm in trying. What we do in the Department of International Relations and Cooperation is to make sure that we try at all times to solve the problems of Africa and of the world.

I can report to you now that the Continent is doing quite well especially in holding regular successful elections. I am glad the Deputy Minister has mentioned that we convey our support to the Democratic Republic of Congo, Zimbabwe and Madagascar who will be holding their elections very soon. We wish them well and we hope that those elections will be without any incidents.

I would like at this point to thank the Deputy Ministers for their support and run around and be where I should be. For their unstinting support to me and the department their support is invaluable and I thank them very much.

Finally, I wanted to say to all of you that this morning I did call on all of us to come together to assist the Palestinians. I would invite the people who represent the Jewish community and I have since received a response which has warmed my heart. The Jewish Board of Deputies is willing to meet with me and I am willing to meet with them immediately so that all of us here can help solve the

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problem of Palestine and Israel. Thank you very much for your support. [Applause.]

The House adjourned at 16:07.

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