**UNREVISED HANSARD**

**NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES**

**THURSDAY, 11 MARCH 2021**

***PROCEEDINGS OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES***

The Council met at 14:09.

The Chairperson took the Chair and requested members to observe a moment of silence for prayers or meditation.

The Chairperson announced that the virtual sitting constituted a sitting of the National Council of Provinces.

Question 1:

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Chairperson, allow me to first take this opportunity to convey our sincere condolences to the Ntumba family who lost their son, their father, their brother yesterday during the student protest. He lost his life at the hands of the police, and I am sure this action will be investigated.

Chairperson, it is common cause that social partners are key to the effective co-ordination and efficient implementation of the country’s COVID-19 vaccination programme.

In the same way as they have been key in the national response to the COVID-19 pandemic over the past year since the declaration of the state of national disaster by the President on 15 March 2020, government has been working closely with all leaders across society towards ensuring effective co- ordination and efficient implementation of the COVID-19 Response Plan.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, government held a number of engagements with social partners including Nedlac, interfaith leaders, traditional leaders as well as leaders of all political parties represented in Parliament. We are encouraged by the wealth of advice we received from traditional leaders on how best to respond to this pandemic in rural communities.

Jointly, we agreed that the balance between saving lives and livelihoods calls for a constant review of our efforts towards ensuring that, amidst the prevailing challenges, we do not lose focus on our greater responsibility as outlined in the

Bill of Rights. Ours is to ensure that every citizen enjoys all the rights to life, equality and human dignity.

The guiding principle of government’s vaccination programme places emphasis on the moral responsibility to ensure allocation of the vaccines impartially, and in accordance with fair criteria.

In the vaccination roll-out process, we are cognisant of the critical role that traditional and faith-based leaders need to play in addressing community fears and misinformation about the benefits of vaccines. Our approach to structured engagements with traditional leaders and faith-based leaders has, in the main, focused on sharing information and raising awareness about the benefits of vaccination in protecting communities against the spread of the deadly COVID-19 disease.

Traditional leaders and faith-based leaders have committed to ensuring that they lead from the front by taking the vaccine jabs when the opportunity comes, as a way of demystifying some of the myths and misinformation about vaccines. At provincial and local government levels, we will continue to engage with all local structures, including traditional and faith-based leaders, to ensure that there is broad-based participation and

sharing of information and knowledge about the benefits of vaccination.

With respect to the vaccination roll-out plan, we can confirm that there is a comprehensive geo-mapping of all facilities and vaccination sites that will ensure equitable access to vaccines by everyone irrespective of where they live. The phases of the plan provide clear categorisation and prioritisation of various population groups to be targeted over the period of the vaccination process until the country achieves the required population immunity threshold.

More importantly, the vaccination roll-out plan has been tailored to ensure all populations in urban and rural areas will have equal access to vaccines by offering a number of service delivery platforms. This includes work-based vaccination programmes for persons from rural areas, which would cover people who are working in the mining sector, for example. Further to this, we have an outreach vaccination programme, which would provide these services in old-age homes and schools in rural settings. Those not covered by these programmes will be serviced through public facilities such as primary health care and community health centres.

These details are shared with communities on a daily basis through Traditional Councils and faith-based organisations. Indeed, government we will ensure that the vaccination programme is geared towards reaching rural communities through platforms with high reach in audience share in those areas.

Our plan includes communicating vaccination messages in all official languages on national, community, regional and commercial radio stations featuring dramas and generic adverts.

The awareness campaign will make use of outdoor platforms across the length and breadth of the country including in rural communities, which amongst others, is the use of outdoor billboards, taxis, electronic screens in public places, as well as boards in shopping malls and branding of buses, to communicate the message on vaccination.

Furthermore, on a daily basis, the *My District* newsletter, which is published in various languages, is used to disseminate COVID-19 pandemic-related content to all communities.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: If the hon Deputy President could keep to the time. I know the question of time is a complicated business! [Interjections.]

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Let me then just say that vaccines save lives. Vaccines will aid in reducing hospitalisations and deaths. COVID-19 vaccines will also help us to reach population immunity so that more people are immune against the virus in order to reduce its spread. The virus is still spreading, and we need to use all available avenues to stop its devastation. Thank you.

*IsiZulu*:

Nk A D MALEKA: Mangibingelele uSihlalo, ngibingelele neSekela Mongameli, Sekela Mongameli ngiyabonga ngencazelo ethembekileyo nebalulekile yemibuzo. Mhawumbe uSekela Mongameli uyaqaphela umlando wokusebenzisana ikakhulukazi phakathi kwabaholi bendabuko nohulumeni basekhaya ekuletheni izinsiza kwezinye izindawo akugculisi neze. Ngamanye amazwi Sekela Mongameli ngabe likhona iqhinga uhulumeni analo ukuqiniseka ukuthi kukhona ukubambisana nezincazelo ekusatshalalisweni kokugonywa nokuthi kuhambe ngendlela efanele. Ngiyabonga Sihlalo.

*English*:

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Chairperson, I think, from the outset, when we started the vaccination programme, we consulted all stakeholders. We consulted our stakeholders in Nedlac. We consulted our traditional leaders. We consulted our faith- based leaders.

I think we secured their full support through those consultations to help government disseminate the information.

This vaccination programme will go right into our deep rural areas. We are going to use those centres that you find in those rural areas – schools, churches, and community health centres. All those locations will be published and thus be known. We are going to communicate to our people through radio stations and newsletters to inform them where the centres are in certain places that are open for vaccination, and we will also inform them who the people are will be administering the vaccine.

We will encourage our people not to jump queues, because we are offering all our frontline workers the first phase of vaccinations. Our healthcare workers are the ones who will

receive the first jab. Thereafter, the other sectors of our society will follow. Thank you.

Ms D C CHRISTIANS: Deputy President, now that government has buckled to legal pressure, will you assure the House that government will place no impediment in the way of the private health sector in its attempts to procure and roll out lifesaving vaccinations for essential workers, including all healthcare workers, and every educator who is delivering an essential service? Thank you.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Chairperson, it is government’s intention that no-one will be excluded from this vaccination programme. There are, of course, phases in which we are implementing this vaccination programme. Like I said, the first phase will be our frontline workers and our health workers. Secondly, you will then still follow with your frontline workers such as your teachers, your mineworkers. All vulnerable groups will then come in the phases that will follow subsequently.

But the intention is for us to reach population immunity so that we can reduce the spread of the virus.

In that manner, we think we are going to conquer the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Thank you.

Mr S ZANDAMELA: Deputy President, South Africa has faced many stumbling blocks around the procurement of vaccines, ranging from uncertainty about the role of provinces in the procurement of vaccines, unclear terms of agreements between government and manufacturers, procurement of the AstraZeneca vaccine with its low efficiency against the 501Y.V2 mutation of the coronavirus currently dominant throughout South Africa, the delays in meeting payment deadlines for a Covax programme, to the cost of procurement, storage, transportation and vaccination.

Deputy President, the national Department of Health indicated to Parliament that the Johnson & Johnson vaccine will cost R147 per dose, while the Minister of Health in his public briefing on 10 February indicated that the exact price will be negotiated as supply is agreed upon.

Now, the Minister of Health says the money allocated in not enough. The Minister of Finance says there is no more money for vaccines beyond R10 billion.

Did Treasury set a limit for Cabinet on how much the country will spend on the vaccines? Thank you.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Chairperson, from where we are sitting, we can confirm that we have secured 43 million doses of these vaccines. Eleven million are from Johnson & Johnson,

20 million from Pfizer, and another 12 million from our Covax facility in the AU platform.

All these doses have been confirmed and, we think, if we are able to vaccinate all our people using the 43 million jab doses, we will be close to reaching population immunity and be out of danger.

So, let’s take it one step at a time.

We have paid for the supply of vaccines that are currently being delivered. Vaccination is continuously proceeding very well in the various provinces.

Yes, we have made money available. Treasury has announced ... That is the money that we have made available. If we come across a stumbling block, government will reprioritise its

Budget, and make it a point that all of our people get this vaccine so that we save lives. Thank you.

*IsiZulu*:

Mnu X NGWEZI: Ngiyathokoza kakhulu Sihlalo woMkhandlu weziFundazwe, ngibingelele nakuSekela Mongameli, Mhlonishwa Sekela Mongameli ngiyathokoza ngempendulo oyinikeze lapha eNdlini, kodwa nginenkinga yokuthi amakhosi lapha esifundazweni saKwaZulu-Natali nabaholi bakhala ngokuthi izinga lokuxhumana lokusabalalisa imigomo ye-COVID isezingeni eliphansi kakhulu. Ngifisa ke ukwazi ukuthi yini eyokwenziwa nguwena nehhovisi lakho ukuphucula izinga lokuxhumana?

Kodwa enye into esibhekene nayo njengezwe ukuthi iqhaza lamaKhosi lapha kuMthethosisekelo wezwe alikachazwa kahle ngokucacileyo. Ngiyafisa nokwazi ukuthi lolo daba uhulumeni uzimisele ngokuba alilungise nini, ngoba asikwazi ukuba nohlelo lwamaKhosi kuMthethosisekelo kodwa lungachazwa kahle nguMthethosisekelo wezwe. Ngiyabonga.

USEKELA MONGAMELI WERIPHABHULIKI YASENINGIZIMU AFRIKA:

Angibonge Sihlalo, ngisho ukuthi sihlangene naMakhosi nendlu yaMakhosi kuZwelonke. Saxoxisana naMakhosi sawuthula umbiko wokugonywa kwabantu, saphinde sasho futhi kuwo Amakhosi ukuthi

besingafisa ukuthi ahambe phambili ukuze abantu bathembe ukuthi ukugonywa lokhu kuzobavikela kulesi sifo. Amakhosi akujabulela lokho. Manje ke siyakwazi ukuthi kufanele thina sehle futhi sikwazi ukuxhumana naMakhosi kuzifundazwe.

Sizokwenza lokho njengoba uma sibheka uhlelo lwethu lokugonywa kwabantu siyabona ukuthi Isigaba sesibili yisona esizobamatasatasa kakhulu. Yilapho kuzoba khona abantu abaningi abagonywayo kuzofanele sixhumane naMaKhosi nabaholi bezenkolo. Wonke umuntu okhona ongumholi sizozama ukusebenzisana naye ukuthi sisize abantu bakithi ukuthi silwe nalesifo iCOVID-19. Ngiyabonga Sihlalo.

Question 2:

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon Chairperson, land reform is one of the difficult complex and difficult programmes many African nations have struggled to implement. More especially in countries suffering from historical imbalances caused and perpetuated by years of colonialism, misrule and deliberate discrimination.

As a nation, we have a moral responsibility to end land inequalities and broaden access to more land for cultivation towards food security, rural development and poverty reduction while equally responding to equitable spatial planning, and

integrated human settlements.

For our part as government, we have always maintained that the need to address the legacies of land dispossession and skewed patterns of land ownership, is not only a moral imperative for social justice and nation-building. It is also a necessary intervention to promote broad-based economic inclusion and access to the means of production and development.

Beyond the narrow lens of agriculture, we should be able to appreciate that more people now have houses and title deeds on the land they own. Across the country, communities whose land was taken away have successfully reclaimed the land of their ancestors, erasing the sad and dehumanising experience and indignity of forced removals and dispossession.

While challenges remain, our land reform programme has been impactful and effective in breaking down barriers to land access and ownership in postapartheid South Africa. More than any other time in our history, more people have had access to land that caters for the expansion of human settlements in urban and peri-urban areas.

More land has been acquired and redistributed to cater for

industrial development, including the targeted land for Special Economic Zones and industrial parks in many parts of the country.

Over the years, various policy instruments have been employed to accelerate land reform for agriculture, human settlements and economic development in general. We are advised by the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development that since the inception of the land reform programme, government has acquired more than 5 million hectares of land through the land redistribution programme, from over 5 500 projects that benefited hundreds of thousands of people.

The strategic acquisition of land by government over time has been crucial to government’s ability to make more land available for agricultural production. The process to release more state-owned land to aspirant farmers for long-term leases is currently in progress.

To date, government has acquired almost 2,2 million hectares of land which constitute over 1 800 farms. Government has committed to releasing state-owned land for agriculture and development. The lease agreements go up to 30 years, and the lessees have options to buy the farms. Based on meeting

performance and applicable policy considerations, there is no reason why ownership of these farms would not be transferred to those beneficiaries who would have demonstrated the productive and efficient use of the allocated land.

As part of our integrated farmer support hon Chairperson, the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development has prioritised the provision of a package of postsettlement support that includes training, as well as financial and technical support to ensure that all allocated land is productively utilised.

In partnership with our traditional leaders, we are focusing on initiatives to ensure that communal land assets are systematically purposed to advance the development interests of communities. Within the context of the District Development Model, we will ensure that land reform programmes are integrated with the sectoral development needs of all communities.

Notwithstanding these successes, we are concerned that a number of our land reform projects have not performed according to our expectations. Due to conflicts, inadequate skills, and limited post-settlement support, some of the

restituted farms have remained unproductive.

For the country’s scale and scope of development and expansion in terms of agriculture, integrated human settlements, service network infrastructure provision, and industrial development, it is clear that the demand and hunger for land outstrip the current supply of development land. Experience, hon Chairperson, has indicated that the slow pace of land reform has been a source of frustration for many of those whose claims have not been finalised. It has become apparent that the cost of land reform is unaffordable and unsustainable in the context of our fiscal constraints.

Therefore, to us the expropriation of land without compensation to advance land reform objectives, promote restorative justice, and solidify social cohesion, is a necessary route to pursue with a sense of urgency. This unfolding parliamentary process is meant to accelerate and give effect to land and spatial justice while ensuring that our Constitutional injunctions are respected.

Through the partnerships with the private sector, we are confident that more land will be donated to contribute to government’s land reform objectives. We have finalised the

Land Donations Policy as guided by the land donation transactions to the extent that our land reform programme has been effective and impactful in driving socioeconomic transformation and breaking structural barriers to economic participation and inclusion.

We are confident that we are on the right track, however we can admit that a lot of work still remains to be undertaken. Thank you, hon Chairperson.

Ms C LABUSCHAGNE: Hon Chairperson and hon Deputy President, my question was about the effectiveness of the land reform programmes goal in ensuring land ownership to more people of colour and thereby intrinsically providing and economic opportunity? Hon Deputy President last year in the National Assembly, you said that no farmer will be evicted from their land.

I therefore must ask you now: How do cases like that of Mr Irvin Cloete and Mr John Mabasa who are now been evicted from their farms where they have been successful as part of the land reform programme can indicate effective agricultural support, food security and aids the goal of ensuring land ownership to more people of colour?

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon Chairperson, I think we must indicate right from the onset that our land reform programme has been very slow because, firstly, we are running short of money to purchase all the farms that have been claimed by our people. That programme is still continuing. The restitution programme and all the farms that have been claimed, we continue to tackle them, but the pace is very slow.

We are also pursuing land redistribution. We buy farms and redistributing pin.

The expropriation of land without compensation is one option available that we want to pursue. In case there is sufficient reasons that government or the state has got reasonable objective in the utilisation of that piece of land and feels that that land can be expropriated for the public benefit, the state will do so.

Now, land can be donated and there are many mechanisms that will be utilised to try and restore land to those people that have been dispossessed. Expropriation of land is one such mechanism. In certain cases, where land that belongs to government have been occupied by farmers, we are not just going to simply remove those farmers. We are going to assess

the productivity of that piece of land, if it is productive, that is all what we want as government to have our land being productive. We are not just going to remove farmers just for the sake of removing them, and we are not going to be guided by racial reasons to remove them. The intention is to support farmers and to make land available to farmers, but we must bear in mind that there are those people that have been dispossessed of their land, that we must restore their land and their dignity. Thank you, Chairperson.

*Siswati*:

Mnu A J NYAMBI: Angibonge Sihlalo, ngibingelele kuwe Sihlalo Wemkhandlu Wevelonkhe Wemaprovinsi, gibingelele naku Sekelamengameli.

*English*:

Hon Deputy President, let me first appreciate your comprehensive and honest answer to the question on the emotive issue of land. Secondly, let me commend the reawakening of the DA about the strategic imperative of the land reform as raised by my colleague the hon Labuschagne for understanding that the issue of land is part of the nation-building.

Can the Deputy President highlight some of the difficult challenges faced by the government in the acceleration of the land reform and what are the plans to address such challenges, besides the issue of the slow process? I thank you Chairperson and the Deputy President?

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon Chairperson, the challenges that are faced by the government on the land reform programme are: Firstly, the programme is very slow in trying to resettle and restitute people and in trying to redistribute land. The main reason behind this slowness is because land is expensive. So, we move according to the availability of resources.

The number of claimants and claims that have been lodged can only be settled through the availability of resources.

Resources are therefore a handicap in our land reform process. Government has tried to apply all instruments to try and restore land to those people that have been dispossessed of their land, but the land hunger continues.

We are sitting with more than thousands and thousands in the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development that still needs to be resolved. The only breakthrough, now that the panel has complained about the pace of land reform

and the decision that has been taken by the Sixth Administration is that land that has been claimed and that this land is in the hands of government would be given to the claimants free of charge.

So there are a number of parcels of land that are in the hands of government that we are now releasing. I can count more than

268 land parcels that would be released free of charge. It is a decision that has been taken. Some pieces of land that are in the hands of government are being released for human settlements. Like here in Cape Town we have been releasing some pieces of land for people to build. So we are now accelerating our land reform. Of course expropriation of land without compensation and with nil compensation is one but very important instrument that we need as government that will help us pursue land reform a bit quicker and faster. Thank you very much.

Mr S F DU TOIT: Hon Chair and hon Deputy President, with reference to the land reform programme and all the challenges that have been encountered with regard to among others farms that were once productive and transferred to a beneficiary community, looted and everything sold for a quick buck before

being abandoned and left dilapidated and nonproductive by the same beneficiaries.

My question is: Is there any legislation governing land reform that makes provision to hold beneficiaries accountable for the assets that they are acquiring these transactions? If not, when would such legislation be instituted. Thank you, Deputy President.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon Chairperson, I think we must confess that we do not have any legislation that will ensure that the land that is given to our people remain in their hands and the land that is given remain productive. However, it is a mistake from the side of government that we give people land and we do not give them the necessary support to till the land. We have just since realised that omission. We are now putting all mechanisms together at a district level to try and anchor our farmer support so that certain farmers must be mentored, trained and taught how to farm. It is not every one who has received land parcel who knows how to farm. We cannot take people for granted that if they get a piece of land you will know what to do with that land. So, as government we are taking it upon ourselves now to put mechanisms in place to ensure that all those restituted farms and the people in those

farms get support so that we get every piece of land that has been restituted get it to be productive. Thank you.

Mr A ARNOLDS: Hon Chairperson and hon Deputy President, landownership is still concentrated in the hands of a few and agriculture production and value-chain mainly owned by white commercial farmers. The effects of the past remain firmly with us today. Land reform programmes have done very little to achieve equitable distribution and access to land for the poor. The poor performance by the government in addressing the land issue particular it is in adequate support for black land reform beneficiaries and farmers in communal areas over the past years has left the landless with many questions.

One of those questions is: Is the government really reforming the agriculture sector and is this the type of land reform the public would like to see?

Mr Deputy President do you agree that the failure to resolve the land question is due to the lack of political will by your government? Thank you.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon Chair, we recognise the challenges that we are facing in our land reform programme. We want to

admit as government that there were huddles and those huddles affected our pace of restoring land to the rightful owners.

However, we are picking up the pace, we are finding better ways of getting land back to the people.

Yes, section 25 of the Constitution is one mechanism that will help. Yes, the Expropriation Act and the amendment of that Act is one tool that will assist, but from where we are sitting we have received a lot of requests from companies especially mining companies that have come forward to donate pieces of land. We want to really applaud that gesture and on behalf of government thank those mining companies that have come forward to donate pieces of land, hence the donation policy.

So there are many options and tools that we are applying in order to fast-track our land reform process. Yes, we accept and admit that over the years we have moved very slow. I have said that to date we have transferred more than 5,5 million hectares of land which is accounting to almost 5 500 farms that have moved from their previous owners to those people that have been dispossessed. It is not a big progress, but we count it as a milestone. We are cognisant that people are hungry for land and we are going to step up our pace. Thank you very much.

Question 3:

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Chairperson, part of the measures outlined in the Terms of the Reference of the IMC, Inter- Ministerial Committee, on Covid-19 Vaccines is:

putting in place measures to prevent corruption and wasteful expenditure in the procurement or distribution of vaccines*.*

To this end, we wish to assure this House that indeed, we have as the IMC developed a Corruption Risk Mitigation Plan as one of the oversight mechanisms in the implementation of the

COVID-19 vaccination programme. To give effect to this, the IMC has identified the potential risks related to the procurement of vaccines and mitigation strategies required to address such risks.

In our view, procurement risk is greater when there are multiple purchasers and multiple suppliers, with no uniformity of quality and effectiveness of the product. The ability to monitor and subsequently address corruption and malfeasance, is difficult as we saw with the procurement of Personal Protective Equipment at the outbreak of the pandemic. In that case there were multiple purchasers, suppliers and there was

no uniformity in terms of the quality or effectiveness which led to corruption.

In the case of COVID-19 vaccines, that is limited by the fact that the market is highly regulated and there are only a few manufacturers. Further to this, the product is assessed by the regulator to conform to quality standards, and the procurement is centrally done at national level, which makes it easy to monitor.

Effectively, there is no room for inflating prices as a result of bribes and kickbacks, especially as we have centralised procurement to ensure fair prices in the acquisition of vaccines.

Provinces will have a limited function in terms of distribution as there is a national contract for vaccine distribution. Consequently, provinces would have to use the selected service providers and existing distribution arrangements for medicines which are already in place.

Therefore, there is no need for any additional procurement.

Beyond these measures at acquisition and distribution level, we have looked at other risks and potential areas for acts of

corruption in order to be comprehensive in our approach. For instance, the IMC in its Corruption Risk and Mitigation Plan, identifies risks and counter measures across the entire value chain of the COVID-19 vaccination programme - from vaccine acquisition, distribution to administration.

Where non-disclosure agreements may be used to hide corruption, constitutional oversight bodies such as the Auditor General of South Africa will have access for probity audit, to such non-disclosure agreements that have been entered into by pharmaceutical companies, as well as by any other vaccine supplier.

In addition to the Auditor General, law enforcement agencies are doing their work on intelligence-driven measures of combating crime, fraud and corruption through the Fusion Centre.

These measures will enable us to deliver a successful vaccination roll-out plan and limit any prospects for corruption, whilst enabling South Africa to utilise this opportunity to grow local manufacturing capability, in line with our industrial policy.

Our government agenda has been stated right from the beginning, that we do not only want to acquire these vaccines as manufactured elsewhere, but we intend to locally manufacture them. As a country, we have the necessary expertise and infrastructure, and we are confident that our capability to locally produce COVID-19 vaccines can be improved.

For us to be successful in such aspirations as a country, we must counter activities such as the production of sub-standard or falsified vaccines. In this regard, we have put in place the following measures:

All registered vaccine centres will be published on platforms, for all citizens to have access to this information, and we are working on increasing the number of testing labs to expedite quality assurance of all vaccines that are produced.

All suppliers will be requested to produce lab certificates to buyers, providing a unique identifier on delivery of the vaccines and online verification of that certificate.

We have through the communication workstream of the IMC, developed a public awareness to conscientize the public on the dangers of utilising unregistered vaccine centres. There are also webinars and radio programmes that are being utilised to engage various stakeholders on vaccine corruption risks, as well as in how we could jointly implement mitigation measures.

Communication of detection and prosecution of any corruption, will be done on a regular basis to enhance transparency and public accountability.

Ultimately, we will move towards local manufacturing of vaccines which will offer opportunities for open contracting opportunities for limited localisation. The adverse effect may be the opening of risks for potential political compromises and manipulation of the tender process. In this regard, we are proactively working on adopting open contracting principles, as part of ensuring transparency in the procurement of vaccines.

We have learnt from the procurement of Personal Protective Equipment that the ability to monitor and subsequently address corruption and malfeasance is difficult but possible, hence

the adoption of comprehensive measures in the Corruption Risk Mitigation Plan.

For us to be able to prevent corruption in the whole vaccination programme, we must work together. That is why we have activated whistle-blowing mechanisms through the existing hotlines such as the Presidential Hotline, the Anti-corruption Hotline hosted by the Public Service Commission, and the Whistle-blowing Hotline of the Special Investigating Unit for the broader public to play their part in prevention and combating corruption.

In the final analysis, we are confident of the effectiveness of the measures that we have put in place, and shall spare no effort in ensuring that we optimally deliver on the needs of our communities and in partnership with them. Together, we must ensure that we tackle any acts of corruption that take advantage of the plight of the people. We have a duty to defeat the coronavirus and ensure the enjoyment of life and dignity for all as outlined in the Bill of Rights. Thank you very much Chairperson.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Thank you very much Deputy President, let me take this moment to acknowledge the presence

of Chief Whip in the National Assembly, hon Pemmy Majodina [Applause.] Thank you very much. We will proceed to receive and get a follow up question from hon Dodovu.

Mr T S C DODOVU: Chairperson, thank you very hon Deputy President for a very comprehensive responsive on the unveiling of the mitigation plans in terms of the administering the role out plan as well as ensuring that we prevent the acts of corruption in the roll out plan as such. Hon Deputy President, you will certainly agree with me that, as part of the corruption mitigation strategy, government must ensure that those in the frontline of the administration storage as well as distribution of the COVID-19 vaccine should be man and women in the public service with unquestionable integrity.

Against this background, does the government plan to subject all the frontline personnel in the administration of the COVID-19 vaccine to integrity test? Would the government ensure that it subject those, to the integrity test, if not, why not and if so what are the relevant details that the Deputy President can share with us. Thank you, Chair.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Chairperson, yes we agree that government must ensure that those on the frontline of the administration, the storage and the distribution of the

COVID-19 vaccine, should be men and women in the public service with unquestionable integrity. But as for now, there is no policy from the National Department of Health that will subjects pre-vaccination integrity test as this is not a prerequisite in the vaccination for COVID-19 potential recipients of vaccines that are required. All that we have, we have got an electronic vaccine data system that everyone who is receiving the vaccine would be registered in that data system. And we think that data system will reduce the number of people that will jump the ques, the number of people that may want to steal the vaccines because each and every sites where vaccination is happening – the vaccine that is sent on that site has been accounted for, has been calculated, the number is known.

So, there won’t be any vaccine that will get missing and everyone who’s vaccinated gets registered in the electronic data system, that is centrally coordinated, so that when the day ends, we know how many have been vaccinated at which sites of our vaccination sites. Thank you very much.

Mr S F DU TOIT: Chairperson, Hon President, people are very innovative and we have recently seen five vaccines that were developed in China, and didn’t take longer for those vaccines

to reach our shores, like the ones that were found in Germiston, now. Deputy President, the fact that vaccine is not the same a fake jacket or fake shoes or a fake brand – these vaccines are actually deadly because someone might think is safe but they are not. The question is, have spoken to your counterparts from other countries, such as China to stop the spread of these vaccines? And, what measures are in place to stop people from being injected by these at the different vaccine areas. Thank you Deputy President.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Chairperson, in our corruption risk mitigation plan, which in the IMC, it’s a work stream, we’ve got law enforcement agencies that are working together with Interpol. Now, a number of medicines that have been found in our ports of entry, which are illegal, have been detected by this multidisciplinary team, that is working within the IMC and that multidisciplinary team, consists all of the arms of our law enforcement agencies and they connect with Interpol, so, all the incidents that the hon member is mentioning, they have been detected, we have been informed and some people have been arrest and some are still being followed.

There’s consignment that came from India of *Ivermectin,* now we have confiscated that consignment and the owners have just

disappeared, there’s no one whose has come up to claim that consignment. So our eyes are wide open on such fake vaccines, our law enforcement agencies report on a daily basis and we are meeting on a weekly basis at the IMC to get reports of such fake vaccines

And we must say to our people, they can only use vaccines that are given on our vaccine sites, that have been announced by government. They can’t be taking any vaccines, anywhere except in those vaccination sites that have been announced by government. Our people must be aware that there are those unscrupulous people out there, that are selling fake vaccines and they must be aware. As a IMC we are working together with this multidisciplinary team of our law enforcement agencies to help us track those fake vaccines. Thank you, hon Chair.

Ms S B LEHIHI: Chair, apartheid was a very dark time in the history of South Africa and the advent of democracy brought with it hope that, finally black lives will be worth some in this country. Sadly, Deputy President government plunge us back into darkness. One at the height of a global pandemic, funds that were meant to save lives of millions of South Africans were looted shamelessly. We saw performative arrest of those found to who have been in the looting of COVID-19

funds, but so far we haven’t heard of any convictions. Would you agree Deputy President, that looting and corruption is so deeply entrenched in the circle of the ANC-led government, that the plans you speak of now will not materialised and black people will the once left to suffer yet again?

Modulasetulo ke a leboga [Chairperson, thank you.]

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Chairperson, well, I’ve said in the response that I have given that, we are trying by all means to avoid what happened during the procurement of the personal protective equipments. Now, and I have explained why I think that we were subjected to that kind of a situation because too many products were sold to us, not from one supplier, from many suppliers and too many prices were offered to us and we were all just subjected to these unscrupulous suppliers.

I am sure in the process we were meant to buy some fake personal protective equipments, but in this case I said it’s a very different ball game because the vaccine manufacturers are very few and limited and all their products get tested by our bodies, like in our case South African Health Products Regulatory Authority, SAHPRA, will test all vaccines that we use as a country, that is why we have detected, the vaccine AstraZeneca, to say AstraZeneca does not provide the necessary

efficacy that can help the immune of an individual. So, it will be pointless to continue vaccinating people with AstraZeneca, because we are going to get the required immunity. That was a very good development by our own scientists and as a country we should be proud that we have got scientists that are alert, that are testing everything that is here on the market, in order to protect consumers, to protect our people.

So, in terms of price we are buying from these suppliers, these manufacturers which are not many, so we are not open to abuse.

In terms of the distribution, we have limited the distribution. Now, today in the IMC, the Minister of Defence offered us some defensive facility where we can utilise to store our vaccine. So, we are going to utilise less and less of external capacity, we are going to utilise more and more of our internal capacity as government. Thank you very much.

Mr W S S AUCAMP: Chairperson, hon Deputy President, it’s a well-established perception that your government talks a good game on ending corruption, but talk is cheap, money buys the whisky. You talk a good game on anticorruption when it comes

to the arms deal, World Cup 2010, even Nkandla but yet you fail dismally when it comes to implementing those empty promises that you have made and prosecuting well connected corruption hyenas, like you friend Bobby Motaung, who feed at [Inaudible.] created by the ANC.

Hon Deputy President, I think South Africans are sick and tired of listening to all these empty corruption promises being made but not seeing it being implemented. Given your assurance that there will an anticorruption turning place with regard to vaccinations. When will you report on the results of the promised interventions of PPE corruption scandals. Thank you very much.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Point of order.

Mr A J NYAMBI: Chair, in terms of the rules of the NCOP, if you are bringing an issue without making it a substantive motion, like hon Aucamp, it’s inferring that hon Deputy President is a friend to somebody without making it a substantive motion, so it’s totally out of order.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Yes, Labuschagne.

Ms C LABUSCHAGNE: Chairperson, on a point of order, there’s a rule that says that we have privileges in this House and that point of order that the hon Nyambi raised, it’s just a way of protecting again. Really, there’s no real reason for saying that there must be a substantive motion. The rule book is there; you can read it. We are protected and we have a freedom of speech in this House and the ANC is always trying to clamp down that freedom of speech and to say things that just fit in the ANC. I am sorry we will have to follow this up.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Yes...alright, let me allow hon Dodovu, after that I will make a ruling, so that we make a bit of progress on the matter.

Mr T S C DODOVU: Chair, I’m rising on a point of order, because specifically, I’m the one who asked the question and the question was about corruption and the preventative thereof in respect of the rolling out of the vaccines, not about the stadiums, not about the PPEs and not about any other things else and therefore you can rule on the particular point order hon Chairperson, thank you.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Hon members, I will come back to the House, at the later stage but for now, I guess what we

should is to proceed and afford the Deputy President an opportunity to respond to the question. Hon Deputy President.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Chairperson, well I take it that the question is a deviation however, I will respect your ruling, I will answer this question in the context of the vaccine distribution.

Any corruption within the distribution programme – I’ve tried to explain that, we have got a risk mitigation plan and we have got a multidisciplinary team that is working with us that is reporting on a weekly basis that meet we as the IMC, to track any act of corruption.

And, I have said in the case of acquisition of vaccines, corruption is very limited because the manufacturers are limited and pricing... we are not open to be abused by any unscrupulous suppliers because the manufacturers are limited. And in this case as a country, it’s only national government that gets to purchase these vaccines and then get distributed to provinces and even into our private facilities, they get these vaccines from government. Now, in that case, it’s very difficult for anyone to defraud the state.

In terms of the storage of the vaccines, up to now, we have been storing our vaccines in the COVID facilities, Biovac facilities in Midrand – that I’ve visited. In those facilities, government is a shareholder, we part own those facilities and we are looking for more facilities because as we are going to face two of the roll out, more and more vaccines will be getting into provinces. That is why we are looking at more and more storages from the Department of Defence and Military Veterans and we have found those storages.

And I said there will be limited services that we are going to require from the private sector. Now, we are going to use our available capacity as government as far as we can, to roll out and distribute these vaccines to all the vaccination sites.

Thank you very much.

Question 4:

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you, hon Chairperson. We can confirm that Eskom’s headcount reduction plan was communicated to government as a shareholder, and it forms part of updates that are shared by the utility with the Political Task Team that has been appointed by the President. Hon members would appreciate the restructuring of a company of Eskom’s magnitude

that it will not be an easy task, and may take longer, considering the potential effects thereof. Nevertheless, our position remains that Eskom must be supported to implement a comprehensive turnaround programme. This will ensure that the utility develops and enhances its requisite institutional capabilities, to meet the country’s energy needs.

To this end, Eskom and government have committed to achieve headcount reduction as part of the turnaround programme without embarking on retrenchments. Our understanding is that Eskom’s headcount reduction, as well as the cost reduction strategy that the utility started implementing in 2016, are amongst those efforts aimed at improving the utility’s financial sustainability. It is envisaged that this would increase efficiencies in capital and operational expenditure, including employee benefits. Therefore, the restructuring process of Eskom into an efficient and financially sustainable entity, means that its turnaround and organisational transformation must be focused on achieving significant cost reductions and savings, while improving overall efficiencies across the cost drivers, such as expenditures on coal contracts and compensation of employees.

Eskom’s headcount reduction that the hon member is referring to, is part of Eskom’s 10-year Strategic Workforce Plan, which seeks to analyse and forecast the workforce that is required to execute the business strategy by enabling Eskom to identify, develop and sustain its workforce in support of its organisational objectives. Essentially, Eskom’s workforce will reduce from 44 929 to 40 691 by 2030, which will be achieved through natural attrition, retirements, limited replacement of attrition and voluntary separation packages. This is informed by a range of factors within business categories but most importantly, it prioritises replacement of critical skills, that is, engineers, artisans, technical officials, technicians and operators, through learner intake to offset the impact of attrition. The bulk of the reduction will still be achieved through natural attrition with 11% from voluntary separation packages. Simply put, the Eskom’s historical attrition is projected to remain the same over the next three years, taking into account replacement of critical skills in operations.

On the figures suggested by the hon member, Eskom has provided government with an overview of the net attrition since the 2019 financial year, factoring a voluntary service packages, appointments for the year 2021, and projections up to year 2024, with a total of 6 074 employees to be released through

voluntary severance packages and attrition. That being said, government advocates for Eskom’s headcount review to be in a manner that balances and matches business delivery outcomes, core skills and improved organisational performance. As government we will ensure that Eskom continues to invest in critical skills, as well as a long term pipeline of engineering and technical expertise.

Supporting Eskom is essential towards ensuring security of supply of energy of our country. With the energy security we will restore economic growth, increase employment, and improve the quality of life for all our people. Therefore, let us continue to work in unison towards these aspirations and support Eskom to get out of these challenges. Thank you, hon Chairperson.

*Xitsonga:*

Man B T MATHEVULA: Mutshamaxitulu, ndza khensa. Xandla xa Presidente...

*English:*

... Matshela Koko, Brian Molefe are not saint and Solly Tshitangano, were all suspended from their various executive and senior management roles at Eskom, on various allegations,

ranging from corruption and underperformance. When Jan Oberholzer was accused of corruption, he was not suspended. In fact, he instituted and investigation to clear himself while at work. Deputy President, currently there are serious allegations of corruption and racism made by a senior manager at Eskom against the Eskom chief executive officer, CEO, André de Ruyter, based on the letter sent to Parliament, the Minister of Public Enterprise and the board, but he is not suspended.

Deputy President, is accountability and suspension only reserved for black senior managers of state-owned entities, SOEs, when allegations of corruptions surface, while whites like de Ruyter are untouchable and protected by the Minister of Public Enterprise?

*Xitsonga:*

Ndza khensa, Mutshamaxitulu.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you, hon Chairperson. Well, we are getting continuous reports from the Political Task Team that is looking into the affairs of Eskom. We are continuously briefed about the corruption cases that are being followed and that are being investigated. Therefore, we appreciate progress

that is made by our law enforcement agencies. We will continue to investigate any allegation that will crop up as we continue to get Eskom into the right ... [Inaudible.] ... I don’t want us to politicise and to racialize the corruption that is happening in Eskom. Corruption is corruption and we must not give corruption a colour. Anyone who is found to be on the wrong side would be investigated, would be suspended and finally would be expelled from Eskom, but let us not jump the gun let us follow the process of the law.

It might take long, some of our members might be impatient to follow the law to the later. However, as government we are all obliged and expected to follow the law. So, yes, there are allegations that are levelled against a number of people in Eskom. Therefore, finally I can tell you, hon member, that we are going to find and we are going to dig right up to the bottom of these allegations. However, we don’t want to be driven by racial tendencies. South Africa belongs to all of us, black and white and we must respect it. We must try to avoid all tendencies that seeks to take us back to our ugly past. Thank you, very much. [Applause.]

Ms H S BOSHOFF: Thank you very much, Chair and good afternoon to Deputy President. Mr Deputy President, is it not true that

if your government had prevented the corruption and the capture of Eskom as seen in verbal detail in the Zondo Commission and had invested in the upscaling of the employees in the renewable energy sector. It may have been possible, may have been possible to ameliorate the fate of these retrenched workers. Thank you, Chair.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: I beg your pardon, hon Chairperson, I haven’t heard the question. Hon Chairperson, I haven’t heard the question.

Ms H S BOSHOFF: Hon Chair, would you like me to read it again?

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Please.

Ms H S BOSHOFF: Could I ask the Deputy President to have his presentation in this House and not somewhere else. Thank you very much. Mr Deputy President, I am repeating what I said earlier on. Is it not true that if your government had prevented the corruption and the capture of Eskom as seen in verbal detail in the Zondo Commission and had invested in the upscaling of these employees in the renewable energy sector. It may have been possible to ameliorate the fate of these

retrenched workers. I trusted you got the just of it. Thank you.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you, hon Chair. I’ve heard the question now. Well, the very fact that there was corruption and a lot of wrongdoing in Eskom, no one is trying to refute that. Hence all the investigations that are happening in Eskom which was supporting the very same government it’s investigating all the wrongdoing that happen in Eskom, but the fact of the matter, the release of this amount of people and workers in Eskom is informed by the business case of Eskom.

Just to share with the hon member that the amount of workers in Eskom has doubled since 2008 to date. Now, the number has doubled, but the amount of energy that we are producing is getting less, that means the demands out there is getting lesser and lesser, and lesser. That means a lot of people have opted out of Eskom, may be they are producing energy on their own, household production and they have disconnected from Eskom.

So, the number of employees that are there in Eskom does not make a business case. Therefore, we must reduce the number. The only business case that has been presented before us is that you need qualified technicians, engineers in Eskom so

that you can improve the efficiency of the utility of all our power stations. And that we have allowed Eskom to try and source engineers, technicians and the expertise that Eskom needs. Eskom might find that expertise outside the country, but in the near future Eskom must train the necessary people, must be able to train artisans, and must be able to train engineers in-house so that they increase their productivity.

We cannot continue to justify that number of people that are there in Eskom given what we are producing, and given the amount of energy that we are producing. So, yes, in the turnaround strategy we must scale down in terms of the number of people that are working in Eskom. Thank you very much.

Mr M I RAYI: Thank you very much, hon Chairperson and greetings to hon Deputy President. Thank you very much for your response, hon Deputy President, which has isolated truth from friction that is born out malicious gossip about the critical task of strategic turnaround of Eskom. As you have loudly made it clear, there is no plan retrenchment in Eskom

... [Inaudible.] ... national re-engineering to improve operational and financial efficiency as part of a long-term turnaround strategy which include natural attrition, retirements and voluntary severance packages.

In this light, hon Deputy President, what incentives is Eskom putting on the table to make voluntary severance packages attractive, especially to the noncritical skills sections of the workforce and how effective is the communication with the organise labour about the turnaround to combat misleading rumour mongering. I thank you, hon Deputy President.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Yes, you are correct we are not really retrenching any person, but we are affording people the different tools, especially severance package. A severance package is made available for anyone who is close to retirement age, and who might want to opt out of the institution. And those people are encouraged to opt out of the institution so that we can attract relevant and younger people. We have got the appropriate skills in Eskom. Eskom has put an incentive of R75 000 as a gratuity if you take the severance package. We are not forcing anyone to take the severance package, but there is an incentive that if you take the severance package you will be given this R75 000 gratuity so that the exercise should not be seen as we are forcefully retrenching people.

People are opting out on their own abolishing. Now, some are getting out of the system through natural attrition. People

die. When they die we don’t replace, we abolish those positions so that finally we can achieve the required number of employees that are desired for the institution and the number of employees that are qualified as engineers, and as old technical expertise that is required by the institution to fulfil its obligation. Thank you very much.

*IsiZulu:*

Mnu X NGWEZI: Ngiyathokoza Sihlalo.

*English:*

Hon Deputy President, surely whatever programme that seeks to address the issues at Eskom has yielded to these kinds of solutions being provided such as what the person who asked the question calls the retrenchment of 2 000 people. My question is that are you not in fear of the poor service delivery that is going to be provided to our people after the retrenchment because this is quite a big number and ...

*IsiZulu:*

...abantu bakithi bangahle babe nenkinga kagesi njengoba ihlale ikhona futhi mhlawumbe isimo sibe sibi kakhulu ...

*English:*

... so, as Leader of Government Business ...

*IsiZulu:*

... awunalo yini uvalo lokuthi kungenzeka isimo kunalokhu esiyikho siqhubeke sibe sibi kakhulu ...

*English:*

... because human resource is now very little at Eskom. Thank you.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you, hon Chairperson. No, hon member, I don’t have any fear. The reason why is because that Eskom is one entity of government that is highly specialised. Currently, we are grappling with power stations that have got problems to be with maintenance and we are aware that over the past years, we’ve lost a number of highly skilled people in Eskom, and we must try by all means to try and reproduce and skill a lot of people that will replace the skills that have been lost in Eskom.

Therefore, these people that we are allowing to leave, those people that leave the utility through natural attrition, we can only replace those skills that are highly in need in the institution. However, if that skill is no longer needed in

Eskom, we don’t replace those people that have gone out of Eskom through natural attrition. If those people that have gone out of Eskom through taking severance package, we replace those that have got the desired skills to be able to take Eskom to the next level. The population the country is really complaining about the service that they get from Eskom, so it is important for Eskom to up its game. Eskom can only up its game if it has got the right people at the right places.

Therefore, as it happens now, Eskom needs more people at the power station level because that is where generation happens. At the power station level, we need engineers and technicians that can deal with the challenges and the breakages that happens at the power station that lead us to load shedding.

Thank you very much.

Question 5:

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon Chairperson, the pollution of the Vaal River System remains a great concern to all of us, bearing in mind its hazards to health and disruption of economic activities necessary for sustainable livelihoods. We cannot express more than we have, our sincere apologies to all affected citizens for the hardships they have endured, because of the pollution of the Vaal River. As government, we

acknowledge the severity of the problem posed by the sewer spillages, and the time it has taken to deal with its negative impact on the lives of our people, the economy of Gauteng as well as neighbouring provinces.

This problem is a result of poor maintenance of our sanitation infrastructure by a number of municipalities along the Vaal River. These municipalities I have met, the municipalities from Mpumalanga, Gauteng, Free State, North West and Northern Cape Provinces. There is no question that the Emfuleni Local Municipality contributes a significant amount to this pollution. What is worse, is that the institutional governance challenges of Emfuleni compound the provision of water and sanitation within the municipality. This, among other issues, led to the Gauteng Provincial Executive Council invoking Section 139 (1)(b) and (5)(a) intervention of the Constitution of South Africa in June 2018.

However, the reality is that over the past two years, the Gauteng Provincial Government intervention has not yielded the desired results in terms of sanitation management improvement. Now, the South African Human Rights Commission has issued a report recommending that government should put urgent legislative interventions in place, to correct the violations

of human rights. Hon Ryder has been on this matter and will recall that in November 2020, he had called for national government to use its authority to step in for the sake of Emfuleni residents.

Of course, at the time we did express our frustration at the developments, and committed that national government would step up its intervention in order to revitalise the services that have collapsed, and get the situation corrected.

Undoubtedly, the situation has necessitated additional intervention, as provided for by section 63 of the Water Services Act of 1997. As part of this intervention, the Minister of Human Settlements, Water and Sanitation will be taking over the functions of the Water Services Authority as stated in section 63(2) of the Water Services Act of 1997.

This means, the Minister will assume the municipal responsibilities for a specific duration, to fix the sanitation challenges as experienced by the people of Emfuleni. This intervention for sanitation and water infrastructure in Emfuleni Local Municipality will be implemented through a R7,6 billion multi-pronged approach. This will be directed at operations and maintenance to be implemented by Rand Water, refurbishment and upgrade of

infrastructure to be implemented by the Department of Water and Sanitation, and sustainability of water and sanitation services through the restructuring of the municipal entity responsible for water and sanitation, as well as the procurement of tools of trade.

In this regard, administrators appointed in the Municipality are working together with the Department of Water and Sanitation to resolve these challenges of Emfuleni Local Municipality. The Ministers of Finance, Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, and Human Settlements, Water and Sanitation are in continuous engagements with the intention to ring-fence financial resources and strengthen government’s response to this sanitation challenge. An amount of

R1,8 billion has been budgeted in the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework to address the refurbishment and upgrade of infrastructure.

Furthermore, the Department of Water and Sanitation is in the process of appointing several contractors to support the efforts to stop further and continued pollution of the Vaal River. It is anticipated that appointments of these civil and mechanical engineers, will be made by May 2021, and work would start immediately thereafter. The completion time for most

major works varies from six months on the refurbishment work to three years on the upgrade work. Thank you, hon Chairperson.

Mr D R RYDER: Hon Chairperson, let me thank the Deputy President for the answer. Mr Mabuza, the involvement of the Minister is nothing new. Every cent of Regional Bulk Infrastructure Grant allocation to the Emfuleni has been given directly to the Department of Human Settlements, Water and Sanitation since 2013, as this became presidential priority project. In fact, the Minister opened the new component to the waste and water treatment works just two weeks ago, at the end of February.

But the problem lies in the broken reticulation and pump stations. So, on the works that the SA Defence Force, SANDF, has done, and its latest addition to the system does not help, as the sewerage still flows in the streets and spoil water system, and pump stations overflow into the river. The NCOP went to an oversight to Emfuleni, and we were told that the different works are under capacity because the sewerage does not even get to them. It’s in the streets, it’s in people’s houses, it’s even in malls and offices.

This past week Rand Water further reduced water supply in Emfuleni as the critical measure. In fact, even cutting off many residents in high aligned areas. Minister Sisulu’s plans that she has been working on are not working. Mr Deputy President, as the leader of government business, you are responsible. The human rights abuse that have been detailed in the report documentary, can be laid directly at the Minister’s feet, not at the Emfuleni’s feet, as the report said.

It can be laid at the Minister’s feet, at your feet and at the feet of the President, as this is a presidential priority project. Will you now declare a disaster, to allow appropriate responses to be applied urgently to save the lives and the environment of the people in the area? Thank you.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon Chairperson, I really appreciate the frustration and the concern from the hon member. I have visited the area, and I have seen the extent of the problem.

Now, the province has intervened, but the intervention has not yielded the desired outcome. The spillage in the Vaal River, in the houses and in the streets still continues unabated.

Now, when we were in this House, we promised to take this problem further, and at that time, we have taken a discussion with the Minister of Defence, Minister of Human Settlements,

Water and Sanitation and the Minister of Cooperative Governance.

It was quite clear that the Department of Water and Sanitation lacks some ability, because some of the authority still rests with the provincial government. Now that the Minister has taken over assumption of water services in the municipality, and has taken it upon herself to intervene, through the amount of resources that have been budgeted for Emfuleni, I want to believe, hon Ryder, that there will be a difference.

I also want to assure you that in the shortest possible time, myself, the Minister of Human Settlements and the Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs and the Premier, are going to visit the area, so that we prioritise the urgency of finishing that project because life is affected. The conditions under which the people of Emfuleni are living, is not healthy. The people of Emfuleni cannot be subjected under this condition for a long time. Thank you very much.

*Setswana:*

Rre K MOTSAMAI: Modulasetilo, ke lebogela karabo ya Motlatsamopresidente. Rre Motlatsamoporesidente, re bona

maiteko a karolo ya 139 mo Masepaleng wa Emfuleni a falotse. Masepala o tsweletse pele go sa eleng tlhoko ditokelo tsa badudi ebile o a ba gatelela. Masepala o mo tlase ga kgatelelo le bonweenwee bo kwa godimo, mme le gompieno ga go na motho yo o golegilweng ka seno.

Motlatsamoporesidente, puso ya rona e tla simolola leng go tiisa letsogo go basenyi mo masepaleng? Ke go reng lo sa utlwele batho ba rona botlhoko ba ba leng mo tlase ga kgatelelo, gape go reng lo sa diragatse toka mo dikopong tsa bosetšhaba? Ke a leboga, Modulasetilo.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon Chairperson, I don’t have any interpretation facilities here, and I could not pick up the question.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: The question is really around the rights of residents or citizens and ... You can continue, hon Mathevula.

*Xitsonga:*

Man B T MATHEVULA: Mutshamaxitulu, eka ntshamo lowu a hi ri na wona tolweni ndzi kombisile xiphiqo xa vuhundzuluxeri. Sweswi xirho xa hina xi vutisa xivutiso hi ririmi ra ka vona. N’wina

ma xi hlamusela, kambe a mi xi hlamuseli swona. Ndzi kombela leswaku mi lunghisa mhaka ya vahundzuluxeri leswaku swirho swa hina loko swi vutisa swivutiso swi kota ku hundzuluxeriwa hi ndlela leyi swi vutisaka hayona. Ndza khensa, Mutshamaxitulu.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: The question of interpreting is a very important question which has been raised before. It’s a matter that we will have to pursue outside of this sitting. We request an urge for the Table staff to attend to this matter. I can see that the Chief Whip wants to make a comment.

The CHIEF WHIIP OF THE NCOP: I do. In fact, there is interpretation in the House, but for the members that are on virtual, there is no interpretation.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Okay.

The CHIEF WHIIP OF THE NCOP: Okay, the comment stands. I don’t want to spoil the fact that the matter should be looked into. I suggest that we should help the President by interpreting the question so that he can give a response to the question.

Thank you, Chair.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: It seems that there has been some intervention, and the issue is being addressed. We will update the House in time, to ensure that we are in par. Deputy President really, the question is around ... [Interjections.] Yes, Mathevula, what is the point of order?

Ms B T MATHEVULA: Can I assist you to read the question before you it very wrongly, Chair.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Yes, please do.

Ms B T MATHEVULA: Okay, thank you very much. Deputy President, despite the lengthy section 139 intervention of Emfuleni Local Municipality, it has remained dysfunctional. The municipality has been run to the ground with ... [Inaudible.] ... to no consequences to those that are responsible. At which point does it occur to government that urgent interventions are needed in municipalities? Are the living conditions of those affected by the service delivery breakdown not enough to instigate an urgent intervention? Did you have time to fix this? What has taken you so long? Thank you, Chair.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Thank you for doing that hon member. Hon Mathevula is playing a very important role, and we should really acknowledge the assistance

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon Chairperson, when I started answering this question, I really conveyed our apologies to the people of Emfuleni. I am quite aware that this problem has taken very long. The interventions that have been made to the municipality have not yielded the desired outcome. Hon member, it was very important that we allow the province to first intervene. Concerning the application of section 139, of which as the NCOP we are also party to that intervention, because the province can’t really go alone without your blessing.

Now, that intervention has not yielded the results. We are therefore now saying that the Minister must intervene, Of course, that is not justification that this problem has taken too long. The only difference that I am now bringing to the House is that, we are now bringing the intervention of the national department. Of course, when the National Department of Defence was brought in the Emfuleni Municipality, the crisis was huge.

When I visited the, the Department of Defence did quite some work because, some of the sewerage treatment plant there were not working, but when the department left, those treatment plants were working. Of course, they needed the required maintenance. I am not aware that, as of now the situation of the treatment plants have improved, but the situation in the households has not improved. This time around, the Minister of Human Settlements, Water and Sanitation would intervene directly.

She will take the directive from the municipality in order to deal with water and the sanitation problem. Of course, certain amount of resources has been allocated to this project, which are not enough. It’s going to be a multi-year project, but we are going to go there and see for ourselves, and make sure that the appointment of the contractors who have to deal with the problem is fast tracked. Thank you very much.

Mr M DANGOR: Through you Chairperson, hon Deputy President, we welcome the intensified efforts to address the challenges in the Emfuleni Local Municipality. As evidence among others, the intervention of the Minister of Human Settlements, Water and Sanitation, hon Deputy President, concerning the challenges,

please comment on the corrective actions taken to the perception of maladministration ... [Interjections.]

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Order, hon members. Just listen to the question

Mr M DANGOR: ... in the Emfuleni Local Municipality.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Yes, please be tolerant. Hon Dangor, please proceed.

Mr M DANGOR: Hon Chairperson, you and I and the hon Ryder among others were present, when the previous Mayor of the area stated that, whatever interventions we take, populist actions further North in Johannesburg by the previous Administration and by Tshwane, is going to contribute to the further problems in the area because, it doesn’t matter what the other does to correct these things, as the affluent flows freely and more and more populist actions are taken, but this will not resolve the problem.

So, it becomes all our responsibility to ensure that these actions are corrected and that some actions are not taking

place because if we lose the Vaal, we lose the ... [Inaudible.] ... of the country. I thank you.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: The last question is a question on political task team. It is raised by ... [Interjections.]

Mr S F DU TOIT: Hon Chair, I am standing on a point of order. With due respect, my follow-up question was supposed to be posed after hon Motsamai, but then you recognised hon Dangor. So, I still have a question on this issue for the Deputy President. May I proceed?

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Why don’t you do that bt getting the response from the Deputy President on the question from Dangor, and then we move on to Du Toit, get the response, then we move to the next question?

Mr S F DU TOIT: Okay. Thank you, Chair.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon Chairperson, I need to reiterate the disappointment and the apology that we have given to the people of Emfuleni. I have said that the problem is not only for the Emfuleni Local Municipality. There are lot of provinces that are contributing to the pollution, because it

is not only about the problem of water or sewerage spillage in the area where people are residing or the blockages of the treatment plants. Those are not the only problems.

The other problem is that the spillage is going into the Vaal River, and it is affecting the economy of five other provinces which are, Mpumalanga, Gauteng, Free State, the North West and the Northern Cape. So, as much as that we are going to deal with the problem of the Gauteng Province in Emfuleni, the inability to deal with the problem, is share of the problem.

We must still deal with all the other provinces and the municipalities that contribute to the problem.

We are going to take this matter up. We have met with the municipalities from different provinces that contribute to the problem. We are going to make a follow-up and we are going to ensure that money is put aside to deal with the problem. So, I must assure the hon members that, the next time we come to this House, we are going to report a different message. Thank you very much.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Thank you, Deputy President.

Let’s move to the question by hon Du Toit.

Mr S F DU TOIT: Through you Chairperson, hon Deputy President, you’ve already answered comprehensively, but it is evident that money has been poured into the Emfuleni Municipality by great extent, and we can’t move around the fact that there are many municipalities that are beyond the Back to Basics programmes, such as Emfuleni. Across the country, much more municipalities experience this same problem every day and in many of these provinces, Provincial Treasuries and ... [Inaudible.] ... waste on taxpayers’ money on something that shouldn’t even existed if the municipalities were managed effectively.

Now, through all these municipalities are the municipal managers who messes in this whole situation, only to be deployed to another municipality. SA Local Government Association, Salga, has in some extent indicated that they will address the issue of municipal managers, but they are really never held accountable for these problems that have been created for the first time, Mr Deputy President. Have you discussed this issue with Salga, and have you come to a solution with regards to this, to hold people accountable for the waste of money and the mess that we are currently in?

Thank you, Deputy President.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon Chairperson, let me thank the hon member for the question. I think that the problem with the collapse of the service delivery in our municipalities, is caused by the architecture and the way we are working as the different spheres of government. Most of the time, the national government would not be aware of the situation that is unfolding in a municipality, until there’s a crisis.

The national government would not be aware of the situation unfolding in a province, until there’s a crisis. Now, we deliberated much on these problems, and finally, the President came up with the District Delivery Model. This model seeks to get together national government, provincial government and local government at a district level, so that we can share our plans of service delivery. All the plans that will be shared they will now be going to be included and accommodated in one district plan, which will involve programmes that are coming from national, provincial and local government.

We are going to ensure that these programmes are funded, and we are going to monitor the spending and the implementation of that one plan at a district level. All of us have the three spheres of government. We hope that in that way, all of us are going to be forced to account. We have appointed the district

champions, which are Ministers, which are going to chair all the district forums that will monitor the implementation of service delivery in each and every district.

We think that this will bring an improvement. Really, to follow each and every municipality one by one is daunting. They are collapsing every day. It will be better that we hold all municipalities, provinces and national government to account at a district level where it matters most and where they must deliver the service. If there is any collapse of service, I think that all of us will be equipped to realise the collapse, and therefore respond accordingly. Thank you very much, hon Chair.

Question 6:

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you hon Chairperson, the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy has started work on the implementation of the Integrated Resource Plan, IRP, 2019. The department has been providing regular updates to the Political Task Team on Eskom in this regard. The work undertaken by the department includes the procurement of additional 2 000 megawatts of generation capacity under the Risk Mitigation Independent Power Producer Procurement

Programme. The department will announce successful bidders from this programme before the end of March 2021.

The department is also working on a request for proposals for the procurement of 11 513 megawatts of generation capacity from renewable energy, gas, coal and storage. We have been informed by the department that the first request for a proposal for 2 600 megawatts from renewable energy commonly known and referred to as bid window 5 will be issued to the market before the end of March 2021. The rest is scheduled to follow in August and December 2021, respectively.

South Africa’s economic recovery and growth path largely will depend on our ability to ensure the security of energy supply. In line with our aspirations of industrialisation and job creation, we must ensure that there is no disruption to electricity supply. Thank you very much, hon Chairperson.

Mr I NTSUBE: Thank you very much hon Chairperson of the Council, the Chief Whip and the Deputy President of the Republic. Deputy President, this august House also had the benefit of a briefing by the Minister of Department of Mineral Resources and Energy on the roll out of integrated resource

plan which we welcome as a step in the direct direction towards sustainable energy security.

We welcome the roll-out acquisition plan of 2 600 megawatts from renewable energy as indicated by the Deputy President’s plan. Hon Deputy President, the critical question is, “How are the merging power suppliers going to benefit from the procurement?” Secondly, Chair, I am not trying to divert or grandstand from the initial question ... [Inaudible.] ... of accounting would really appreciate the stanza or the comment from the Deputy President regarding what is happening on the ground, particularly at Wits University with regard to National Student Financial Aid Scheme, NSFAS, because there has been a contest between the Minister of Higher Education and the policy position of the ruling party. Thank you very much, hon Chairperson.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you very much hon Chairperson, allow me to focus on the question of Eskom, because the challenges that is faced by students I am sure the Minister of Higher Education will respond to that as he did this morning as he responded to the challenges and the availability of resources that they will seek to resolve the problem. Coming back to the question, government has approved the IRP 2019 and

that is going to be the roadmap that we are going to follow in trying to procure additional energy.

Most of the energy that we are going to procure is going to be from renewable energy sources. Those renewable energy sources have been procured right from bid window 1 to bid window 4, and we are not planning to go to bid window 5. This bid windows 1, 2 and 3 involve a lot of companies that have been appointed to generate energy using our natural resources like wind, solar and as and when they complete a project, they then connect to Eskom, and I must say that bid window 1 to bid window 4 have been very slow in their completion hence very little energy has been acquired from bid window 1 to bid window 4.

Progress is very slow, hence the struggle that we are facing. But one thing again, which is a problem to Eskom is that the price of one unit that is sold by the independent producers is a bit exorbitant and very steep for Eskom. Eskom is negotiating the prices with those power producers, and we are encouraging that to finalise those negotiations because this is unsustainable, Eskom is charging a certain amount for a unit of energy to the consumers. But if Eskom is paying more

for one unit, then that can’t be sustainable, otherwise the

power utility will be broke. Thank you very much.

Mr S F DU TOIT: Thank you hon Chair, through you to the hon deputy President, I am quite informed that in the integrated resource plan 2019, “South Africa is a signatory to the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and has ratified the agreement.

The IRP is an electricity infrastructure development plan based on this cost electricity supply and demand balance, taking into account security of supply and the environment to minimise the negative emissions and water usage and at the time of the proclamation, it was envisaged that the IRP would be a living plan to be revised regularly.”

This plan makes mention of natural gas, hydro renewable energy, solar, wind, etc. But, with reference to the above and the fact that the initial question refers to economic growth and employment and that the plan is a living plan, does the integrated resource plan allow for biogas plants to be erected at existing municipal sewage treatment facilities - since this will directly speak to the incorporated government objectives, namely, affordable electricity, reduced greenhouse gases, reduced water consumption, diversified electricity generation

sources, localisation and regional development and reduced water pollution. Thank you, Deputy President?

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you very much for the question. Yes, we are mindful of the carbon emissions from our power station that are coal fired. To this end, our position is that the transition from coal to renewable power generation in a manner that does not impede socioeconomic development must be pursued. As the political task team we have agreed that the just energy transmission should be implemented in a phased manner over a period of time with the objective of transitioning Eskom to a net zero carbon emission by 2050.

It’s a very ambitious goal to deal with the carbon emission, but to this end, just to secure the anxiety of the hon members that Cabinet has approved the submission of the Gas Amendment Bill of 2020 to Parliament. The benefit of gas is that it contributes to the lowering of carbon emission and supports the renewable energy generation.

In the main, the establishment of a gas market helps mitigate the decrease in coal production and use; provides for the accommodation of new technologies in the market and fosters the creation of new profiles and skills to develop; construct

and manage new imports, transport storage and consumption- based infrastructure and tertiary sectors such as services sector.

So, the country is endowed with a lot of resources, and one of those resources is gas. We think that with the advent of this Bill that is going to be discussed, we are going to open the market. We have gas that we are going to explore and open its market. We hope that it is going to reduce our carbon emission and it will help us to transit from coal to other renewable energy resources. Thank you very much, hon Chairperson.

Mr M S MOLETSANE: Chair, in close to three decades that the ANC has been in power, we have not seen strong and decisive moves towards rapid industrialisation, despite numerous calls from the EFF to do so. To depend on the provision of stable, secure energy from Eskom in order to implement rapid industrialisation and by virtue thereof, promote economic growth and employment will be to do a disservice to South Africans. Ambitious plans on paper are all good and well, but we know that when it comes to implantation, the ANC always falls short. Deputy President, can you tell our people what immediate long-term gains will the Integrated Resource Plan,

IRP, 2019 provide for them? And what realistic timelines can they expect to start seeing changes? Thank you, Chair.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you hon Chairperson, the IRP 2019 is a game changer because it allows the country to open its scope in terms of energy generation. We are no longer going to rely on coal. We have realised that there are many other energy generation resources that we can utilise, like we were talking about gas now, wind and solar. And all those are very clean energy generation mechanisms that are not costly.

Eskom is paying a lot of money for the emission of carbon. Now we need to find technologies that will lower the carbon emission but still utilise our coal deposits that we have. But the IRP 2019 opened up a new chapter in our power generation and it allows independent power producers to also enter the market. It’s no longer going to be a monopoly of Eskom to generate energy. Independent power producers are allowed to produce energy, and we think that would have a very good impact on our economic growth because more and more energy will start to be available for industrialisation.

It is not true that the ANC government has done nothing. The ANC government has connected a number of households that were

not previously electrified and are now electrified. Of course, we left behind in terms of our build programme – yes, Medupi is there and Kusile is there but it is not enough to keep pace with the economic growth of the country. That is why we are now putting more energy into these independent power producers and the IRP 2019 to open up our generation capacity. Thank you very much.

Mr M NHANHA: Well, well, well, Mr Deputy President, I am sure that you will agree with me for once that the political task teams’ integrated resource plans are like trying to rearrange the deck chairs of a Titanic. I will put it simply, it is like trying to herd chickens into a kraal, that’s simple English.

What South Africans really need is a proper plan and a plan which is proposed by the DA ... [Interjections.] ... which is independent electricity management operator bill, which was in act a response by the DA to the President’s pledge to unbundled Eskom in his 2019 state of the nation address.

I heard you Mr Deputy President mentioning things like opening up the market; things like opening up the scope of energy generation; things like no longer allowing Eskom to enjoy the monopoly. You can take it from me Mr Deputy President, I support you and I accept your commitment but in this Council

today, can you tell South Africans and assure them that you will put them first and not the ANC first and support the private members’ Bill as advised by the DA. Thank you very much.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon Chairperson, I think the very fact that we as the ANC are governing the country, is because of the plan that we have presented to the people about how we want to take the country to the next level. I really appreciate the DA’s plan, but it has failed to impress upon the people to support that plan - that is why the DA is in the opposition today. The people of South Africa did not agree with your plan, let alone a small plan about Eskom, but the plan of the entire country.

Now, the plan that you have about Eskom is nothing different from the plan that was announced by the President. There is nothing different, really. We said in the beginning that Eskom is too big to fail and probably Eskom must be unbundled so that we create three separate entities that will help one another in times of crisis. We don’t want our generation capacity when gives us problems it affects our transmission capacity. We don’t want our transmission capacity when it has problems as it affects our distribution capacity. So, we think

three entities that will be stand alone will have the capacity to pull Eskom out of this financial problem.

We still believe in that plan, and we are almost far from turning Eskom around and unbundling it. Yes, Eskom is still facing a lot of financial challenges and we think that overtime we are going to overcome these financial challenges, when our people start paying for the services that they consume. We call upon our people to pay for electricity that will help Eskom to get out of this financial problem.

We request and we plead with our municipalities to pay for the electricity that they consume so that Eskom can come out of this financial problem. We plead for all government departments that are consuming electricity from Eskom to pay for the electricity that they use so that Eskom can get out of this financial problem. The problems that are faced by Eskom are multipronged and they have been there for a long time. Now that we are here looking at these problems, we believe that we are going to resolve them. Thank you very much.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Thank you very much, Deputy President. Allow me at this point, hon delegates to thank the

Deputy President for making himself available to answer questions and engage on various issues that we have raised.

The Council adjourned at 16:45.