**THURSDAY, 11 JULY 2019**

***PROCEEDINGS OF MINI-PLENARY SESSION – NATIONAL ASSEMBLY CHAMBER***

Members of the mini-plenary session met in the National Assembly Chamber at 14:01.

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:

The MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND CO-OPERATION: Thank

you very much, Chairperson. Chairperson, Ministers, Deputy Ministers, hon members, excellencies, ambassadors, high commissioners — I’m so grateful for your presence here today — all members of the diplomatic corps and representatives of

international organisations attending this debate, dear colleagues and distinguished guests, I am pleased to have the opportunity to report to this House on our progress and activities in the 2018-19 financial year and to indicate our plans for 2019-20.

Last year our department was allocated R6 552 billion to be utilised to advance our agenda for global co-operation. The development of our region and continent was to be supported by this funding. This year we are allocated less — R6 508 billion. As with all departments, we are confronted by the limitations of our low economic growth and thus, reduced budget allocations. As a department we also unusually face the impact of currency fluctuations and rather inadequate provision for our compensation budget. Given these challenges, we have to use our resources wisely and strategically. The reduced budget severely impacts on our ability to support government in reaching our national priorities. Fortunately, we have an excellent team in the Department of International Relations and Co-operation, Dirco, and we shall do our best to execute our tasks.

Debates on the International Relations budget and programme are incomplete if they are not associated with the tremendous role the international community played in supporting us to achieve our freedom. We have in many ways sought to honour these solidarity-based contributions through reciprocating in creating a just world order that has a human face — a face of empowered women and girls, of men and boys free from war, living with human security. I have been pleased that our statements and voting patterns in Geneva and New York reflect our support for a more just world. Our work must always reflect this commitment to return the privilege of international solidarity with attention to the plight of those who seek refuge, democracy, freedom and peace.

Fortunately, this world has improved vastly from the world in which racial domination could thrive, and yet Palestine is still occupied and not free; South Sudan has internal conflict; Western Sahara is still occupied and not free; Cuba remains blockaded; and extremism and terrorism destabilises the world.

Powerful forces of economic bullying seek to alter the established multilateral world order.

Africa too continues to have many development challenges that must be addressed. We have to promote our relations in this challenging context. We have to use our extensive network and limited resources to support the emergence of a world where all enjoy freedom and democracy, increased human security and peace. Our relationships with the world will be centred on achieving these outcomes.

As South Africa, this year we celebrate 25 years of freedom. Even though we are young adults in democracy, we can, as President Ramaphosa said in his state of the nation address, “move forward together towards achieving a stronger, greater, more compassionate, more united and harmonious South Africa”, and might we add Africa.

We recall too that this year Rwanda commemorates 25 years since the genocide of 1994. We reaffirm our friendship and solidarity with the people and government of Rwanda, and salute them for their determined efforts to achieve reconciliation and a nation at peace with itself. The search for social cohesion and

reconciliation has been put to good effect in both our countries and we should use this common experience to forge greater links.

The work we do will advance such links and also actively contribute to the seven priorities announced by President Ramaphosa. These priorities are global. They are in our National Development Plan — our vision 2030; they are in the Sustainable Development Goals — Agenda 2030; and they are in our African Agenda 2063 — describing the Africa we want. We will promote action to realise them for our country and our continent. We pursue the priorities in a period in which Africa has entered a phase that holds much promise for genuine sustainable development. We plan to use our diplomacy to build stronger links with Nigeria, Egypt and Kenya as anchor countries that should advance these goals.

Many African countries are achieving positive economic growth and developing social and economic infrastructure that expands the likelihood of national development, higher growth levels and broad social development for all. It is noteworthy that

democracy has also taken hold in much of the continent, with free, fair and regular elections on the rise.

We are very encouraged by the launch of the African Continental Free-Trade Area Agreement, AfCFTA. Now that it has come into force, immense opportunity for trade within Africa has come into being. South Africa must ensure it is ready to take advantage of the potential offered by this expanded market access. Once the agreement is fully operationalised, Africa will be one of the world’s largest single markets encompassing 55 countries, a population of 1,2 billion people and a combined gross domestic product, GDP, of US$3,2 trillion. The development of the necessary infrastructure for this expanded trade is going to gather speed and we as South Africa must be ready to play a key role.

In addition, I believe that our capacity for research and innovation could play a critical role in advancing our industrial development ambitions. Minerals beneficiation, the use of advanced manufacturing and the wider use of digital

technologies could place us at the leading edge of economic innovation support in Africa.

As South Africa we have excellent research universities. We train a significant number of African postgraduate students and researchers, and yet we absorb just a small number of them. As a country we also have very competent research councils. Imagine the contribution we could make to our continent if we multiplied this capacity. The development potential of a vibrant Africa- based knowledge economy would become a genuine reality. Our capacity for innovation must become part of our diplomatic interactions and be utilised to advance our continent’s ambitions. We should promote the creation of hundreds of research institutes all over Africa and ensure that they are supported to be innovative, productive and responsive. We have the capacity; let us use it strategically.

One of our major co-operation successes is our regional economic community that has established a strong platform for greater integration and growth. We must consolidate and expand trade and

investment in the Southern African Development Community, SADC, and give effect to the President’s assertion that:

Within the SADC region, we should prioritise development of cross-border value chains in key sectors such as energy, mining and mineral beneficiation, industrialisation and enhancing manufacturing capacity, infrastructure development as well as agro-processing.

We will therefore intensify several related SADC initiatives. I am pleased with the progress that was achieved during South Africa’s tenure as SADC chair. Progress on regional trade has been increased by the operationalisation of the integrated Real Time Gross Settlement, RTGS, system, which is hosted by the SA Reserve Bank. A total of 81 banks are participating in this system. The system aims at establishing a firm platform for increased intra-SADC trade and investment to further strengthen regional financial integration. The SADC-RTGS system has performed impressively since July 2013 when the system went live, with a total of 1,275,591 transactions settled as at the end of 2018, representing R21 trillion ... I beg your pardon,

R5,21 trillion. The benefits of the cross-border payment system are its efficiency and the reduction in transaction costs. We believe this experience is going to be a valuable contribution to the development of the continental payment system announced at the AU summit in Niger just three days ago.

A second example is the completion and adoption of the SADC Energy Foresight and Assessment Study for Renewable Energy Value Chains. Member states are going to use the recommendations to develop SADC’s renewable energy capacities. Our Council for Scientific and Industrial Research was tasked to conduct a mapping exercise of potential renewable energy value chains for use by SADC member states. A progress report will be presented to Ministers in June 2020.

Thirdly, the SADC Engineering Needs and Numbers study has been concluded. It will assist in implementing programmes for developing enhanced engineering training at national and regional platforms to enable career development and the sharing of experience and expertise within SADC. Member states have also been urged to introduce Science, Technology, Engineering and

Mathematics at very early stages in SADC education systems to increase the number of students able to take up studies in engineering fields.

We are also going to work hard to promote the tripartite free- trade area, TFTA. The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, Comesa, SADC, as well as the East African Community, EAC, in their summit in 2008 agreed to accelerate the programme to harmonise trade arrangements among the three regional economic communities, with a view to establishing a single free- trade area encompassing all member states of these three regions.

Our country appended its signature to the agreement establishing the TFTA on 7 July 2017 in Kampala, Uganda. To date, the agreement has been signed by 23 member countries. We require

14 ratifications to enter it into force. Thus far we have three and we need more. We will intensify our diplomatic efforts aimed at urging other member countries to sign and ratify this important instrument in order for it to become operational. A summit of the tripartite communities is scheduled to take place

in January 2020. We hope that the ratification threshold would have been achieved by that date when we meet in Kigali, Rwanda.

The recent report of Africa’s regional bodies submitted at the AU’s extraordinary summit in Niger confirmed the critical role that regional economic bodies are playing in our development programmes and particularly in acting on our programmes linked to Agenda 2063.

I confirm that our commitment to Agenda 2063 remains steadfast. We are honoured to have been selected as the 2020 AU chair. We are cognisant of the huge responsibility ... [Applause.] ... this places on South Africa, particularly the pursuit of the ambitious agenda of silencing the guns on our continent by the end of 2020.

We have a rare opportunity to place this goal on top of the agenda of the UN Security Council when we assume the presidency of the council in October this year. The theme for our council presidency is: Continuing the legacy: Working for a just and peaceful world. It is important to use our tenure at the

security council and as chair of the AU to implement the enhanced co-operation agreement on peace and security as it foregrounds commitment to conflict prevention, and to addressing the root causes of conflict.

This commitment is the embodiment of the legacy of Nelson Mandela who, during his tenure as President of our country, worked tirelessly to advance peace and stability on the continent and globally through mediation and preventative diplomacy.

The continued existence of conflicts diverts us away from our goal of peace and development. In this regard, we repeat our call for a total ceasefire in Libya and the pursuit of an inclusive national dialogue led by the AU. On Sudan, we deplore the recent violence and deaths in that country and welcome the agreement reached by the Transitional Military Council and the Forces of Freedom and Change. This is an opportunity for the people of Sudan to begin entrenching peace and stability. We applaud the mediation efforts of the AU and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, Igad. As South

Africa, we stand ready to assist where we can. Our experience in conflict resolution and in drafting a progressive Constitution makes us a partner genuinely able to resolve complex national problems.

Our President has done much to assist the Kingdom of Lesotho as the envoy of SADC. While appreciating the progress reported recently, we implore all the people of the Kingdom of Lesotho to work diligently on the finalisation of the necessary constitutional and security sector reforms. We thank former Deputy Chief Justice Moseneke for his work as the presidential facilitator.

A peaceful and stable, as well as economically integrated Africa, will contribute towards transforming the world to ensure that people of the global South are not marginalised. We have partnered with likeminded countries to improve our condition and that of our partners. Work in Africa’s partnership with China in the Forum on China-Africa Co-operation and with Japan in the International Conference on African Development can make a significant contribution to our progress.

The Brics is also a formation which has the potential to change the global political and economic outlook. The work of the New Development Bank, NDB, its Africa Regional Centre, ARC, located in South Africa, and the Contingency Reserve Arrangement, CRA, are concrete examples of the effectiveness possible in Brics.

The regional centre is focussed on providing financial and project preparation support and funding for infrastructure and sustainable development in South Africa, Africa, and we hope in future, to other developing countries.

In April this year, the NDB approved around US$790 million of loans for three projects in South Africa. One half of the funding is for Eskom to stabilise our national electricity grid. The NDB and Eskom signed a separate agreement for a

US$180 million loan to implement an integrated renewable energy project. This is all evidence of the use of diplomacy to address national imperatives.

The NDB will also provide infrastructure and sustainable development project funding to countries that are not members of

Brics. It has confirmed that part of the US$790 million will fund the Lesotho Highlands Water Project. The implementation of the second phase of this project is important to both South Africa and Lesotho, and is of immense development value to the two countries.

We also continue to enhance our co-operation with institutions and countries of the North. Our partners continue to play a constructive role in bridging the global development divide.

President Ramaphosa has been consistent in using platforms such as the G20 and the G7 to argue for support for Africa and for a fair, inclusive and balanced world trade environment.

As a country we believe in multilateralism and reject attempts at unipolarity and a neglect of the poor and marginalised. We believe much more must be done for shared growth; for the empowerment of women; and for the eradication of poverty as well as the eradication of inequality. Success in pursuing these objectives means leadership, hard work, consistency and commitment. We as Africans must rise and act in our own interest. We need to execute our own agreed agenda.

We have a number of important strategic partners whose support and solidarity we appreciate. One, which we often don’t talk of, is the USA, a very important strategic partner in the fight against HIV and Aids. The USA has been instrumental in supporting our national HIV prevention and support programmes, and American businesses continue to invest in South Africa to create employment and reverse the frontiers of poverty. We have excellent trade relationships and are determined to expand them for increased growth and job creation.

We will affirm these links while also working to support measures for peace in South Sudan; freedom and justice for the people of Saharawi; and freedom, security and democracy for the people of Palestine. We will also continue to strive for the end of the unilateral economic blockade against Cuba and continue to strengthen our collaboration with the government and people of Cuba.

We have been closely monitoring developments regarding the UK’s planned exit from the EU. South Africa remains strongly committed to our strategic partnership with the EU, which has

created a platform for engagement at a number of levels, not only on bilateral matters but also on matters pertaining to regional, continental and global challenges. As a bloc, the EU is South Africa’s largest trading partner, with total trade having increased from R497 billion in 2014 to R620 billion in 2018. While there remains a significant trade deficit, South African exports to the EU have increased from R197 billion in 2014 to R268 billion in 2018. The R1,4 trillion in foreign investment from Europe, representing approximately 77% of total foreign direct investment, FDI, in our country, has made a significant contribution to our economic goals and to industrialisation in our country.

We will work with greater energy to increase our co-operation with India, Russia and Brazil. Our partnership with the People’s Republic of China will continue to grow and thrive. The recent conclusion of 90 trade and export contracts will enhance our partnership even further.

In his recent state of the nation address, the President referred to the need for us to increase tourist arrivals to

support our economy. Europe and Africa remain among the leading continents in terms of tourist arrivals in South Africa. I have tasked all our missions with the responsibility to help manage and brand South Africa to attract more tourists. Similarly, they have been given the huge task of assisting us in securing more FDI, while identifying and leveraging trade and cultural diplomacy opportunities in their host countries.

Our foreign policy principles remain centred on promoting peace, human rights and dignity for all throughout the world. We continue to be guided by our apex mandate, which is our Constitution. I am currently studying the ministerial review panel’s report on foreign policy and hope to report very soon to our portfolio committee and Parliament on our response. We also hope that Parliament will assist us by finally processing the Foreign Service Bill.

I would like to conclude by thanking the two Deputy Ministers for their guidance and support in preparing for the Budget Vote. Deputy Minister Botes will outline further details of our work in his contribution. Deputy Minister Mashego-Dlamini is away on

official duties attending a Commonwealth governing council meeting. I thank our director-general and the management of the department, my special advisors and the staff in the Ministry. I also thank my family, especially my daughter who rather late at night had to listen to my draft of this speech and was falling asleep poor thing, but kept up. [Applause.] I thank her for that. Sorry to have put you through that pain. Let me also thank the Dirco team for their role in ensuring that we were ready to provide an overview of our work in this debate. Thank you very much, hon Chairperson. [Applause.]

Ms T MAHAMBEHLALA: Hon Speaker; Minister and Deputy Ministers of International Relations and Co—Operation; Hon Members of the Portfolio Committee Members of the Diplomatic Corps, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen.

We meet here on a historical day, the 11th of July. The very same day on which our revered Rivionia trialists were rounded up at Lillies leaf farm. As we come to learn from the annuls of history these great heroes were incarcerated for making the world a better place.

So today, I start from the premise that the world we live in can be a better place. And I say this with great certainty. We need a paradigm shift. Africa should be peaceful, united, and prosperous. After all it is a continent blessed with all the raw materials from oil to any other natural resource you can think of. It has been said many times that the African is the poorest continent. Is it really poor? Is it not high time we confront the truth in its entirety, and that is some amongst us are stealing from the continent with assistance of former colonial masters? Or some are simply the conduits of former colonialist.

Collectively we must continue to celebrate the victories won for our liberation; we must dedicate ourselves to rise together whilst we ensure that we defend our liberty and unity. In the words of the Kwame Nkrumah: “We face neither east nor west. We face forward.”

Hon Members, whilst we celebrate and deepen the liberation of our fellow African states we cannot for one moment forget about the rest of the world. Our own sovereignty is strengthened by our ability to influence the world’s outlook on humanities

development in economic terms and the advance of human rights. South Africa in itself is a great testament to the world that if you ignore the human rights of certain groupings or humans in your society, in the long run, you cripple the economic growth of the country. This is one obvious lesson that apartheid thought the world.

Perhaps, our greatest diplomat, liberation stalwart and former President of the ANC Oliver Reginald Tambo coined it best when he said, “We who are free to eat and sleep at will, to write, to speak, to travel as please, we who are free to make or break a revolution, let us use our comparative freedom not perpetuate the misery of those who suffer, nor to give indirect aid to the enemy they fight by withholding our own contribution.”

Hon Chairperson, indeed we cannot stand aside and watch whilst our sisters and brothers in Western Sahara continue to be deprived of statehood and complete independence. We must take tangible and decisive steps to ensure that after this 6" Administration we speak of a liberated Western Sahara.

Hon Members, we may think that we no longer live in an era of colonization and imperialism but recent events in Venezuela and Libya to some extent show us a completely different picture. It is no coincidence that Oil rich countries experience similar levels of unrest and disenfranchisement albeit at different times. We cannot be at ease whilst history repeats itself in any part of the world. For the simple reason that when a regime is changed outside of the country's own violation almost always results in a human rights crisis.

We cannot ignore the plight of Libyans today, especially because it was not of their own doing. The crude colonization, of that country has had a profound effect on how the worlds take on immigration, especially in Europe, we now live in an era where thousands of migrants die whilst fleeing states which used be to functional before. If we do not take decisive steps against the resurgence of an imperialist agenda, we run this risks of seeing a relatively progressive human rights agenda deteriorating.

There are few countries in the world who have resisted the cajoles of capitalism and imperialism like Cuba. For ﬁfty years

the people have suffered as a result of an unjust economic, commercial and ﬁnancial blockade by the U.S.A, this has been a major hindrance to Cuba's development.

Despite this the Cuban nation has maintained its independence and sovereignty in the face of the vicious imperialist- orchestrated campaign to destroy the impressive gains made by the Cuban revolution. We must continue to assist the Cubans to be the masters of their destiny.

In many ways the internationalist character of the Cubans has aided many revolutions on the continent; it is this internationalist’s character that we should continue to embody in our approach to peace and security in the world.

Hon Minister, as the African National Congress, we have been unanimous on the plight of the Palestine people. In the Palestinian people we see ourselves. We see the rightful owners of the land being oppressed, killed and degraded as human beings. It is an inescapable sense of déjavu. It is for this reason at the 54th National Conference the African National

Congress came to the conclusion that boycotting Israel is a justiﬁed as boycotting Apartheid. We cannot speak in moderation in matters of manifest injustice.

As former President Mandela put it, “The temptation in our situation is to speak in muffled tones about an issue such as the rights of the people of Palestine... we can easily be enticed to read reconciliation and fairness as meaning parity between justice and injustice. Having reached our freedom, we can fall into the trap of washing our hands of the difficulties that others face... yet we would be less human if we did so.”

The implementation of all Nasrec resolutions in so far as this question is concerned, is undoubtedly framed around this logic. The Gaza strip has become war zone, a sight of injustice and the deﬁnition of human rights violation. To this end we look forward to a concise plan on the full implementation, of Israel's downgrading. And if need be we must be willing to go the route of economic embargos against Israel.

Hon Chairperson, As I conclude, with a profound but simple quote by Che Guevara, “Words that do not match deeds are unimportant.”

In other words house Chair the efficacy of Better Africa, Better World Approach will not be judged by what we say but rather by what we do.

International Solidarity is meaningless without any real tangible actions. I have no doubt that this budget vote supports an action-based plan. As the ANC, we support budget vote 6. I wish to thank the officials of Parliament, the department of International Relations and Co-operations and the members of the portfolio for assisting us have a robust debate in all the issues that we have taken as a collective.

Thank you very much Chairperson.

Mr D BERGMAN: Thank you. Hon Members, the time has come to ask ourselves some tough questions. Are we the masters of our destiny or are we doomed to repeat the same mistakes as the dark past that we came from? Have you ever asked you about the value we are getting as a country from our BRICS membership? Has South

Africa not been reduced to playing second fiddle to countries such as China and Russia? South Africa is trying so hard to move away from its colonial past, would it not be fatal for the country to land in the same trap as before?

The problem is that we send off mixed signals, to the extent that there is communication discord between the Department of International Relations and Cooperation, DIRCO, and the Executive. South Africa has come out of a devastating Zuma administration, which our current President rightfully described as wasted years. We watched in dismay as international fugitives wanted by the International Criminal Court, such as the Sudan's deposed dictator, Omar al-Bashir, were assisted by organs of state to exit the country in violation of our international obligations.

We witnessed the assault of a South African citizen on our soil, but the state bent over backwards to protect the perpetrator instead of the victim. We were constantly bombarded with reports about allegations of smuggling by our diplomatic staff. Hon members, we cannot allow this assault on our image as a country

to continue. Our inconsistency in defending human rights abroad is unacceptable. We only seem to raise our voice on human rights abuse when the offending country is not one of our so-called ‘friends’.

We enter the UN Security Council with a string of illogical voting patterns that seem to be more about an appeasement to our allies than a ﬁrm stand for a cause. Hope Hon Minister, I appeal through the Chair, to you to allow DIRCO to do its job without undue interference from other arms of government. Oftentimes, DIRCO has been called upon time and again to clean up the mess caused by politicians. It is time that the DIRCO committee is given space to conduct its oversight role unhindered on all the Department's functions. What South Africa needs is a predictable and logical international engagement framework that will guide our diplomatic personnel on what is expected of them.

Diplomatic staff must know that there are consequences for deviating from the set code of conduct. Members of the executive must be made to understand that message discipline is a key requirement to successful engagement with our international

partners. The era of burdening DIRCO staff with cleaning up the mess caused by motor mouths in the Executive should be a thing of the past. Just as we need stability in the country, we also need stability in our interaction with our international partners and allies.

A DA government would review all current missions with a view to measure their contribution to South Africa's development, whether in increasing bilateral trade or increasing tourism receipts to our shores. Any mission that does not measure up will either be closed or downgraded. South Africa's interests, and not political considerations, will inform our approach to diplomatic engagements with the rest of the world. We must be careful that when we shout for downgrades, that those very same actions that we call for, do not cause own-goals in our own country in terms of loss of jobs, loss of trade and loss of technology and enhancements.

Our role in the AU will be to facilitate the deepening of democratic practice, consolidation of the recently signed inter- Africa free trade agreement, infrastructure development and

value addition of our natural resources. Gone should be the days where we have to mine a resource, send it abroad for manufacturing and then buy that very resource back from another country.

We will be unwavering in our condemnation of human rights abuses, wherever they may be. Even as we try to live in the letter and spirit of our Bill of Rights, at home, we should fight for the same privilege for oppressed people around the world and not just in three countries as was mentioned by the Minister. Our approach to ongoing raging conflicts across the world should be guided by a firm commitment to justice and the defense of human rights.

We should leverage on our internationally acknowledged conflict resolution reputation to advocate for peace and protection of vulnerable people. It is time that South Africa occupies its rightful role as a beacon of hope for the oppressed.

Hon members, a back to basic approach in our engagement with international partners will bring us back on track to fulfill

the vision set by our democracy's greatest statesmen, the late Nelson Mandela. Let us take a deliberate decision today to refocus the role of DIRCO and ensure that it prioritises key drivers of change in South Africa, namely, trade and investment.

Hon Minister, the ball is in your court to ensure that DIRCO becomes a key driver of change both locally and internationally. It is up to you to position South Africa as a key global player and a country that is ready and open for business. I thank you.

Mrs T P MSANE: Thank you, Chairperson. On behalf of the Economic Freedom Fighters, l would like to take this opportunity to pass our condolences to the family of the late Mam’Nomhle Nkonyeni, who passed away early yesterday morning. Mam’Nkonyeni had a distinguished career spanning close to 60 years and inspired generations of South African actors to aspire for more. May her beautiful soul rest in peace and rise in eternal glory!

Minister Pandor, as a distinguished freedom fighter yourself, you need no one to lecture you about the critical role played by the international community, particularly our siblings in the

African continent, in the Caribbean, our comrades in Latin America, Europe and the Middle East, in the struggle for the liberation of this country. This history ought to underscore the premise of our international relations policy, which must be underpinned by the experience of the international anti- apartheid movement, which was the largest human rights campaign in the world. Where people all over the world responded to the oppression of the people of this country, and committed themselves to our liberation.

They never needed to come here, but they mobilised themselves and held their governments accountable for the diplomatic and economic ties they had with the murderous apartheid regime.

Today these historical lessons, should constantly poke our conscience and international relations approach We must ask ourselves if we have remained true to the values that are underpinned our liberation struggle and if we have not betrayed the hopes of millions who sacrificed their own Tanzania, Nigeria Cuba and Angola.

Today, we live in a global community where imperialism is raising its ugly head again through economic manipulation of less developed countries. The US trade embargo on Cuba, the shameless attempt to remove Nicolus Maduro in Venezuela, the constant undermining of the rights of the people of Haiti to choose their leaders, the deliberate destruction of Iraq and éyzhaf the unforgivable assassination of Colonel Gaddafi, the destabilisation of the Congo; all these and more, tell us that the forces of imperialism will never rest until they have sucked the last drops of blood from developing countries.

It is for this reason that we need our international relations approach to be embedded on the principle of Pan-Africanism and progressive internationalism. We must be driven by solidarity with the oppressed and the exploited in the world. We must understand that we will never be completely free until there is democracy and peace in the Congo, until the people of Libya and me Sudan have full control of their natural resources, until the people of Palestine are free from the oppression of apartheid Israel.

Above all Minister, we must be unapologetic about the Pan African nature of our international relations approach. We have unfortunately lost our moral and strategic voice in the continent, and are therefore unable to provide leadership for the regeneration of Africa. As we take over our non-permanent seat at the UN Security Council, we must agitate for tangible reforms of the Security Council, and remove the veto powers of the five permanent members of the Security Council.

The world is far bigger and more complex than the 5 countries which have the power to veto any decisions taken by the UN. To foster Pan African development, we must recommit ourselves to the Abuja Treaty, which will remain the only radical plan for African integration and development, with clear, tangible goals for integrating Africa’s development, to ensure that Africa benefits from its wealth and its natural resources, and that there is a deeper entrenchment of freedoms across the continent.

To attain this vision, we must strengthen the Pan African parliament, and give it real and exclusive authority to legislate on the elimination of intra-African trade barriers. We

must applaud the bringing into force of African Continental Free Trade Area, which seeks to eliminate trade barriers between African countries. We must however emphasize, that the trade and movement of goods within Africa, must be for African produced goods.

This must emphasize the local production and beneficiation of goods in Africa. African mineral resources must be processed in Africa, to create jobs in Africa. In the midst of all this, President Ramaphosa had nothing about the Pan-African development; he did not even mention anything about Africa in his State of the Nation Address.

The continent looks up to South Africa, because of our relatively advanced capitalist economy, even while the economy serves minorities, with the rest of the people languishing in poverty.

In conclusion, we need to work towards the African isolation of Botswana, which has been home to an imperialist military base, and fight for progressive internal reforms within Botswana which

should involve the people of Botswana. Fight for democratic political reforms in eSwatini, including the political and economic isolation of the Monarchy, until there are meaningful political changes and tolerance in the country. Protect Zimbabwe from imperialist threats and sanctions; ensuring that Zimbabwe is self-sustainable, and that the land remains in the hands of Zimbabweans Hon Minister, we reject your budget

Mr M HLENGWA: Hon Chairperson, and hon member at the outset the IFP which to welcome hon Minister Naledi Pandor and her team to DIRCO and we which here well as she carries our hope dreams and aspiration to the world as Tshwane top diplomat.

Hon Minister, I was happy when you spoke about world bullies and world bulling. On Saturday I had the privilege of attending the birthday celebration of His Holiness Dalai Lama in Pretoria which was hosted by his office here in South Africa. The shirt I’m wearing was given to me then as a reminder that we as South Africa the land of the free should be refuge of those who are world oppressed.

So, hon Minister, we must reflect therefore on the decisions we took not to grant Dalai Lama a visa, is a reminder that we should never walk away from human right. [Applause.].

As we speak about Western Sahara which I support you fully Minister; and on the issues of Palestine and Israel insuring lasting solution – the two states solutions we agree with you Minister.

Equally Minister, we must speak about the big bullies China, and it is one China policy and what is doing in wrecking havoc for the people of Tibet in Taiwan, who themselves also want their freedom and democracy and universal suffrage. So, if India was able to stand up and give home to the Dalai Lama, we too as South Africa must be able to trade with China without negating our human rights outlook.

Minister, you speak about Sudan, and whilst we are happy at the developments, the fundamental question becomes where was South Africa when we allowed Omar al Bashir to escape South Africa. We chose not to stand with the people then, and as we choose the

people now, let us not make the mistake of walking away again from human rights. That was the irony of course of what the Minister said.

Hon Minister, we fully understand that yours is not an easy task, given the current political and socioeconomic climate that South Africa finds itself in. We all agree that foreign investment is critical for growth, productivity and competitiveness.

This country remains weak in terms of its integration into global trade systems and value chains, and this reduces the critical access that is required for our domestic enterprises to access foreign markets. It additionally makes imports which include tech-intensive capital goods more expensive.

Chairperson, foreign direct investment is weary of South Africa and in all fairness why shouldn't they be? The land question has not been resolved, infrastructure and public service is poor, bureaucracy is high, corruption is rife, and policies and regulations change on an almost daily basis. There is no

certainty, and this will in no way shape or form inspire foreign investment. One must only look at the volatility of the rand to the effects of policy uncertainty.

International migration although necessary to attract international skills is difficult, and you would only have to walk across the road from this very chamber to our IFP offices and many Home Affairs offices and DIRCO offices in South Africa to see the number of problems with visa applications we are trying to assist with in respect of applications being made at our embassies abroad that are now either lost or languishing in the ’system’ or being denied in error. The interphase between this ministry of DIRCO and the Home Affairs must be thoroughly scrutinized and its problems identified and the entire process reengineered. Fast, accurate and efficient must be the mandate in this respect and in all respects if we wish to be competitive and attractive to foreign markets and individuals.

Additionally, to our credit and for the third time in 12 years, we have been elected as a non-permanent member of the UN Security council for 2019/2020. In this regard the reforms of

the United Nation Security Council hon Minister, must not be negotiable. These must be celebrated but further we must build upon and strengthened them for South Africa benefit the region and the continent and all the multilateral forums which South Africa is a part of.

In conclusion, we must also prioritise climate change and mitigate, adapt and develop resilience to same and we must stand against human rights abuses wherever they may occur in the world without cheery-picking. South Africa must be a leading light not only on the continent but also upon the global stage in respect of the advancement of human rights and the condemnation of abuse thereof.

Hon Minister, the IFP will support your Budget Vote. In conclusion let me say, we speak of budget cut let us also reduce the high number of foreign mission and the process of rationalisation in that respect must be fast tracked. I thank you.

Dr C P MULDER: Hon Chairperson, today is indeed a good day since the FFP yesterday won a ward from the DA with a huge majority.

The FFP won that ward with more vote than all the other parties combined and that indicate swing towards the FFP continues.

Being that as it may, no, it was not.

Hon Minister, allow me to congratulate you on your appointment. You are also a veteran since 1994, and we all know that at the moment there is term used when refer to President Ramaphosa when people talk about Ramaphoria, I would like to suggest that we also look at the term when it comes to our International Relation Department and maybe we speak about Pandorphoria, and what I mean with that is, I think we have a chance, we have got a window; we can continue as we have done in the past couple of years in Parliament or we can turn a new leaf in this department, and I would like to appeal to you to consider that. When Ramaphosa our President refers to nine wasted years, no doubt it must have huge impact on our international image as well. The challenge hon Minister, in front you and the department and I think is a very important challenge is to restore South Africa graphitise and our image in the world in

terms of foreign relations because I have no doubt that the last nine years did have a strong impact on our image internationally, that what a mean. Now hon Minister, you also refer to your speech to the theme for our seat when we occupy the chair of the African Union when you say continuing the legacy working for the just and peaceful world and I understand that.

And I have had in your speech today your twice refer to the Palestinian question and some of the other colleagues as well.

But I did not hear you say that the government is still committed to a two states solution and that you are also committed to respect the self-determination of the people of Israel as well as the right to security, and I think that is very important and I think we should say that and I would like to here that from you.

Hon Minister you said basically when you address the personnel of the Department of Foreign Affairs recently in June you said

you believe in values and ethics, you hate corruption as well as those who abuse other and I understand and support that.

My problem is in South Africa we have become a country without consequences and I want to refer you to two instances, I have to do that. I refer you to the utterance by our ambassador in Demark we all know happened there when hon Ambassador Zinzi Mandela Hlongwane when she basically said – and I’m quoting in Afrikaans, she said ...

*Afrikaans*:

Wit Suid-Afrikaners is gronddiewe wat soos ongenooide gaste weier om te loop.

Verder het sy aangegaan om wit Suid-Afrikaners uit te kryt as verkragters, afstammelinge van Van Riebeeck.

*English:*

You reprimanded her and I congratulate you on that. However, since then, she continued, she once again went ahead with further tweets that are extremely offensive to South African

citizens and I really implore you that we cannot act that way. Since then, her appointment has now been extended to the end of the year. Now I understand that is the decision need to be taken in terms of all our ambassadors where there is a change in that regard. But with all due respect I think this a case where we could have done differently and we should act.

The second one deal with our ambassador to Netherland, our ambassador Mr Koloane, we all know the facts, everything in terms of reality points to his involvement in the landing of Waterkloof Air Force Base when the Gupta family came here with the little wedding excursion. What happened to him, he was suspended for two months and then he was promoted and appointed to be an ambassador to Netherland. Currently he is in front of the ZondO Commission but clearly Madam Minster, this is not the situation that we can tolerate and I will implore you to take steps in that regard.

With the few minutes remain, remember, couple of members have mention that already, it is nice to have, there is a difference between nice to have and what we can afford. It’s good to have

our representation at across the globe and I understand that. But I’m afraid because of economy reality and in terms of priorities we simply cannot continue in that vein. I know that you will address those issues with the systems of the department as well as the systems of the Treasury, but in the interest of South Africa I implore you to look to that as soon as possible. I thank you very much.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND COOPERATION

(Mr A Botes): Hon Chairperson, our Minister, Dr Pandor, other Ministers and Deputy Ministers present, our portfolio committee chairperson and hon members of the House, our Director General, your excellencies, ambassadors, high commissioners, members of the diplomatic corps and representatives of the international organisations, leaders and members of civil society, distinguished guests, comrades and friends, we are proud of our past and confident about the future. We are proud of our freedom fighters, who did not flinch, who did not submit, and who prosecuted our freedom struggle for a just South Africa and a noble world order.

Today we salute the Rivonia Triaiists, Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Govan Mbeki, Raymond Mhlaba, Ahmed Kathrada, Lionel Bernstein, Bob Heppie, Arthur Goidreich, Andrew Mlangeni, James Kantor, Dennis Goldberg, Harold Woipe and Elias Motsoaledi, some of whom were arrested on this exact day 56 years ago, in 1963.

The Rivonia Triaiists made a choice to fight for the achievement of the provisions of the Freedom Charter, which contains a clause stating that, “There shall be peace and friendship”. The Freedom Charter argued that South Africa shall be a fully independent state which respects the rights and sovereignty of nations ...

Mr T M LANGA: Chairperson, on a point of order.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G Boroto): On what point of order are you rising, hon member?

Mr T M LANGA: Chairperson, yesterday we requested that other official languages be covered as well but we only seem to find English.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G Boroto): Is it so?

Mr T M LANGA: Yes.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G Boroto): Okay, let me request that they work on it. They will do that, and I am sorry for that but I think it will be rectified. Continue hon Botes.

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND CO-OPERATION

(Mr A Botes): Chairperson, the Freedom Charter argued that South Africa shall be a fully independent state which respects the rights and sovereignty of nations; shall strive to maintain world peace and the settlement of international disputes by negotiation and not war; and that peace and friendship amongst all people shall be secured by upholding the equal rights, opportunities and status of all.

Our constitution as well as Chapter 7 of the National Development Plan, envision an activist, developmental state, with an over-arching foreign policy architecture premised on Pan

Africanism; progressive internationalism and human solidarity with in particular the countries of the South.

A Human Rights centred foreign policy with due regard and respect for international law; multilateralism and an international rules based order to resolve conflict peacefully; and economic diplomacy. The Department of International Relations and Co-operation’s mission is to promote South Africa’s national interest and values and the African Renaissance, and to create a better world for all.

Our national interest is to eradicate poverty, to confront joblessness and to reduce inequality. Our value proposition is to construct a better African and a noble world – a new world order. When we pause to reflect on what needs to be done, we recall Nelson Mandela who inspired us, and I quote, “We owe it to all the peoples of the continent to ensure that they see in us, not merely good leaders waxing lyrical about development, but as the front commanders in the blast furnaces of productive investments and visible change”.

African unity and international solidarity is integral if we wish to accelerate our economic diplomacy. Moreover, Patrice Lumumba was unambiguous in asserting that African unity and international solidarity are no longer dreams. They must be expressed in decisions. Our concrete expression, as it relates to of south-to-south solidarity, is through the African Renaissance Fund, whereby we committed more than R770 million for projects that are currently under implementation from previous financial years.

These projects include, amongst others, humanitarian aid, conflict resolution, peace keeping, post-reconstruction and development projects. Countries that have benefited included Namibia for drought relief, emergency food assistance to the Kingdom of Swaziland and emergency humanitarian assistance for the Saharawi refugees.

Furthermore, we have supported peace keeping missions, conflict- mediation, promotion of democracy and good governance in both the Kingdom of Lesotho and Madagascar. The establishment of the African Ombudsman Research Institute and South Africa’s

participation in the African electoral observer missions of Zimbabwe, Swaziland, DRC, Mauritius, Madagascar and Comoros were also supported.

In 2019-20 financial year, the African Renaissance Fund has committed a further R138 million to new projects. The new projects commitments include, amongst others, humanitarian, specifically disaster, assistance to Zimbabwe to the worth of R5million and Mozambique; deployment of a border boundary expert and humanitarian aid to South Sudan to the tune of approximately R115 million and the African Women in Dialogue leadership programme which brings to together 100 women leaders from across the African continent.

We will continue to support electoral observer missions in the forthcoming elections across the continent and strengthen electoral training support and democratic institutions as it relates to good governance.

We draw inspiration from Che Guevara when he defined what a revolutionary and a comrade is, and I quote “If you tremble with

indignation every time that an injustice is committed in the world, then you are a comrade of mine”. To solidify our posture on progressive internationalism and revolutionary solidarity we approved, already in 2015, an amount of R350 million as a means of economic assistance package to the people of Cuba.

We will continue to strengthen our bilateral and multilateral co-operation with Cuba which includes, amongst others, skill transfer, development assistance and trade. We will continue to increase our trade with the regional economic organisations. We

remain steadfast in our call to end the unjust economic blockade by the USA against the people of Cuba.

We remain concerned about the humanitarian crisis in Venezuela. We call for a peaceful solution to the crisis and that development assistance provided must be through internationally recognised humanitarian organisations. As a country we will continue to ensure that the African continent and the Global South remain on the agenda of BRICS, India, Brazil and South Africa, IBSA, and the Indian Ocean Rim Association. Our national

interests and the interests of the Global South remain the driving force behind our membership in these noble formations.

Hon Chairperson, through our bilateral, regional and multilateral relations we will work with our European counterparts to address mutual geopolitical global challenges. This includes the rise of extremism; terrorism; rightwing populism; narrow nationalism; neo-fascism; xenophobia; racism; anti-Semitism and migration.

We believe that these challenges are not unique to Europe and are instead the effects of the failure of neoliberal internationalism that has taken root over the past three decades globally. We will therefore commit ourselves to work and build an alliance with like-minded countries in the north to push back the threat to multilateralism; climate change denialism and political interference in the sovereignty of countries.

There are more than 2000 companies from America and Europe operating in South Africa. Many countries in the Americas and Europe allocate significant funding to technical exchanges,

collaboration in the fields of science and technology and other vocational training. It therefore holds that there is significant potential and interest in collaboration and probable collaboration on the Fourth Industrial Revolution programmes.

Whilst we believe that our future economic growth opportunities are in the South, currently, as the Minister indicated earlier, the EU countries collectively remains our largest trading partner. Therefore, we require equal commitment to both the north and south to advance the economic diplomacy of South Africa.

South Africa will continue to engage with North America, as an important region for trade, investment, tourism, technological transfer, health and education cooperation, in pursuit of our national priorities.

Hon Chairperson, the United States of America is the most significant economic partner with R76,7 billion in South African exports to the United States in 2018, with R73,1 billion in

imports, supplemented by investments worth R129 billion in South Africa.

There will also be continued focus to work with partner departments and our friends and partners in the USA on removing the impediments to South Africa’s value added exports to the United States under the African Growth and Opportunity Act. The attraction of higher level of foreign direct investment, FDI, from the United States will be a key focus to secure increased support for the President’s investment drive, including for the follow-up investment conference to be held in November 2019.

Aligned with the national objectives identified by President Ramaphosa in his state of the nation address, South Africa will receive in excess of US$ 915 million in development co-operation from the United States in 2019.

In the area of health, that will further be complimented by a funding allocation from the USA to an amount of US$730 million that will support antiretroviral treatment.

Hon Chairperson, to illustrate the strategic and significant role our missions play in the reconstruction and development of our country, I wish to site work of one of our missions in Germany. Our economic diplomacy has resulted in the increased of South African exports from R125 million in 2017 to R133 million in 2018, translating to 11% increment. We further increased our export orders for beverages, fine food and meat to R893 million and R372 million in orders for fruit and vegetables in 2018.

In the automotive industry, Germany, through BMW, Mercedes Benz SA and VW SA, has been able to increase human capital development to enable South Africa to produce high quality vehicles, parts and accessories to the same standard of Germany. Importantly, we are now part of the global manufacturing supply chain which makes South Africa an exporter of high quality products.

I wish to thank our dedicated ambassador, Stone Sizani, for his excellent work in this regard. Our appreciation is extended to all heads of missions and staff for their commitment and devotion to promote our country abroad.

President Ramaphosa has been unequivocal that, I quote: “The current generation of youth has therefore chosen as its mission the attainment of economic freedom”. We should, therefore, maximise our resources in the Department of International Relations and C-operation to break the intergenerational poverty and maximise the democratic youth dividend.

In this regard, we wish to commit DIRCO to expose our young people to the diplomatic world, and we will announce a pragmatic programme in this regard on United Nations’ International Day of the Youth to be convened on 12 August 2019. We will, equally so, continue to provide consular services to our vulnerable youth who, because of their socioeconomic conditions, became exploited by drug traffickers and ended up in foreign prisons particularly the girl child. We will do this in line with the Vienna Convention.

Ladies and gentlemen, as I conclude, the President of the Republic of South Africa detailed his better vision for South Africa, Africa and the world, and was inspired by Dr Mae Jemison, first African-American female astronaut, who inscribed

that we should never be limited by other people’s limited imaginations and that we should continue to dream and re-imagine a world free from poverty ... [Time expired.] [Applause.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G Boroto): Before I call on Reverend Meshoe ...

*IsiNdebele:*

... mhlonitjhwa Langa, ukutologwa kwamalimi kukhona. Amalimi wesiNguni akhona; isiZulu sisenomborweni yesihlanu. Emalimini weSesotho kuneSepedi kunomboro yekhomba.

*English:*

I think you are now okay. Thank you.

Rev K R J MESHOE: House Chairperson and hon members. The ACDP would like to congratulate hon Dr Naledi Pandor on her appointment to head this very important Department of International Relations and Co-operation, DIRCO.

I also want to give credit to my former colleague, Ms Cheryllyn Dudley, who did a sterling job while she served on his committee for many years. In one of her many speeches she said, and I want to quote her:

The ACDP will support all government efforts to promote peace and sustainable development within South Africa, regionally and globally.

This position will not change in the ACDP as we are committed to peace, reconciliation and nation building.

The ACDP is aware that pressure is constantly put on South Africa to take sides in many conflicts. We would like to encourage government to, despite the pressure, remain committed to meaningful and positive engagement with all stakeholders, particularly when dealing with Middle East conflicts. Government should attempt to not only remain impartial at all times, but also aim to convince those in conflicts that peaceful negotiations are the only way to restore peace, reconciliation

and stability in their land, and we hope that they will ultimately bring them prosperity too.

Our peacekeeping forces have to date, managed to remain impartial in the missions they have undertaken on the continent and for that we are grateful. The ACDP would like to see government maintaining the same position of impartiality wherever South Africa is involved in mediation everywhere in the world, including in the Middle East.

Obviously, a number of things have been said about the conflict between Israel and Palestine; that also deserves a comment from the ACDP. South Africa, Chairperson, has the opportunity to negotiate peaceful co-existence between Israel and Palestine.

But attitudes have to change and South Africa must prove itself to be a credible and impartial mediator.

If government is truly committed to peaceful co-existence, then they should be heard condemning Iran, Hamas, the Palestinian Authority and all other Israel haters who are calling for the destruction of the state of Israel. Otherwise all the noise that

is being made about world peace is hypocrisy. Nobody or no country in the world should have the right to try to annihilate another nation. That should be totally unacceptable.

The mandate of the Department of International Relations and Co- operation is, among other things, to coordinate and align South Africa’s policy abroad and monitor developments in the international arena. It is also to contribute to the creation of an enabling international environment for South Africa to do trade abroad. Furthermore [Time expired.]

Ms B SWARTS: Hon House Chairperson, hon Minister of the Department of International Relations and Co-operation, Minister Dr Naledi Pandor, all Ministers and Deputy Ministers, hon Chairperson of the committee, hon Mahambehlala, hon members, esteemed Guests, ladies and gentlemen and fellow South Africans.

It is indeed a special pleasure and honour for me to address this house on the occasion of DIRCO Budget Vote.

It is befitting that this debate is taking place in the month of July when we pay homage to an illustrious world icon, the founding father of South African democracy, President Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela who laid a firm and solid foundation for human rights and active involvement in multilateral processes.

For us as the ANC this month is made even more sacrosanct and firmly rooted in our hearts because it is also the month when we commemorate the inspiring life and death of the 9th President of the ANC, iNkosi Albert Luthuli.

These two great icons of our people have left us all of us with important lessons of how to serve our people, of the need to put the interests of our people before our own personal interests; to be prepared to sacrifice for the greater good and to refuse to sink into the cesspool of greed, of lust for power and the betrayal of the noble ideals and traditions that many heroes and heroines of our protracted struggle, such as Inkosi Bambatha, Pixley ka Isaka Seme, John Langalibalele Dube, Mahatma Gandhi, Charlotte Maxeke and others had bequeathed to him and to us.

Hon Chair, the late former Secretary-General of the United Nations Kofi Annan asserted in his book titled Interventions: A Life in War and Peace:

What do we stand for as a global community? What are the responsibilities for our common fate in a world that is simultaneously coming together and coming apart-and how do we exercise those responsibilities? How do we strike the balances between growth and development, equality and opportunity, human rights and human security?

The ANC as a government has over time used progressive internationalism including commitment to multilateralism, peaceful resolutions of conflicts, human rights, social justice and the reform of global political and economic order as prism of its role in international affairs. It has been guided by the need to link the national interest to the achievement of a better Africa and a better world as envisaged by the forbearers of our liberation struggle.

These developmental imperatives are in line with the objectives of our chapter 7 of our lodestar visionary document, National Development Plan, NDP.

Hon Chair, South Africa is required to understand the current balance of forces in so far as global realignment is concerned. This is a moment that we must never take for granted in relation to the constant changes that continue to straddle domestic, regional and global domains.

I am stressing the global realignment in the context of the current situation as it relates to referendum developments regarding the UK exit from the European Union and the Africa’s intensions and conflicts which continue to be on the rise.

We must deepen our collective understanding about the associated implications of such developments. This highly dynamic and complex environment that must be closely monitored, if we are to meet the goals of Agenda 2063 and the implementation of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development programme.

It remains in our interest to continue to work with the partners such as the European Union and countries of North America to ensure the continued consolidation of the relationship with South Africa’s bilateral. These regional partners in America and Europe will promote partnerships with international priorities such as infrastructure, information and communication and technology industrialisation and water and sanitation.

The NDP acknowledges that only about 10 percent of African Trade is within the continent, compared to about 40 percent in North America and about 60percent in Western Europe.

Hon Chair, it is our firm belief as a portfolio committee that South Africa as an emerging economy continue to grapple with a large majority of Africa’s role in the European Union, EU, in its populace that lives in poverty. It is against this backdrop that South Africa’s role in the EU as the largest trading partner in Africa, should be able to utilise the strategic partnership in promoting trade, investment, tourism, technology transfer, education and health cooperation for the realisation of our national objectives.

We are looking forward to the impact of the investment drives that our President is driving with the special envoy team to attract more foreign direct investment to the county. This will go a long way in growing our economy and in turn create jobs particularly for young people.

We must be aggressive and radical in promoting South Africa’s brand in the interest of attracting more investors to the country. We are hopeful that the next round of the President’s investment drive for the conference in November 2019 as already announced is a welcomed boost already to the country’s economy.

Hon Chair, let me hasten to congratulate South Africa for being afforded an opportunity of a seat in the United Nations Security Council for the period 2019 to 2020. We further welcome the expression of confidence by our counterpart in the AU who have elected us as the 2020 AU incoming Chair.

It is our hope that these seats will help us as a country to advance and drive the vision enshrined in our National Development Plan which posits that South Africa seeks to build

strategic partnership for development in order to realise our national priorities including contributing to peace and prosperity across the continent.

We welcome the call by the Minister to all the missions abroad, in particular our mission in the US should indeed work around the clock in removing all the impediments to South Africa’s value added exports under the African Growth and Opportunity Act, AGOA.

Hon Chair, it is worth reminding ourselves that South Africa is a signatory to many international conventions and global partnerships which are not limited to the UN Charter but inclusive of sustainable development goals. These conventions enjoin us to work through sustained efforts to promote strategic relations with countries of the North among others. These conventions and partnerships represent a moment of ushering a new dawn wherein our country can respond to the problem statement of South Africa and reposition herself once again to reclaim space in the global arena.

In conclusion, we are looking forward to the conclusion of the Medium Term Strategic Framework 2014-2019 that will form the basis of the 2015-2020 Revised Strategic Plan. The African Union, AU, Master of Roadmap on Practical Steps on Silencing the Guns in Africa by the year 2020.

African Union Agenda 2063 as well as the blue print for sustainable development goals, UN Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development and global partnerships with strategic formations and countries of the north are essential vehicles in driving our international relations political agenda for this term of office.

This will position South Africa in the World as asserted in the opening statement of the Chapter 7 of the NDP.

We are Africans. We are an African country. We are part of our multi-national region. We are an essential part of our continent. Being Africans, we are acutely aware of the wider world, deeply implicated in our past and present.

God Bless Africa, God Bless South Africa. The ANC supports this Budget Vote. I thank you, hon House Chair.

Mr A M SHAIK EMAM: Hon House Chairperson, the NFP welcomes the report of the Department of the International Relations and Co- operation.

Hon Minister, allow me to congratulate you on your appointment as Minister and I am quite certain that this department is now in very good hands.

Minister, let me start off by talking about our participation in some of the international structures and one structure is Southern African Development Community, SADC, Parliamentary Forum. Now, SADC has two sides to it, one is the heads of States and SADC Parliamentary Forum. And I think it’s one of the matters that you need to look at whether it is really serving the intended purpose that is ... we spend a lot of money, we go there twice a year to the different parts of the region and we need to look at whether it’s really serving the interest of our

people particular in the country and in the region. So, I will leave that in your good hands Minister that you look at it.

I think the issue of the leasing of the premises has been going on for many, many years and the question that arose was should we rather be purchasing these properties since they are going to be for long-term rather than leasing them? But I think your department is dealing with that issue.

The issue of Palestine, now, Chair, I don’t know whether we read different dictionaries or what but when I look at the word impartial, it looks like some of us interpret it differently but I have an answer why we interpret it differently, there is only one reason and that one reason is money. So, if you get money for anything you sell your principles, you sell soul, you sell values, you sell everything. [Interjections.] So, you can’t be impartial that is clearly what it is.

Now, look at this one, you come there, you take over something that it is not yours, you violate the human rights of these people and you telling me I must be impartial, I don’t

understand this. So, to be honest with you, some of these people need to go back and search their souls but let me tell you where it comes from. Those who that were privileged during the days of oppression in South Africa and were part and parcel of the oppressors will never understand what the Palestinian people go through.

We as the NFP say anyone, anywhere in the world, must not be allowed to be oppressed.

I hear lot of words about China and yes indeed we must be mindful of China and what they can do. But why is it I don’t hear the same of the greatest monster on earth and that is the United State of America? [Applause.] Where there is no peace in the world because of the United States of America. Wherever there’s trouble it’s the United States, whether there’s diseases there’s United States, where there’s war there’s the United States, but nobody wants to say anything; and they talk about impartiality. Now, this is a sick joke as far as I am concerned. I think they need to have their heads read.

The NFP fully supports you Minister and your entire team and congratulates you on the work that you do. Thank you very much. [Applause.]

Mr D L MOELA: Hon Chairperson, Minister and Deputy Minister present here today, hon Members of Parliament, distinguished guests, ladies and gentleman. Sanibonani [Good day.]

It is my greatest honour to address this Sixth Parliament which is recently installed as our legislative authority in the year coinciding with the 25th anniversary of our constitutional democracy.

I would like to thank the ANC for affording me this opportunity to represent the people of our country in this important institution of our democracy. We thank the generations of young leaders and activists who came before us, who in their own sacrifices, paved a way for many of my generation to enjoy the freedom and opportunities that we have today.

This debate takes place in the month wherein we observe the Nelson Mandela Day, which is a ‘global call to action that celebrates the idea that each individual has the power to transform the world’. This is done in honour of the distinguished service by our founding father in the promotion of freedom, human rights, peace and democracy in the world.

We draw strength from his wise words when he said:

We cannot allow, for our common well-being, that the unilateral interests of single nations or groups of nations dictate international conduct and affairs.

These are the same values that have become the cornerstone of our foreign policy outlook, wherein we use our own historical experiences to promote a better Africa and the better world.

Hon house chairperson, I want to reflect on the Promoting Global Democracy to Transcend Unilateral Decision-making. It must be stated without any fear of contradiction that unilateralism is an outdated 20th century phenomenon. It also has no place in the

modern world wherein there is an existential urgency for all of us to promote multilateral governance, security and trade architecture. Be that as it may, what we can no longer be in doubt of is that multilateralism is under siege.

There is no rise in narrow nationalism, trade protectionism and a scant view of international institutions and rules. The unilateral withdrawal by the Trump Administration from the Paris Climate Change Agreement, at the time when the effects of global warming are so devastating to the developing world, underscores the crisis we are faced with.

The ongoing trade war between Washington and Beijing has serious implications for equitable global economic order. We have seen how sharing of technological innovations such as Huawei’s 5G technology, that will meet the demands of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, is stifled through arbitrary trade wars that militate against the World Trade Organisation, WTO, rules.

Europe as our major trading partner is dealing with its own challenges of Brexit.

The Iran nuclear deal is under threat with an escalating stand- off between all parties involved. As a consequence, the Middle East can explode further at any moment now.

These developments do little for the advancement of global democracy that is rooted on international solidarity. Instead, we see the rise of inward-looking populism, which seeks to elevate national sovereignty above all this.

In countries like Myanmar, Syria and Venezuela, we are faced with a complex political and security situation that requires global response. This requires of us to use available international and regional instruments to find lasting solutions for the benefit of the people of those countries, in particular and the world in general.

The end product of these developments is displacement of ordinary people, in the main who happen to be women and children. They find themselves caught in unresolved civil conflicts or trapped in humanitarian crisis due to disruption of life and necessary supplies for their livelihood. It is under

such conditions that the mass rape of women occur leading to the spread of diseases like HIV and AIDS.

Therefore, it should concern us that unilateralism in global decision-making is on the ascendant whilst global democracy is on the back foot.

It is an indictful reality that the post-Cold War international system, still has to reckon with pockets of unilateralism meant to benefit the “military-industrial complex" whereby, for example, defence budgets far outstrips national investments in healthcare, education, infrastructure upkeep, and elemental service delivery.

The tangible costs of none sticking to international democratic system, include, the undermining of the authority of international bodies such as the United Nations, WTO, the African Union and the European Union.

“In Larger Freedom”, Kofi Annan, the late UN Secretary-General, reminds us that:

Dealing with today’s threats requires broad, deep, and sustained global co-operation. Thus, the states of the world must create a collective security system to prevent terrorism, strengthen non-proliferation, and bring peace to war-torn areas, while also promoting human rights, democracy, and development.

It is in global co-operation that we will manage better trans- border migration. It is in global co-operation that we will defeat acts of terrorism. It is in global co-operation that we will prevent human trafficking by organized criminal gangs.

Indeed, it is in global co-operation that we will prevent international drug smuggling and illicit financial flows. It is in such co-operation that we will achieve more in placing African agenda at the centre of global deliberations and action.

The ongoing political and security challenges in Libya, Cameroon, Sudan and South Sudan are of great concern. We have long held a policy position that South Africa’s development and prosperity is inextricably linked to peace and development to the continent.

Our foreign policy posture and outlook should be alive to current realities. That is why we must not just celebrate being part of multilateral foray without a clear and tangible plan to advance our domestic and regional agenda.

Our commitment in contributing to a stable, peaceful and prosperous African Continent working with other nations within SADC and the African Union should be the basis of our agenda.

Mr M G P LEKOTA: Hon Chairperson, hon Minister, may I join those who have extended their congratulations on your appointment to your office. I want to comment on an issue that I think is very important. We as South Africa took a position when we graduated to democracy that with regard to the issue of the Middle East, we would not take sides, however we would be pro-peace. It is for that reason that our government under the leadership of President Mandela adopted a position that we must invite both Palestine and Israel to have missions here and to put own missions in the two countries.

The idea being that we wanted to convey to them that South Africans had said as South Africans without anybody from outside discussed the problems of their country and found a solution to that. We did so because we also recognise the fact that the two state solution of the Middle East was an initiative of both Israel and the Palestinians.

It may not have been perfect, but it was the product of the owners of the conflict. What was important for us was to join the international community to support a process that saved the lives of people on both sides, but that necessarily needed to be helped and guided towards a more complete and acceptable solution.

I would like to say to you Minister and your department, that South Africa must not be part of those who lose patience in the drive towards achieving the objectives both Arafat and his counterpart, identified for their people and laid the foundations for it.

We announcing it in the United Nations with both sides; the flag of Palestine and Israel are flying there. We have a duty to continue to prevail on both sides to return to the negotiations where they do not agree on issues, but they must find solutions in discussion and not spill more blood.

The countries of the world today understand that peace in any struggle, in any battle, killing people can go on and on, but in the end you can solve it if you go and sit down and negotiate.

Our leaders in this country when they took up the arm struggle; they made the point quite clear that we are not taking up arms because we want to kill whites or to spill blood or to do that, we are doing so to put pressure on the government to go to the negotiations with us. Thank you. [Time expired.]

Mr M G E HENDRICKS: Hon Chair, hon Dr, Minister and sister, when you were given the great honour to be our Minister of International Relations on the eve of commemorating President Mandela, we saw you realising his dream of a free South Africa which we all know he said will only happen when occupied Palestine is free.

Hon Minister now is not the time to talk about the two state solutions. We do not want a solution for Palestine; we call for freedom for the Palestinians. The same freedom South Africans enjoy today. One man, one vote!

We cannot thank the leadership of the international relations enough, for the position on the Palestinian struggle. It was the Palestinians who facilitated the huge arm shipment of weapons from Libya via Angola and then in a Russian truck and more trucks to South Africa where former Defence Minister, Modise, took delivery. We should send weapons to Palestine. The truck is still here.

It is disappointing that the African renaissance and the International Co-operation Fund budget has declined over the years. Does that help our President as Chair of the African Union, AU, to take further the dream of brother, Colonel Gaddafi, for a united Africa?

However, we still have former President Thabo Mbeki who will support him and we are waiting for the identification of a site

for a Pan-African Parliament which we hope will be within a stone’s throw from Parliament in District Six, the hub of the resistance in the 1960s. This was the dream of President Thabo Mbeki.

Judge Fikile Bam was arrested in District Six. The great African intellectual, Archie Mafadi spoke about the African Renaissance in District Six. So, Minister we are waiting for you to take the lead and take forward the African Renaissance.

Minister, we have to express our disappointment on your silence on the untimely death of the first democratically elected president of Egypt. We also want to suggest to you that you look into Pakistan for the nuclear energy to help us with our electricity crisis.

Our hopes lie in you, in negotiating a settlement between Morocco and the Western Sahara the ambassador which Aljamaah hosted recently because they are both close to our hearts. [Time expired.]

Mr M CHETTY: Greetings and salutations hon Chair, hon Ministers, hon Deputy Ministers, hon members, diplomatic corps present, our guests in the gallery and fellow South Africans, hon Minister, it will be a disservice to South Africans watching this debate, if I did not bring to light that some members have come to this podium having not attended the committee meetings or even read the Annual Performance Plan, APP, but express blinding support for this Budget Vote. That is an act of criminality to those constituencies that have sent them here. [Applause.]

I quote the late great Martin Luther King Jr, who said:

Life’s most persistent and urgent question is: What are you doing for others?

How apt hon Minister, is this quote when the reference to the Department of International Relations and Co-operation and its role on the African continent?

According to the Annual Performance Plan presented to the committee and Minister depending who you ask? The chief

financial officer, CFO, will tell you is R855 million, the director-general will tell you is R955 million and if you look at the APP it is R1,1 billion. You take your pick, Minister.

This allocation for Programme 5, international transfers which provides for South Africa’s membership to international organisations, such as the United Nations, African Union and SA Development Corporation.

A persistent source of discomfort during the Fifth Parliament was always that South Africa was not receiving value for money in return for these membership fees.

The amount contributed should surely ensure that we are at the forefront of setting the agenda, not merely sitting on the sidelines, as is currently the case. South Arica has always been the reluctant leader, even when our African compatriots view us as a beacon of hope for the continent.

But then again, one need not look far on why we struggle to own our place as a geopolitical leader.

Despite the international embarrassment that the Ambassador Zindzi Mandela brought to the country, President Cyril Ramaphosa still went ahead and extended her tenure.

Also, Minister, the shocking testimony at the Zondo Commission by yet another delinquent Ambassador, Bruce Koloane from the Netherlands, and his involvement in the irregular and illegal landing of the infamous Gupta plane at the Waterkloof Airforce Base, should warrant his immediate removal from office. [Applause.]

Frankly, Minister, we can do better in vetting ambassadors and diplomatic staff.

Hon Minister, you need to awaken from the dream that President Ramaphosa concocted during the state of the nation address and come to the realisation that the appointment of ambassadors need to move away from the current patronage model where political rejects are given a soft landing.

Government should be bold enough to appoint ambassadors from opposition parties who have played a role in the advancement of South Africa’s democracy. [Applause.]

Minister, this government’s foreign policy veers to the East, where we seem comfortable to be playing second fiddle to China and Russia, has not been met with the same zeal from our own citizens.

Students, who not of their own choice, but out of desperation, go to China to study medicine, suddenly find themselves with medical qualifications that cannot be practiced in their very own home of South Africa.

The Minister of Higher Education, Science and Technology, Blade Nzimande, made an unfulfilled executive promise to recognise these medical qualifications.

Minister, you have an opportunity to right this wrong by taking up the plight of South Africans who spend years in foreign universities studying, only to be rejected by their own country.

We simply cannot lose this vital human resource.

The department’s handling of the suspension and ongoing investigation of its CFO, leaves much to be desired. The lack of decisiveness has a direct bearing on how we effectively use the Department of International Relations and Co-operation for the South African brand and meet pour obligations internationally.

In as much as we seem to sing our own praises regarding the country’s international footprint, this does come with financial constrains. Serious consideration should be given to downsizing some diplomatic missions and merging functions such as tourism advocacy with consular services.

The need for cost-cutting measures has further been reinforced by the department’s own acknowledgement that there is widespread fruitless and wasteful expenditure across our missions and properties abroad.

Spending money on properties that are not being used is not only a waste of money, but is an insult to South Africans who are both homeless and destitute. [Applause.]

Hon Minister, the Fifth Parliament went by and the department failed to ensure that the Foreign Service Bill was approved. It is my sincere hope that you will play your role to facilitate the passing of this legislation during this Sixth Parliament.

One of the mandates of the Department of International Relations and Co-operation is to assist South African citizens abroad, yet on numerous occasions, most of them have often been left stranded due to red tape at our embassies. Thank you, Madam Chair. [Time expired.]

Mr T S MPANZA: Hon Chair, the hon Minister, the hon Deputy Ministers, the hon Chair of the Portfolio Committee hon members of the portfolio committee, hon members, ladies and gentlemen. Chair, I think for the record we must state that our portfolio committee yesterday adopted the report unanimously by all political parties with no objections.

I am going to focus on the issue of African Renaissance. Africa must take its rightful place in the global politics and development of the continent. There are a number of instruments that we can use to achieve this goal of Africa taking its rightful place in global politics and development. Fortunately, for us who are now in the sixth administration, our predecessors were visionary leaders who in their wisdom established an instrument called an African Renaissance International Cooperation Fund, ARF, to take the African agenda forward. The ARF Fund was established immediately after 1994. The democratic government took a deliberate decision to establish this fund to promote the development, assistance and to consolidate peace and reconstruction in Africa and elsewhere in the world. The fund was thus established in the year 2000 pursuant to act of Parliament, the African Renaissance International Cooperation Fund Act 51 of 2000. One of the objectives of the ARF is to promote democracy and good governance.

The ARF would continue to support the Southern African Development Community, SADC, election observer missions. Minister, the holding Minister of democratic elections is

considered critical socioeconomic development of the continent and the region. There are 10 countries that are due to go for elections in the 2019/20 year. Of these, five would from the SADC region, that is, Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia and South Africa. Of course South Africa has just had its own elections recently. The ANC-led government believes that building strong institutions would enable South Africa to entrench the culture of good governance as well as efficiency and responsiveness, which is an integral part of Africa’s renewal programme.

The ARF would continue to pursue its strategic objectives as outlined in the ARF Act 51 of 2000 with more emphasis on the provisions of loans and investment projects to fulfil these strategic objectives. The good story to tell about this RAF is that, the ARF granted its first loan to the government of Cuba, which is inline with the RAF future strategy of focussing on loans and infrastructure investment. This will aid in re- capitalising the ARF amid reduce allocations. Cuba is reported to have already and paid its loan in full. We therefore thank

and commend the Cuban government for honouring its commitment to this noble cause.

*IsiXhosa*:

I-ANC iyaqhuba, vumani booo!

AmaLungu ahloniphekileyo: Siyavumaaaa!

*English*:

The world continues to experience in natural disasters. The fund enables South Africa to be counted amongst those who strive to restore human dignity and bring relief to the people in distress as and when humanitarian situations arise.

One of the strives that we have also made as a country on behalf of the African Continent is that, South Africa is one of the largest footprints in the world when it comes to foreign policy implementation. I think this should be celebrated by all Africans across the continent. Hon Chair, the signing of free trade agreements amongst African countries creates more space and opportunities for African countries to trade amongst

themselves thus boosting the African continent’s economic growth for the benefit of Africa and the world.

This positive development should be commended by all of us. Charity begins at home. Local is lekker. Furthermore, the signing of this free trade agreement also repositions Africa as one big market that can now compete with other countries and continents from a position of strength than that of weakness, making Africa a force to be reckoned with in the world.

*IsiZulu*:

Iyahamba le moto kaHulumeni oholwa uKhongolose. Bathi-ke imoto ehambayo izinja ziyayikhonkotha kodwa emile ziyayichamela. Manje sebethi ehlehlela emuva ziyayidunusela njenge-DA. Dunuduna!

The MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND COOPERATION:

Chairperson, let me begin by thanking all members who have participated in this debate, and in particular thank those members who have agreed that they will support our budget. To those who say they won’t, I am not sure why they will continue

to insist that we should have diplomatic relations if we have no funding, because that is the consequence of their position.

I believe that we must utilise our international relations to advance our national objectives and the policy goals of our country. Of course, with due regard to the values and principles of solidarity, democracy and peace, we will always endeavour to seek out friendships based on shared values and common goals. I confirm again that Africa will be a priority and the expansion of the excellent platform established by our predecessors will be the foundation that I utilise to advance this particular objective.

I believe that we must always show that we will reject misogyny, racism and chauvinistic ethnicity in all its forms in our diplomatic collaboration. Solidarity networks that seek to advance a progressive agenda for the world are the networks we will attach to. On the Middle East, we take side with the oppressed. We do not reject Israel when it wishes to discuss a genuine settlement.

The two-state solution remains the objective of all members of the United Nations, but we must act to indicate that we are concerned at the lack of movement. We are concerned at the lack of freedom. When there are genuine steps for peace, we are ready to consider again, but it cannot be that we act as though matters are normal when there exists a condition where a people enjoy no rights whatsoever. We cannot attach purely to the theoretical. We must signal that we are concerned.

That does not mean that we give. It means we are ready to engage in discourse leading to a solution. Mr Mandela didn’t say a two- state solution even where no movement exist. He said that the people of Palestine stood shoulder-to-shoulder with us; we must stand shoulder-to-shoulder with them. We will be there with the people if Israel and its government once it is ready to recognise that the two-state solution must be brought into reality. So, it should be understood what our intentions are.

We would be most happy when we discuss the Middle East. There we talk about Syria. We talk about the humanitarian disaster in Yemen. Then we talk about all those who suffer and don’t neglect

to mention other actors in that region that are exacerbating the negative condition of humanity. It is absolutely imperative that we do that.

We agree with hon members that the budget decline is a real concern for us and I take the advice and wise counsel from members that we must look at the issue of the missions. We will, but I do urge the hon Chetty to understand that the allocations that are provided as the first touch by Treasury do not always remain as so.

At times the figures we state may be understated by the need to revise how we prioritise, given the changes introduced by Treasury post the Medium Term Expenditure Framework. We would ask – given that an explanation was provided to the Portfolio committee, that the bona fides of the department be accepted given that set of explanations.

There is no intention not to be accountable or transparent by the department and we absolutely understand the concern of members, and we assure you, there is no intention to hide

anything. We will respond to the directives of the Auditor- General and ensure we improve our financial administration. Please be assured of that.

I thank the hon member, Mr Bergman of the DA, for the indications that he will support us when the right things are done. We assure you that we are going to strive to try and do the right things, particularly for South Africa and our continent.

It cannot be said that we are bullied by China. China is an important player in the world and we are fortunate to have excellent relations with them. What we should be asking is: Are we drawing the best advantage from that relationship? Have we done as much as we could to extract the economic and other opportunities that derive from such a strong relationship?

I think much more could be done, but I don’t think we can just neglect such a powerful and potential trade and economic opportunity, but in no way has China ever in fact found them intriguing in that they say you relate to us on your terms or

you don’t relate to us on your terms. They would never come begging for the relationship; we have sought it and they have sought us. I think it’s one of rapprochement but I do think there is much more South Africa could secure from that relationship, especially in trade terms.

There are so many provinces in China with a total lack of awareness of South Africa as a tourist destination or indeed a business opportunity. We need to exploit those opportunities much more. We need to go into the deeper recesses of China and begin to build a whole set of new unimagined relationships up to this point. So, there is a lot that can be done and I think we need to explore that but the notion that we are bullied, cajoled, et cetera, is a mistaken one.

On the matter of human rights, I have said our voting record in the United Nations Security Council has certainly for me been a very good one in the time we served as nonpermanent member this year and into 2020. We will ensure – having listened and taken on – an aspect introduced by former Minister of International Relations, Sisulu, that our focus will be the traditionally

observed human rights perspective of South Africa. That will drive our voting pattern. That is what has been happening and I am very pleased at that.

On the conduct of ambassadors, clearly we must address this. I must do so in discussion with the President. It is not just the decision of the Minister; we must have a proper discussion and address that. Also, I do call on us as South Africans to always have a regard when there is a set of dialogues to all sides of the dialogue and to be critical of all elements that exude racism, sexism or any form of prejudice or discrimination. [Applause.]

Don’t choose one part!

All of us are focused on Ambassador Mandela and not what has been said to her or about President Mandela or Mrs Winnie Mandela. By saying that, I do not in any way absorb or say one supports, but I am saying let us be even- handed in all commentary that we make about comments. Of course, with respect

to Ambassador Kholwane, again I think a serious discussion is merited.

On the matter of our chairing the African Union: I hope we are going to show the continent that we really take the continent seriously; and that we are going to develop a set of programmes and interventions that will enhance Africa’s place in the world and progress with all the agenda programmes of Agenda 2063.

We as Africa must begin to make real advances. This is why I have inserted the notion that let’s use South Africa’s capacity for research and innovation, to begin to place Africa at the heart of developing new ideas and new products. We haven’t done a quarter of what is possible by our continent. We are not yet using the opportunities for creating a knowledge-based society. So, let’s begin to think differently.

Africa’s change doesn’t only happen through resolutions at the African Union, in the economic communities or at the United Nations. The change begins by how we use our talent and our institutions. So, let’s begin to add these elements that I

believe are missing at this moment so that we really make the kind of advances that place us in the centre of the world. If we do that, I believe finally our continent and our people will come into their own. I thank you all for participating in the debate. Thank you! [Applause.]

The ACTING HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms L S MAKHUBELE-MASHELE): Thank

you, hon Minister. Members are reminded about the debate on Police - including Independent Police Investigative Directorate

- Budget Vote will take place at 16:30 in the National Assembly Chamber. The debate on Social Development Budget Vote will take place at 16:30 in the Old Assembly Chamber. The debate on Public Enterprises Budget Vote will take place at 16:30 in Committee Room E249.

Debate concluded.

The mini-plenary rose at 16:13.