**UNREVISED HANSARD**

**NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES**

**WEDNESDAY, 17 MARCH 2021**

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

The Council met at 14:00.

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

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Hon members, just before we start, I just, once again, want to express our sincere condolences to our members that lost family members in the recent past and also to the Zulu nation as we are going to see the monarch of the Zulu nation being buried in these few days. We want to express our sincere condolences to everyone and we also want to wish all of you well in these few days that we are still in here and also where you are going to be for constituency.

Hon delegates, let me remind you of the following: the virtual sitting constitutes the sitting of the NCOP and the place of

the sitting is deemed to be Cape Town, where the seat of the NCOP is.

Delegates in the virtual sitting enjoy the same powers and privileges that apply in the sitting of the NCOP.

For the purposes of the quorum all delegates who are logged on to the virtual platform shall be considered as present.

Delegates must always, but I disagree of late with it but we will discuss it, it is understandable that delegates must always keep their videos on and they should ensure that the microphones on their gadgets are muted and must always remain muted. I think we can advise that those that are going to speak must make sure that they switch the videos on.

The interpretation facility is active, we have made sure about that, because yesterday there was just a little bit of a misunderstanding.

And any delegate who wishes to speak must use the ‘raise hand’ function. In some of the instances I see that it is under ‘reactions’ and others I see that it’s under ‘more’ on the gadgets it has different areas where it can be implemented.

There will be no Notices of Motion, in accordance with Council Rule 247(1).

Hon delegates, before we proceed to the questions let me also take this opportunity to welcome the Ministers from the economic cluster, particularly the Minister of Tourism and the Minister of Communications and Digital Technologies.

I would further like to make the following remarks: the time for reply by Ministers to a question is five minutes; four supplementary questions are allowed per question; a member who has asked the initial question would be the first to be afforded an opportunity to ask a supplementary question; the time for asking a supplementary question is two minutes; the time for reply to a supplementary question is four minutes; the supplementary question must emanate from the initial question.

**QUESTIONS TO MINISTERS ECONOMICS - CLUSTER 4C**

Question 40:

The MINISTER OF TOURISM: Hon Deputy Chair, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a devastating impact on both economic growth

and employment, particularly for the tourism sector in South Africa and globally, affecting lives and livelihoods. It brought with it significant lessons for the sector in the country.

These lessons include, amongst others, the following: over the years the sector, both public and private, had most of its focus on attracting international tourists as they have always been considered to yield higher returns. This meant that limited investment went into the promotion of domestic tourism with the implementation of various mitigating measures by most of our people at international tourism market, including closing of the borders, it necessitated that we do look at

re-orientating our work, in terms of tourism and therefore, focus on domestic tourism.

This, you would understand, hon members, has been a necessitated lesson. When countries started closing South Africa when we announced that we have variant 501Y.V2, this led to many countries and airlines stopping international travellers to South Africa and therefore, the lesson we learnt out of this process is that domestic tourism remains the pillar of our tourism and we have to learn from other countries and increase our work around domestic tourism,

increase the numbers and the number of stays as travellers go into those.

Another significant lesson that we have learnt is around how the workers and small businesses became highly vulnerable, in terms of crisis. Insurances were reluctant to pay for those losses associated with the pandemic to the point that it ended up in court. For the workers, the Department of Employment and Labour came to the rescue in providing cash; we also provided support in terms of R200 million for tourism relief fund, but we could only support 4 000 Small, Medium and Macro Enterprises, SMMEs, with R50 000 each in terms of grant.

The lesson we are learning out of this is that payment of Unemployment Insurance Fund, UIF, should be compulsory for everybody. So, we picked up during this period that many in our tourism sector were not paying UIF though government took a decision that despite employers not paying UIF, workers would benefit.

So, firstly, we are saying lesson that we learned is that UIF contribution is paramount in the tourism sector.

Secondly, sustainable mechanism is important. For us to say when we reach this period of difficulties how do we support SMMEs like we’ve done with tourism relief?

Perhaps one of the things that we have to look at is some reserves that we could be able to start contributing to as a sector so that when we have difficulties we are able retrieve from it.

The last point I want to make is that it taught us that it’s important to pay attention to the supply side, in terms of crisis, and therefore, a sustainable database of what we have as a supply side is important so that when you say you are protecting the supply side you know where and when you are going to be able to protect that. Thank you very much, hon member.

*Setswana*:

Rre K M MMOIEMANG: Motlatsamodulasetilo, sa ntlha, e re ke tseye tshono eno ke leboge Tona gore a bo a kgonne go re fa karabo le ditlhaloso tse di tseneletseng mabapi le potso e ke e boditseng.

Sa bobedi, ke leboge Tona ka loeto le a ileng a le tsaya go ya kwa porofenseng ya rona ya Kapa Bokone. Ke bone a le ko Grawiesval.

Jaanong, Tona, jaaka o tlhalositse gore go na le ...

*English*:

... pocket of excellence ...

*Setswana*:

... tse e leng gore le kgonne go di iponela, re shebile gore lephata la bojanala le nnile lephata lantlha la go shotlega gape e nnile lone la bofelo la go buliwa.

Se ke batlang go se botsa jaaka potso e e latelang ke gore rona ba kwa magaeng, ka gonne o ka fitlhela gore le ditshono tse o di tlhalositseng ga re a kgona go di fitlhelela, o ka dira eng go bona gore di re fitlhelele? Le gore ke eng se o ka se isang kwa porofenseng ya rona go latela loeto la gago la Grawiesval? Ke a leboga, Tona.

TONA YA BOJANALA: Motlatsamodulasetilo, ke rata go leboga Rre Mmoiemang. Fa ke ne le kwa Kapa Bokone beke e e fetileng ke lemogile gore batho ba bantsi ga ba itsi gore go diragalang

kwa Kapa Bokone. Batho ba atisa go bua ka bontle jwa Motse Kapa, Durban le Kapa Botlhaba ka gonne di na le mawatle; fela bontsi jwa bone ga bo itsi gore Kapa Bokone e na le mafelo a mantsi a ma ntle.

Ke ka moo re neng re ntse re tsaya ditshwantsho re be re di phasalatsa mo mafaratlhathleng a botsalano gore kwa Kapa Bokone go na le Grawiesval. Bontsi bo ne bo ntse bo botsa gore lefelo leo le ko kae e bile ba ka le fitlhelela jang? Ke selo se se dirileng ke itumele go bona gore Maaforika a batla go ka itsi ka ga naga ya bone e bile ba ikemiseditse gore tshegetsa le go etela Kapa Bokone.

Se ke ithutileng sone fa ke ne ke bua le bangwe ba bo rakgwebopotlana ke gore ga ba ise ba amogele sepe go tswa go Letlole la Tshegetso la Bojanala [Tourism Relief Fund]. Ba tlhalositse gore bothata bo dirilwe ke gore bontsi jwa bone ga bo na ditokomane tse puso e di batlang, bangwe ga ba itsi gore kopo e diriwa jang, bangwe ba ne ba sa itsi gore puso e tlhamile letlole leo.

Se ke se tshepisitseng batho ba kwa Kapa Bokone morago ga go bua le MEC Vosloo, re dumallane ka gore re tshwanela gore re tlise Lefapha la Bojanala le Lefapha la Tlhabololo ya

Dikgwebopotlana kwa Kapa Bokone go ka katisa borwakgwebopotlana gore ba itsi gore go tlhokega ditokomane tsefe.

Bangwe ba nagana gore go bona tokomane e tshwanang le Tax Clearance o tshwanetse o duele madi kante fa o na le kgweebo e e potlana ga o batliwi madi go ka bona ditokomane tse di tshwanang le Tax Clearance. Bangwe ba nagana gore go bona BEE Certificate o tshwanetse o duele madi a mantsi. Ga ba itsi gore fa o le kgwebopotlana o dira afitafiti go supa gore o kgwebopotlana, ka jalo, ga o na go batliwa madi.

Ke se ke ithutileng sone kwa Kapa Bokone e bile nna le Tona re ipofile ka gore re tla romela ditlhopha mme ...

*English:*

... director-general, DG, is working on that programme together ...

*Setswana:*

... le ba Lefapha la Tlhabololo ya Dikgwebopotlana. Re tlile go nna le dikatiso [workshops] go ka thusa bao ba leng kwa Kapa Bokone.

Ke rata go itsise gore jaaka ke ntse ke tsamaya diporofense tsotlhe, ke tlile go thusa dikgwebopotlana fa re ntse re lemoga dikgwetlho tse ba nang le tsona, e se ke ya nna kgang ya gore re thusa Kapa Bokone fela; re tlhabolola le ba ba kwa magaeng, re tlile go thusa botlhe ba ba tlhokang thuso. Ke a leboga.

*English*:

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Hon Minister, I am so excited when you speak about my province but I’m not allowed now to comment [Laughter.] I will take another opportunity. But I’m sure you saw that the Northern Cape is the jewel that is just not well-known to people.

Mr T J BRAUTESETH: Minister, you and I both know that to be at the cutting edge of any business, the playing field needs to be level; this is unfortunately not so. Not everybody benefitted from the temporary employment relief fund and no, would also not benefit from the exclusionary tourism equity fund. This is a violation of the rights of employees.

How will you explain to those employees that work for companies that are not Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment, BBBEE, empowered that they will be facing possible

retrenchment as these businesses may close their doors, as they are not allowed to benefit from the funds set up by your department? Thank you, Chair.

The MINISTER OF TOURISM: Hon Brauteseth, let me just explain. Let me make an example, when I was in the Northern Cape I came across one of the business owners who told me that he didn’t benefit from the tourism relief fund and I asked why, only to find, firstly, in terms of understanding, what was the requirement was limited and was confused by the noise in the public domain, didn’t follow what we issued, in terms of tourism relief fund; secondly, there was a letter I received from one of the beneficiaries who said ‘Thank you Minister for giving us the support. I’m a white female business owner, I have received my tourism relief fund and thank God I did not listen to those in the public domain who said I do not qualify.’ I’m saying this because many of the people were misled by this statement, hon member, you are making and I hope you will desist because you’ll make a lot of people not to benefit from tourism equity fund.

The fund was not for black people, the fund meant for

compliance. Now, if you’re a SMME with an income below

R5 million, R10 million, R5 million, are you aware that you’re

exempted? So, automatically your BEE status would have made you to receive the tourism relief fund.

But ... you say to me what would I say to the workers? I will tell them that their employers are not willing to be part of building a new South Africa. Their employers need to help me as workers to shoot around the table and have a heart-to-heart conversation with their employers as South Africans to say ‘How do we rebuild this country that comes from the ashes of apartheid, that excluded majority of South Africans that we want to build a nonracial society but an inclusive economy?’

Inclusive economy doesn’t say I must perpetuate to give support to the previously advantaged at the expense of the previously disadvantaged. That’s what I would say to the workers.

We have to make sure ... that’s why I’m even talking ... some of these employers you’re talking about, by the way, who have perpetually in the public domain claimed to have the best interest of the workers at heart were not even taking the money that the workers were contributing of UIF to the Department of Labour. It was this government that took a decision to say, despite the employers not taking the money

and contributing it to UIF we are going to make sure that we take care of the workers. This is what we stand for and this is who we are. Thank you.

Mr T J BRAUTESETH: Will the Minister give us a list of those beneficiaries, Deputy Chairperson?

The MINISTER OF TOURISM: They are on the website of the department.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Hon Brauteseth, what you’re doing is out of order. And I can testify that just recently I watched a TV show and there was white tourism operators that they were very lucky and fortunate to get [Interjections.]

Ms H S BOSHOFF: On a point of order.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: No, but I’m just bringing order here because hon Brauteseth also is just shouting [Interjections.] [Inaudible.] Order! I’m chairing this session, order! I can [Interjections.] [Inaudible.]

Ms H S BOSHOFF: Chair, on a point of order. Chair, you [Inaudible.] be so biased

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: I’m not bias, I’m telling

the truth. Must I not [Interjections.] [Inaudible.]

Ms H S BOSHOFF: No, I’m saying you should not protect the

Minister because you’re talking about white people

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Hon Boshoff, that’s not a

point of order and we are going to continue.

Ms S B LEHIHI: Minister, in what ways do you envision the sector will evolve to aid recovery post COVID-19 and would you say that your department is ready

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Do you hear? I don’t hear,

can you hear her?

Hon Lehihi, can you try again?

Ms S B LEHIHI: Minister, in what ways do you envision the sector will evolve to aid recovery post COVID-19 and would you say that your department is ready for that undertaking?

*Setswana:*

Ke a leboga, Modulasetilo.

TONA YA BOJANALA: Leloko le le tlotlegang, se re se batlang kgotsa se re se lakatsang re le Lefapha la Bojanala ke gore re lakatsa gore re nne le lephata le le tsenyeletsang batho botlhe, moo e leng gore mosadi wa montsho o kgona go ka nna mong wa lefelo la go jela, e nne mong wa hotele, baša ba rona ba ba tswang kwa magaeng ba bone tshegetso go tswa go lefapha; ke seo re se lakatsang. Seo re sa se lakatseng ke gore morago ga covid re be re na le lephata leo le nnang e kete e ntse e le 1994.

Ka gantsi fa ke bua le boradikgang ke atisa go ba bolelela gore kgang eno e ntlhokisa boroko ka gonne fa o lebelela lephata la rona o bo o lebelela mathata a batho bantsho kgotsa a batho bao ba tswang kwa ditikologong tse di neng di sa bone ditshono mo malobeng, re bua ka basadi, e le bantsho kgotsa basweu, go a tshwana.

Lephata la rona le tletse ka basadi fela fa o ba batla ko botsamaising ga o ba fitlhele, fa o ba batla ko go beng ba ditlamo ga o ba fitlhele. Se ke se batlang ke gore morago ga covid, jaaka re ntse re mekamekane le go itharabologelwa ga

bojanala, re ba fitlhele basadi ba kgonne go bona ditshono tsa gore e nne beng ba dikgwebo, e nne batsamaisi. Ke ka moo re nang le mananeo a a farologaneng a a tshwanang le Lenaneo la Tlhabololo ya Khuduthamaga [Executive Development Programme] leo le tshwarelwang kwa Unisa. Beke eno bomme ba semeletse ka Lenaneo la Tlhabololo ya Khuduthamaga. Re ba tshegetsa ka lenaneo leno re le Lefapha la Bojanala ka gonne re batla go ba bona e le bakhuduthamaga bagolwane.

*English*:

Letlola la Tshiamo la Bojanala [Tourism Equity Fund] ke letlole le lengwe le re batlang gore morago ga covid le be le ungetse batho ba bantsi bao ba neng ba sa bone ditshono mo malobeng gore le bone e nne beng ba ditlamo. Ke seo re se dirang.

Fela re le lefapha ga re kitla re kgona dira dilo tsotlhe re le nosi, re tlhoka tshegetso ya bontsi jo bo mo lephateng, le lona le le Maloko a Palamente le re tshegetse mo maanong ano gore re ageng Aforika Borwa eo batho botlhe ba tla ikutlwang ba tsenyeletswa go yona le gore ba ikutlwe e le karolo ya setšhaba. Ke a leboga.

Question 43:

The MINISTER OF TOURISM: Thank you very much, Deputy Chairperson, and thank you, hon Boshoff for your question, I think it gives me an opportunity to clarify what Tourism Equity Fund is about.

In its criteria, Tourism Equity Fund direct its support to businesses owned and controlled by South Africans with 51% majority black ownership and control, not 100%. It is not 100% supporting black people, it is in the process of transformation. Thus the fund criteria are inclusive as they are accessible to all South Africans

In its conception, recognition was made to the fact that levels of participation of black majority, women, youth and people with disabilities are nowhere near the target set by tourism broad-based black economic empowerment, BBBEE, sector codes. The state of transformation in the tourism survey reveal that promoting black ownership of enterprises is a primary element if you look at the 2015 report. If you look at the 2018 report, you’ll notice that we were regressing with regard to transformation.

Very few enterprises achieve the target sets of ownership. In fact, less than 45% of tourism enterprising in the three

sectors; accommodation, hospitality and travel had achieved at least 30% of ownership target. It is for this reason that over and above the 51% ownership and control requirement, priority is also given to those businesses whose ownership and control includes 40% of women, 30% of youth and 2% people with disabilities.

Further, the fund also prioritises businesses in rural areas and townships as part of inclusivity. In essence, the Tourism Equity Fund moves away from an approach that empowers a few to a broadened ownership and control in the sector.

After the launch in January, the fund ... by the way hon member ... there was a threat of litigation with a view that this is unconstitutional. We know we have done our work and we know we are constitutional in what we have done ... Last year, we have been taken to court on BBBEE and we won. We do anticipate that this one ... if anyone wants to take us to court ... we will fight on and we will win. That’s why there has not been any court case as we speak and we are implementing.

You were saying few people are going to benefit. I can tell you now, the response is overwhelming from both black and

white. There are white businesses who have said that we have always wanted to have partnerships with black enterprises because we want to benefit from government business and we have not been able to because banks are not supporting them because they don’t have surety.

With Tourism Equity Fund, you made it possible for us to reach our dreams. I have received those letters and I have received those calls. I am not so sure which part of South Africa you live in that is not cognisance of what is it ... I go across the country, province by province and village by village. Many people have been saying this is long overdue.

By the way, hon members, we are just talking about a mere R1,2 billion support. It’s not even going to touch the tip of the iceberg.

Where I am sitting, I should at least be having R200 billion to be able to achieve what we want to achieve with regard to tourism transformation, but we said, even with this little, let’s do our best to contribute to transformation so that it could be seen and believed that we are doing our best. Thank you very much Deputy Chairperson.

Ms H S BOSHOFF: Thank you very much Deputy Chair, and thank you very much Minister for your response, from the onset I would like to say that we should be thankful that you got R1,2 billion because many other departments didn’t receive anything.

Minister, as you’ve just rightly said that litigation is in its place and you are so sure that you are going to win, etc, you are not afraid of any litigations that are going to take place but why is it that civil organisations have to threaten with lawsuits before you and your government realise that the tourism industry as a whole has suffered and not just an elite few? I would like a response on that as you have an obligation towards all the citizens, and you should to show unity, reach out to every tourism related business and not be fixated on race-based ideology.

I would like to know who were the donors who contributed to the Tourism Equity Fund and were they aware that the donations would be used to divide South Africans instead of furthering the dream of our rainbow nation? Thank you very much.

The MINISTER OF TOURISM: Thank you, I think I need to spend some time with hon Boshoff. Firstly, there is no litigation in

place, hon Boshoff. Afriforum and Solidarity issued a statement to say they’ll go to court. They sent letters to get explanation. I called a meeting and we met around the table and I explained. There aren’t any papers that I have in front of me since the launch in January. So, there isn’t litigation, hon member. So, please get your facts right.

Secondly, the other thing that you need to get right is that there are no donors, hon member, that contributed to this fund.

Thirdly, the fact that you need to get right is that the R1,2 billion doesn’t come wholly from government. Out of the

R1,2 billion, almost R540 000 comes from us as the department. There is a contribution the Small Enterprise Finance Agency, Sefa, with regard to the loan fund. So the one that we have will be a grant. The Sefa brings the loan, then private banks bring credit facility to make it to make it to R1,2 billion.

If what we were doing was not within the legal framework, do you think any bank would want to be part of it? That’s the first question. If what we are doing is not viable, does not have sustainability, do you think any private bank would want to be part it? No. Those are the first facts that you need to

know. I think as a member who serves in Tourism, you should be advocating for more resources on tourism. Not to say that we must be thankful. Tourism is one of the least funded, hon member, in this country. Yet, if indeed what you are saying you believe in it, with regard to tourism being critical as one of the pillars of the economy, you should be able to say that Department of Tourism deserves more money. I’ll leave that for the time when we deal with our Budget Vote so that we can have that conversation.

How do you have a ... [Inaudible.] ... What we have learned to do in tourism is creative ways of doing things. We go and find partners so that we can enhance our support.

You say I should stop being fixated on ideology. Ideology is very important because it grounds you and you have a standpoint as a person. I am not fixated on segregation. I am fixated in building a non-racial society but that is cognisance of the past that a black woman pre-1994 was the face of poverty. A black woman post-1994 remained a face of poverty. But today, during COVID-19, a black woman remains the centre and remains the face of poverty. As a leader in this government, I have an obligation to contribute to changing

this face of poverty because it is unacceptable. That’s the

fixation I have.

Do I support white businesses? Yes, I do. I have been across the country, people have benefitted from our programmes, I have to establishments where I promoted them, as I left, they were full to capacity. One of them is Phalana, you can call them ask them. I went there, last year, in Limpopo. Since I left last year, until in April, they are fully booked. Go and check all of them.

I was in Tsitsikama area. Go and check where I stayed when I was there. You must look objectively you would see that we balanced our support. Our support must not be at the expense of the others. It shouldn’t be that because you want us to show a non-racial society, we must exclude and ignore what the prescripts of the Constitution requires us to do with regard to redressing the apartheid past. All of us have that obligation including yourself. You need to start advocating an inclusive society. Thank you.

Mr T APLENI: Thank you very much, Deputy Chairperson, Minister, for the longest time black people have been excluded from sectors that white people believed belonged to them. The

Tourism Equity Fund can go a long way in ensuring that black people are more than just subjects of township and rural tours, like animals in a zoo but rather owners, beneficiaries and contributors to the sector and the gross domestic product, GDP, in hospitality.

Minister, how do you aim to ensure that the Tourism Equity Fund does not become yet another failed government project marred with looting and corruption? Thank you very much.

The MINISTER OF TOURISM: Thank you very much, hon Apleni, indeed there is a need for us to ensure that black people and majority who are living in rural areas and townships do not become the subjects but also the product owners and benefit. This is what we have as an obligation

We do also acknowledge that there has been issues around corruption and mismanagement of funds in projects that government has initiated in other areas. That’s why we have investigations that are happening. Firstly, is cognisance of that. That’s why when we started this thing, I was able to sit with the team and said we are looking at ensuring that there is transparency and accountability. One of the things, for example, you would know when you work with the banks if

somebody is a politically exposed person. The banks are able to pick that up and raise a flag. So, one of the things that we are cognisance of and appreciative in the partnership is that one.

In the application process, we do make sure that people disclose if they are. One of the things that we want to do from our side ... I have committed ... is that like we have done with the Tourism Relief Fund, where we have released all the beneficiaries on our website for public scrutiny ...

That’s what we are going to do. We have set targets and are also working in terms of trenches. So, we are not submitting the entire amount at a go. You would have money that has gone for this financial year, next financial year and the other financial year as we do with regard to the three years. This is important because in the process we are doing monitoring and evaluation.

There will be reporting with regard to reporting from the Sefa, who are the administrators for this fund to the department. I would receive the report and we would definitely make sure that we are able to report progress to Parliament.

What would be the difficulty is at the time we release the names and all that, we would have to do the assessment but we

have all the issues. I want to assure you of transparency and accountability on this programme. Thank you.

Mr S F DU TOIT: Thank you, hon Deputy Chair, hon Minister, tourism is a complex yet simple industry. Tourists visits destinations to relax, appreciate and experience. Tourism is an industry that is supposed to grow and evolve. It cannot be forced.

Minister, the BBBEE exclusion or inclusion for some, the exclusion is discrimination. Discrimination is racism. By focusing only on supporting black entrepreneurs or companies with the 51% ownership, you are focusing mostly on individuals and not the whole industry. The tourism industry is reliant on tourists, hon Minister, irrespective of race.

According to President Ramaphosa tourism directly accounts to 2,9% OF South Africa’s GDP and 8,6% indirectly. It supports about 1,5 million jobs. You know this.

Minister, would you agree that focusing financial support to your historical voter base ... in other words ... black South Africans knowing that government failed to create a safe and an economical stimulating environment for conducive job

creation that these racist acts of exclusion forms part of the greater election campaign to boost the illusion that government cares, when in reality it is the cause of the demise of this country? Thank you, Deputy Chair.

The MINISTER OF TOURISM: Thank you, hon Deputy Chair, thank you, hon Du Toit for your question, I think it is unfortunate that we seem to misinterpret what the Constitution says. The Constitution does take cognisance that we come from a difficult past. Firstly, it puts an obligation on us to say you have to redress the past. That’s a constitutional obligation I have as a Minister because I took oath of office to abide by the Constitution and the policies of this country.

The BBBEE Act, is an Act of Parliament that you and I, hon Du Toit, have taken an oath of office as Members of Parliament to abide by those laws. So, it is not optional for us. When it suits us, we will abide by this law. When it doesn’t suit us, we mustn’t abide by it. The oath of office says we will abide by all the laws. Until the BBBEE Act is not a law, I am obligated, as a Member of Parliament first and as a Minister to implement it.

Secondly, you talk about an illusion with regard to discrimination. This is one of the programmes. I am not so sure if you are familiar with the programmes that the Department of Tourism runs because you seem to insinuate that out of all the work that we are doing, this is the only thing that we do. Surely, President Ramaphosa would have fired me if that’s the only thing I do. We do quite a lot of work with regard to support.

Would the hon member acknowledge that the tourism sector remains untransformed? That’s why today we are having this conversation because if over time, willingly, based on the commitment by the sector itself ... because if you remember the codes and the targets are not set by us. It is the sector that come together and agree that this is what it should be. It is a sectoral code.

Do you agree that should we have been volunteering, that the sector on its own transforms, we would not have this conversation today? Would you agree that it is this conversation that pushes leaders into a corner and blackmail them as if they are not truly representing all South Africans? That has left us to the disaster of untransformed tourism industry because if we had previously reached the area with

regard to making all of us understand the importance of every South African feeling out of this country, contributing to the development and feeling that opportunities are equal. It is like saying people must compete but you put one person 1 km ahead of the other and say it is a fair race. How is it a fare race when I am standing 200 metres or 2 kms away from you? You are standing there because you have been given opportunities by the previous government. You have been given opportunities not because I was stupid as a black person or a black woman; I was told I am a perpetual minor; I do not have rights. As the rights come, I am catching up with you. You are saying we must race equally. How is that fair?

Mr S F DU TOIT: On a point of order. With all due respect, Minister, you do not know what my background is. You are insinuating that ... [Inaudible.] ... you are the one that’s racist.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Hon Du Toit, you asked a question and you cannot take it personal because you generalised and the Minister is generalising ... [Interjections.]

Mr S F DU TOIT: With all due respect, Chair. No Chair, the Minister pointed to me in person ... [Interjections.]

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: ... Hon Du Toit doesn’t

want to hear your response. Listen to the response. Respect the process. Please.

Mr D RYDER: On a point of order, Deputy Chairperson.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Hon Ryder.

Mr D RYDER: Once again ... [Interjections.]

An HON MEMBER: The Minister cannot individualise. She must speak for the whole country.

Mr D RYDER: Once again, Deputy Chairperson, you are not being impartial and I must ask you to please be impartial and less emotional in your dealing members.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: My responsibility is to keep order.

Mr D RYDER: Yes, you mustn’t be emotional, Chair.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: You cannot personalise when you have asked a question and you get the response. It cannot become personal. I must keep order in this House. It not about ... [Inaudible.]

Mr D RYDER: Very emotional.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Order. Order from yourself even. Don’t tell me I am emotional because I am woman. Don’t bully me. I am not emotional; I am trying to keep the order.

Mr S F DU TOIT: On a point of order.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Order.

Mr S F DU TOIT: Hon Ryder never referred to you as a woman. You are putting words in his mouth. [Interjections.]

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: He said I am emotional. When he said I am emotional, what does he mean because men don’t become emotional? So, please, order here. We are continuing. Hon Du Toit doesn’t want the answer to his question anymore because ... [Inaudible.] ... Please, may we continue.

Mr M I RAYI: Sorry, hon Deputy Chairperson, hon Landsman has a connection problem. He has asked me to ask his question his question, if you allow me.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: I will allow you. You may continue.

Mr M I RAYI: Thank you very much hon Deputy Chairperson, greetings to the Minister and Deputy Minister Fish Mahlalela. Hon Minister, there is no doubt that the tourism sector is amongst the important sectors of our economy, which is still exclusively preserved for the few.

We in the ANC welcome your courageous leadership in using the Tourism Equity Fund as part of the strategy to redress the imbalance of the past as opposed to those who seek to maintain the colonial and apartheid status quo.

How is the department going to make sure that this Tourism Equity Fund is going to be distributed in a transparent and ethical manner to benefit the intended beneficiaries? I thank you.

The MINISTER OF TOURISM: Thank you very much, hon Rayi, and thank you very much, hon Deputy Chair. Thank you for the support. We do appreciate it.

Ours is to build an inclusive tourism sector; the sector that we can all be proud of, that when we go and market abroad, that those that we market at do not ask us ... making sure that we are attending ... we are making sure that we are dealing with issues of sustainability and sustainability of tourism.

The issue of transparency ... what we have asked for ... the process ... let me just explain with regard to the process ... when a person applies, they apply and submit the documents.

There is a technical team that sits at the Sefa, which are the people who are able to do due diligence with regard to the proposals. Look if this person is a person that is an entrepreneur, has an interest in this, and has an experience in running ... because one of the things that we are saying, it shouldn’t be that it’s a Mmamoloko who comes from somewhere, who doesn’t know what ... and does not partner with anyone with regard to tourism, then you would have an establishment that is not sustainable. We are looking at expertise, looking at the people on how they run businesses,

experience in businesses and also because ... one of the things that I always say to hon members that they must pay attention is the area where we are partnering with the banks.

We come with the grant and acknowledge that we might not be able to do proper due diligence, that’s why we ask the Sefa to help us. The Sefa will do the work, analyse and make sure that it is the right people with the right product that will contribute to tourism and then they approve. Out of that, then the work is done and it also includes the banks duty ... [Inaudible.]

One of the things that we said, as we do the approval as part of building confidence because we do not want to lose due to confidence and we want to get money back as it is a loan, where is it going to be sustainable for the programme to run ahead in how we are doing.

We are also going to publish the beneficiaries where they can tell their stories. We will visit the sites. We will also provide the list so that as and when members are doing oversight they can see the areas of support. Like we have done with the black industrialists, it still has to go to the DTI, website. You’ll you go on the website and find a story of that

particular person who has benefitted under the black industrialists. We are taking that model almost to replicate it in the tourism space.

We do commit that we will continue to account and be transparent and provide the report so that we are able not only from the reports but these establishments can be visited and see for yourself that this is what we have done. The best resolve with regard to dealing with corruption is transparency. Publishing the people and how much they got, the businesses and all those things. Thanks.

Question 41:

The MINISTER OF TOURISM: Deputy Chairperson, the Department of Tourism programmes have a bias towards areas that have not been in the mainstream of tourism activities with the aim to bring more activities in such areas. This includes townships, small towns and rural areas. Departmental intervention in these areas include, but not limited to, small, medium and micro enterprises, SMMEs, development, access to finance, market access support, product development support, skills development, tourism safety and reigniting domestic tourism recovery.

The department’s footprint in this regard covers all the nine provinces of our country. South African tourism develops specific content and promoted township experiences which received significant media exposure in the mainstream and digital during the tourism month across the various provinces.

As part of reigniting of the domestic tourism through the domestic tourism campaign, township and rural products and experiences are a large part of the campaign. To mention but a few, the campaign has provided exposure to areas such as Mthatha and surrounds in the Eastern Cape, Riemvasmaak in the Northern Cape, Eshowe in northern KwaZulu-Natal, Soweto in Gauteng etc.

The campaign will continue to include other townships and rural areas. For instance, I will be in Franschhoek tomorrow in Cape Town as part of my stakeholder engagement to ensure that our work is inclusive. This will also continue to be done with local media as well including community radio stations across the country.

In relation to the enterprise development, the Department of Tourism established incubators in Mogwase in the North West province, Phalaborwa in Limpopo, Manyeleti around

Bushbuckridge in Mpumalanga and Mier in the Northern Cape. Each of these incubators incubates 50 entrepreneurs. The department also provide businesses and financial training support to enterprises in various townships across the country. To mention but a few, the training was conducted in places such as Langa in the Western Cape, Emalahleni in Mpumalanga province, Thohoyandou in Limpopo province and Klerksdorp in North West province.

So, we are doing quite a lot. Furthermore, a partnership between South African tourism and Google shall provide township products with access to Google training workshops and tools. This is critical in terms of ensuring adequate online marketing opportunities for SMMEs.

One of the areas where department intervention greatly supported townships and rural areas, as I spoke to, is Tourism Relief Fund. We do have as well the World Tourism Organization, UNWTO, pilot project which is in the rural in Limpopo. This is supporting implementation of empowerment of women opportunities in the tourism sector.

We have been supporting products from the townships such as Mdantsane, Galeshewe, Khayelitsha and Vilakazi street and we

are in support currently working with SATOVITO. This is a South African tourism and village township association as an emerging voice of the village and township businesses. Thank you very much.

Mr M I RAYI: Hon Deputy Chairperson, to the Minister, thank you once again for the response. The issue of tourism is a shared function between national and provincial government with a more critical role located in the hands of local government. In this regard, is there any integrated policy approach to incentivise private sector investment in the township tourism? Thank you.

The MINISTER OF TOURISM: Hon Rayi, just to indicate that one of the work that we do as the department is destination development, and under that branch we have an area where we look at investment development. So, we do investment pipelines, and part of what we do is to invite private sector to come and invest. Our focus has been investment in remote areas, for example, some of the identified areas in the Eastern Cape would be Port Saint Johns and Coffee Bay. We are looking for investors who can come and invest in those areas we can develop them.

We do some work and create opportunities so that we can create interest in the private sector. That is one of the things that we are trying to do to make sure that we can bring that linkage between private sector and our self because we do believe that it is sustainable.

We will continue to work ... I think one of the areas that will have to intensify in the coming financial year is working together with the municipalities increasing interest and ensuring that municipalities who are tourism hubs can focus and ensure that the Local economic development, LEDs, are focused in tourism and we can support them. Thank you very much, hon Rayi.

Mr M NHANHA: Deputy Chairperson, can I request the Minister to put on the translation because I will ask this question in isiXhosa.

The MINISTER OF TOURISM: I can hear isiXhosa, Tata.

Mr M NHANHA: Oh! Let’s go for it then.

*IsiXhosa*:

Mphathiswa, khawuchoph’uyichaze, uchoph’usichubele ukuba, kutheni le nto ezokhenketho ezilokishini (township tourism) - ngakumbi koomasipala abambaxa abafana naseGauteng kuba eGauteng kukho iVilakazi Street, eDurban kukho le ndawo ibizwa Eyadini, nazo zonke ezinye iindawo ogqiba ukuzibiza ngoku, ezibonisa ukuba ugxile kakhulu kukhenketho lwasezilokishini, kwiidolophu ezinkulu apho kukho oomasipala abambaxa.

Iidolophana ezinembali etyebileyo, ezifana nedolophu yaseDikeni eMpuma Koloni, zingawafumana nini la mathuba okuba yinxalenye yokhenketho yeli lizwe, ukuze nabo abantu bazo bakwazi ukuqhayisa ngenkcubeko yabo kwakunye nembali yezi dolophana ndizichazayo.

Ukuba ubungazi, kodwa ndiyaqonda ukuba uyazi, mininzi imisebenzi ibinokudaleka kweza dolophana zincinci, ukuze ikati isuke eziko, kubekho unopotyi odadela ngasemlilweni. Enkosi.

UMPHATHISWA WEZOKHENKETHO: Mnu Nhanha, ndiyavumelana nawe xa usithi kuninzi ekufuneka sikwenze ukuze siphucule ukhenketho lwasezilokishini, ngamandla kwela phondo usuka kulo iMpuma Koloni. Mandiyichaze ngolu hlobo le nto, iVilakazi Street xa yayiqalwa, ayizange iqalwe ngurhulumente. Ngabahlali ababonayo

ukuba, apha sinabantu abaziwayo nababalulekileyo kwimbali yethu ababehlala apha. Singenza ntoni na?

Bathi bakudibana bavula indawo yokutyela yokuqala, kwalandela eyesibini, babona ukuba bangayiphuhlisa la ndawo. Urhulumente wangenelela sele beqalile wathi, siyabona ukuba niyazama singancedisa njani ukusebenzisana nani. Into endizama ukuyichaza lungu elihloniphekileyo kukuba, into ekufaneleke ukuba siyenze njengabantu basezilokishini – kuba iyenzeka into yokuba ndithi ndinguMphathiswa, ikhona into endinokuyenza kule lali, kanti ndizayibhuda.

Into ebalulekileyo kukuba oomasipala bethu mabadibane babonisane, apho bazakuchaza khona izinto abanokuzenza ukuphucula indawo yabo. Iindawo ezininzi, ngamandla eMpuma Koloni zityebile, kodwa xa usiza ufuna ukunceda kubakho ingxaki. Ndizakwenza umzekelo nge...

*English*:

... Memorial Site of the Calata Four ...

*IsiXhosa*:

... kaTata uCalata, sayakha singurhulumente, sayithatha sayinikezela kumasipala ukuba basebenzisane. Xa unokuya phaya

ngoku, uzakufumanisa ukuba ayihoywanga. Into endizama ukuyicacisa yile, kwezinye iindawo ayisebenzi into yokuba kuqale urhulumente athi ufuna ukwenza into, luluntu olufanele ukuba lubonakalise umdla luququzele.

*English*:

In that way, it becomes sustainable.

*IsiXhosa*:

Ngoku besihambele iMpuma Koloni ndiye ndathetha neNkulumbuso yePhondo kunye noMphathiswa wePhondo, uMvoko, ndathi masibambisane kuba kuninzi esinokukwenza. Kodwa, kufuneka sitshintshe indlela yokwenza singasuki senze ngokwethu singurhulumente, masibuze kuluntu ukuba zintoni ezi bazinqwenelayo ...

*English*:

... so that we make it community-owned programmes. In that way, they will be sustainable hon Nhanha.

*IsiXhosa*:

Asikuko ukuba asizihoyanga ezi ndawo. Nalapho senzileyo khona, umzekelo xa ndinokukubonisa iinkqubo ezifana ne ...

*English*:

... Extended Public Works Programme, EPWP ...

*IsiXhosa*:

... ungabona ukuba zininzi izinto esizenzileyo. Sasiyile phaya kooTata UMandela, eQunu naseMvezo sibaxhasa kwiphulo lemuziyam. Sasuka apho saya kwezinye iindawo apho siye sakha khona iindawo zokuhlala eziqeshisayo zasemaphandleni. Into esiyifumanisayo kukuba izakhiwo zethu ziyonakaliswa kuba asenzanga ngendlela eyiyo, sifumanisa ukuba izinto azisetyenziswa ngale ndlela bekumele zisebenze ngayo. Nalapha eGauteng, njengoko uthetha ngeedolophu ezinkulu, xa usiya eSharpeville Memorial Museum uzafumanisa le ngxaki inye kanti kuyafana nase Soweto eVilakazi Street. Ndicinga ukuba wawufundile emaphepheni ngokwenzeka e-Hector Peterson Memorial Museum. Ngoko ke kuyafuneka ukuba sitshintshe indlela yokwenza, sibambisame noluntu ngamandla xa sithetha ngezi zinto zethu zomzabalazo, siqinisekise ukuba inkcubeko yethu ayimoshwa ukuze ingalahleki.

Ndingathanda nam ukuba sibonisane sisonke, sijonge ukuba singayisombulula njani na le nto, kuba nathi iyasixaka ngamanye amaxesha. Uyakha, xa uphinda ubuya awuzifumani izakhiwo ezo ubuzakhile zikwimeko entle. Enkosi.

Mr T APLENI: Deputy Chair, to the hon Minister, considering the state of our roads, especially here in the Eastern Cape, lack of water and poor sanitation in our townships under the leadership of the ANC, how do you think poor service delivery will affect these efforts and programmes to promote township tourism? Thank you very much.

The MINISTER OF TOURISM: Deputy House Chairperson, like any other sector, services that are basic services do affect our work in terms of the products that we are producing and all that. Just to share what we have done as the Department of Tourism: We have come up with what we call a Green Fund. This Green Fund supports tourism establishments that can be able to, for example, move away from the grid and put a solar panel so that when there is no electricity they are able to survive. They can apply for this fund to be able to put a borehole and a water tank so that they can collect water on rainy days.

So, we are not folding our arms as the Department of Tourism and say we are going to blame another person. Instead, we are asking how do we find solutions to work together for the sustainability of our tourism sector. For those in the Eastern Cape that do not know, we do have a tourism equity fund. If

indeed you have challenges, this is available for you to receive.

Just to emphasise this, I have seen in terms of the interest of the Premier ... as I said, I had a discussion with the Premier sitting down with him and he has assured his vision. I am confident that through his vision and his work we will be able to achieve a lot in the Eastern Cape.

Question 36:

The MINISTER OF TOURISM: Deputy Chair, the people who are eligible in terms of the criteria are as follows: An applicant must be a registered legal entity in South Africa in terms of the Companies Act 1973 as amended, a Close Corporations Act 69 of 1984, as amended and a Co-Operative’s Act 2005 as amended, be a 100% owned by a South African citizen, 51% black-owned, be registered and compliant with the South African Revenue Services, be operating in the qualifying sub-sectors of the accommodation hospitality and related services travel and related service or any other product and initiative that supports tourism development imperatives and submit required documents such as business profile and registration documents, Tourism B-BBEE Certificate/affidavit, *Financial Intelligence Centre Act,* FICA, documents, copies of IDs of directors,

12months bank statement, latest financial statements and management accounts, where possible, a cash flow projection in terms of the work – because we want to see if it’s sustainable. In addition, the transaction for which support is sought must have a minimum size of R10 million.

The nature of support and size of the grant component will be dependent on the transaction’s ability to contribute towards a number of developmental imperatives such as jobs, women empowerment, and youth ownership and to stimulate investment in rural township and small towns’ tourism assets. Thank you very much, Deputy Chair.

Mr A B CLOETE: Deputy Chairperson, maybe we need to remind ourselves about the very clear distinction between the legislative and executive authorities of the state. [Inaudible.]

Minister, you held a meeting with Solidarity and AfriForum on the 15th of February this year, following a letter from the attorneys which they had threatened legal against the roll out of this Equity Fund, as you stated earlier. As we speak, papers are being filed in court after discussions between your

department and AfriForum and it was Solidarity apparently that did not end well, the degradation has started for you.

I know you won’t elaborate on the legal issue now. But let me say just this; all other small tourism businesses, many businesses across communities already had to close the doors after the government’s severe COVID-19 restrictions regardless of the targets your party has legislated.

Minister, the real disaster transformation is that this government does not create opportunities for the poor, regardless of their race. You would rather regulate the Black Economic Empowerment, BEE**,** policies and legislation then create. The past have shown us that you cannot have inclusivity by exclusion. You would rather call it [Inaudible.]

From what I have read, Minister, I want to ask you this, is this Tourism Equity Fund, TEF**,** punishment for companies who have not met your BEE targets?

The MINISTER OF TOURISM: Deputy Chair, it is good to hear that we have more information about litigation. We will deal with it when we get to court. As I said, I’m prepared for it and we

will deal with it. It is a just war that we need to fight. If I may use the word. It’s about time as South Africa that we stand firm in terms transformation.

The issue of dilly-dallying and going under the table with our skirts behind [Inaudible] it’s not helpful. We are where we are because of being threatened. We are where we are because people think they have superior right above others. Other people don’t have the rights in this country. As you asked me, the same question I would ask to you as well - if I had the opportunity as a member, perhaps would have been do you believe that apartheid existed. But it’s not your time to answer questions; it’s my time to answer questions.

The issue is that, we are not punishing those who are not discriminatory. If we were punishing maybe we would have gone extreme. We are taking our own resources as government and we are bringing people who are willing to believe in thing that we are doing and we are saying it is about transformation, it is about ensuring that you turn the face of poverty in South Africa. It can’t continue to be face being a black woman in South Africa. It’s unacceptable.

As a black woman, I can’t be comfortable to seat around the table where I have a better opportunity, a roof on my head, when a woman sitting on the street, as an informal trader – not because she is stupid, not because she is not brilliant, the intelligence quotient, IQ, is good, but because she was never given an opportunity. I have that obligation to give that woman an opportunity. As a Minister who is a black woman, I will do it and we will fight to do it. Thank you.

Mr D RYDER: Deputy Chairperson, Minister, I have been listening to your response and I just want to ask, will you be using the pencil test to determine eligibility for beneficiaries of this fund?

The MINISTER OF TOURISM: I beg your pardon. You said will I be using what?

Mr D RYDER: Deputy Chair, Minister, wow! If I can explain to the Minister, the pencil test was a mechanism used ... [Interjections.]

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: I will explain to her because I am a victim of the pencil test.

Mr D RYDER: ... Indeed Deputy Chair, we are going back to racial classification, it is like we are in a ... [Interjections.]

The MINISTER OF TOURISM: So you are acknowledging that the apartheid government gave white people better opportunities more than black people?

Mr D RYDER: Absolutely, Minister, but now you are repeating the process.

The MINISTER OF TOURISM: Exactly, if we acknowledging that we are not saying ... And remember what apartheid did was exclusion of black people. We are not excluding. Here is that if you are willing as a participant does participate. No one is forced; black people were forced in the apartheid system they were not given an option to choose. Black people were not given an option to choose, Black people were not given an option to say this is what trade you will be involved in.

During apartheid, black people were never given a choice to this the business that I would be involved in. They were forced. So you can’t equate what we are doing with what apartheid was doing.

Right now, we are saying we want to transform. Those who believe in the vision of building and inclusive and you it is unsustainable for this democracy when majority of the people remain side lined and not being part of the economy. Our democracy is not sustainable. We are saying to them lets work together, they exist they are there we did not force them like I have said with the tourism relieve fund.

You can go to Google and You Tube, you would find video clips of people saying that ‘I am grateful, I have benefited and I did not listen to the naysayers.’ Don’t become a naysayer.

Allow South Africans of all races to participate in the tourism industry. Thank you.

Mr M S MOLETSANE: Deputy Chair, Minister, how do you plan to ensure that this funding opportunity reaches those who need most and that there is a fair and equal access to information and opportunity to apply for those involved in the sector who are based in township and rural areas. Thank you, Deputy Chair.

The MINISTER OF TOURISM: Deputy Minister, indeed, one of the reasons we choose Skills Initiative for Africa, SIFA, to support us in the work was precisely because they exist in

different remote areas. So it’s not only going to be work- based application system. People can walk into the offices and receive support and are able to apply. We do want to make sure that those who are interested – we have distributed qualifying criteria. I have held discussions in communities as well as online, with those that are interested. We will continue to explain as we go province by province. We explained tourism equity fund is about, who is eligible so that people can apply.

We do believe that in terms of the spread of offices of Skills Initiative for Africa, SIFA, we will be able to reach majority and we have seen the responses. I have received a report that says responses are quite positive; a lot of people are applying. Many are even asking questions clarifying and verifying. So we are happy that the work even begun as I committed. The transparency will continue to be there.

We want to utilise members as well, as they are in their constituencies. Please make sure because - we have an opportunity to download this pamphlet that we have created on our website. Download them and take them to your constituencies and share with them. For those who are in your constituencies who are interested who are real entrepreneurs

and interested in benefiting out of this programme so that we can support them? Thank you very much.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Hon Dangor, can you unmute please?

Mr M DANGOR: Deputy Chairperson, I am struggling to get it**.** Let me miss and come back.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: I think we can hear you. Continue.

Question 46:

The MINISTER OF TOURISM: Thank you Deputy Chair, as the Minister of Tourism I have engaged and continue to engage with relevant parties within the structures of the National Coronavirus Command Council, NCCC, on the possible inclusion of the frontline workers within the tourism sector as part of the prioritised sector in the future phases of the vaccine roll-out programme in order to ensure its recovery. These discussions are still underway guided by the Interministerial Committee on Vaccine led by the hon Deputy President Mr D D Mabuza.

The Department of Tourism is of the opinion that frontline staff in the economy, including those in the tourism sector, should be prioritised but such decision will be taken by the relevant structure at the appropriate time. This, together with the continued use of non-pharmaceutical measures such as social distancing, sanitising, wearing of masks, etc, shall go a long way in boosting consumer and business confidence for our country as a tourism destination.

I am pleased to indicate that the tourism industry has pledged in writing through the Tourism Business Council of South Africa, TBCSA, to provide financial support towards the roll- out of the vaccine to frontline workers if necessary within the tourism sector. This demonstrates the partnership approach that we have been able to build between ourselves as government and the industry as we deal with the recovery of the sector. Thank you very much, Deputy Chairperson.

Ms H S BOSHOFF: Thank you very much Deputy Chair. Hon Minister, thank you for your response. It is pleasing to see that discussions have taken place between you and various departments, and it is very important that you carry on acting proactively and using the powers vested in you to ensure that the industry remains the biggest contributor to the GDP and to

show that you care and reverse the decline that this industry has experienced. You and your government must carry on ensuring that employers and employees in this industry are vaccinated.

Minister, this is the only way that you will send out a signal to the international community that we are ready and that it is safe to travel to South Africa. I would like to ask you today that once you have had this meeting and the necessary decisions have been taken that you provide me or this House with the steps that will betaken to ensure that the tourism industry is part and parcel of the phase 2 vaccine roll-out programme. Thank you very much.

The MINISTER OF TOURISM: Thank you very Deputy Chairperson and the hon Boshoff. Indeed, we are interested and we will remain committed to support the tourism sector recovery and we will continue to work within the structures of NCCC. Unfortunately, in terms of information regarding the protocol hon Boshoff, I am not even in the interministerial committee, IMC. The IMC that is responsible for the vaccine will be the communicators through the Deputy President as the chair – communicators of what has been decided upon and they will be able to inform the public. I think from our side as government, we have been very

clear and open. Communication has gone out regularly in terms of what has been discussed and where we are in terms of the vaccine roll-out. We do believe that a lot of work beyond the vaccine is important.

There is a lot of work that has been done to rebuild confidence, it is not only around vaccinating frontline staff in terms of tourism, but engagement with international bodies, engagement with embassies; engagement with our partners across. This is the work that we have started. I had a meeting with China ambassador, yesterday. Last week I had interviews with media in Germany. And you might have seen even CNN had a broadcast where I was at a panel in terms of the work that we are doing within and how the vaccine response to tourism, we have seen quite positive response. It was co-ordinated by GCIS.

So, there is quite a lot of work that we are doing. The issue is to be able to take cognizance that we need to drive a better communication from all of us in how we are dealing with the variant, and that we have passed that stage and responsible communication. The other issue is that ... recently, I am not sure if the hon members have heard of international scientist saying that South Africa has actually

shown a good way of managing the pandemic - I think it was on CNN as well. The international scientists were having a conversation where they were saying that even before we had the vaccine roll-out, we were managing the pandemic very well in terms of numbers - looking at the recovery rate and fatality rates which are very low compared to other countries.

So, they were saying we were one of the examples in their lessons that global communities can learn from us. A comprehensive approach remains a critical way of us responding to the pandemic and getting an economic recovery and tourism recovery. Thank you, Deputy Chair and hon member.

AN HON MEMBER: ... platform, Chair, I think there was a mistake. It has to be the hon Apleni who will do the follow up.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: Well, we are doing the follow up. Okay. Hon Apleni?

Mr T APLENI: Thank you very much Deputy Chair. Minister, in your discussions regarding the recovery of the tourism sector as well as possible vaccine roll-out have there been any stakeholder engagement with business owners in the sector? And

what role do you see them playing in the prevention of the spread of the coronavirus when people start travelling for leisure again. Thank you very much.

The MINISTER OF TOURISM: Thank you to the Deputy Chair and the hon Apleni. People are already travelling, since last year, so, that is work that we continue to do and encourage in terms of both domestic and international market, travelling is happening. In terms of stakeholder engangement we regularly meet with various organisations as I said. We have regular meetings. The last meeting, I had with TBCSA was during their strategic plan. I addressed them and we engaged.

When there is a need for me to call; we have been on an ad hoc basis in terms of calling each other. We would decide to meet if there is something that we need to deal with. And other organisations that are outside would reach out and say we need to talk, as I said ... [Inaudible.] ... as well is one of the new organisations I have been engaging with. We have been hosting webinars; we have been hosting engagements in terms of the sector. As we do our work towards recovery of tourism sector domestic campaign, I have been to almost all the provinces as we speak. And in all those provinces we interact

with people who are business owners in the tourism space, and we have been able to listen to them.

Yes, there is anxiety around whether the people who are coming will feel comfortable. For example, international travellers will not feel comfortable to interact with the tour guide who is not vaccinated. So, one of the things ... that is why we said that we want to include frontline workers as part of our tourism recovery in phase two of the vaccine roll-out - that is why we’ve made that appeal. We have made that contribution. The other area as part of our engagement with the private sector as I said earlier on is the issue where they are prepared to set aside money so that they do not burden the state with 100% funding of frontline staff in the tourism space. Thank you very much.

*Sepedi*:

Moh M L MAMAREGANE: Ke leboga Motlatšamodulasetulo ...

*English*:

Hon Minister, let me express my appreciation for your elaborate and comprehensive ... [Interjections.]

*Sepedi*:

Re a le kwa, mma.

Moh M L MAMAREGANE: Le a nkwa? Ke be ke bona okare gona le khuduego.

*English*:

Hon Minister, let me express my appreciation for your elaborate and comprehensive response once again. Hon minister, besides getting the sector frontline workers vaccinated, what else is the department doing to restore the confidence of tourists in the sector to reactivate the industry? I thank you, Deputy Chairperson.

The MINISTER OF TOURISM: Through you Deputy Chairperson and thank you Mamaregane. What we are doing is quite a lot in terms of rebuilding the confidence in the domestic market. One of the things we did when we came out of the first hard lockdown, is that we understood as a team and sat together and said we need to get South Africans out of their houses. We knew that people will have fear - and that was around last year August and September.

We knew that people will have fear to leave their houses because they know they are likely to be positive with

coronavirus. And because people had not been willing to go out of their houses and go into the lodges or attractions, they were not confident that it can be done. So, we understood and as we discussed and agreed together with that team that we would be the face of the campaign. We decided to go out in leading the campaign, by going and staying in the establishments, go to attractions, showcase that we are able to tour, and we are able to visit attractions and be safe. So, that was the first thing that we did.

The second one was also to take the media along with us to these attractions so that they can see that as we get there the protocols are observed. Where there are issues we addressed them, and also we are able to learn as well as the department. That’s what led to the improvement even on the regulations in terms of the directions. You would see that one of the things that we are doing because we understood that in terms of international travellers, because globally there is a thing called biosecurity standards - so, travellers are interested in knowing what the biosecurity standards are. We call them norms and standards. We then took a decision to work together with the private sector to develop the norms and standards for the tourism sector as something that will remain permanent, so that we build confidence.

As we speak, those norms and standards are currently in public domain for comments. Once they finished for public comments as required by law, they will go to Cabinet and we gazette them so that people can feel confident that we are observing the protocols. We will not become the centres that spread coronavirus and we will be able to succeed. But another area that we are trying to look into and ensure that as part of our Expanded Public Works Programme, EPWP, programme, is to have the safety monitors assisting us within the programmes that we are running to monitor the compliance. We believe that if we have a high level of compliance, it builds confidence.

The last part will be in terms of international engagements that I have been having with the media, ambassadors, tour operators and partners globally so that we can explain the situation in South Africa - explain to them what is it that we are doing. If you can look at Switzerland and Germany in Europe, you would see that we did quite a lot recently where have been quite a number of increase articles that we have done. Just to explain that it is safe and South Africa is open and ready to welcome visitors. We will engage United Arab Emirates, UAE, as we are concerned about them banning us. We will pay attention in the coming weeks to the countries that

have banned South Africa on the basis of the variant. Thank you very much, Deputy Chair.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Thank you very much, hon Minister. I am going to once again just ask whether the hon Ngwezi is on the platform yet, if he is not on the platform, we are going to continue, and we will request the hon Minister to respond to Question 42 as asked by the hon Lydia Moshodi.

Question 42:

The MINISTER OF TOURISM: Hon Deputy Chairperson, hon Moshodi, the department has, over past two years, worked with various provinces and tourism associations to develop the Tourism Safety Strategy. The Strategy is a guiding document in the management of tourist safety. One of its main objectives is to ensure an integrated approach in the country’s response to issues related to tourist safety.

The strategy is divided into three pragmatic areas. Preventative measures that involve an initiative to minimise the risk of a tourist becoming a target, responsive measures are those initiatives that respond to situations at the time of crisis, aftercare measures to ensure victim support. We are doing this programme across the country.

One of the initiatives under this preventive measures is the tourist monitor programme. This programme entails the recruitment, training and deployment of young people in key tourist attraction, to assist tourists with tourism and safety-related information.

The department has also signed a MOU with the South African Police Services and part of the collaborative entails issues related to the training of the tourism monitors on safety and security, ensuring visible policing in key tourist attraction through the ... [Inaudible.] ... programme for police reservists, especially during the festive season.

With regard to the Table Mountain National Park, the Department of Tourism has signed a contract with the South African National Parks, Sanpark, where a total of 302 tourism monitors have been placed in various parks across the country. Of these, about 100 tourism monitors have been placed at the Table Mountain National Park. The deployment followed crime incidents that involved a tourist at the Mountain, to which the Minister, working together with the Minister of Environmental Affairs – myself working with Minister Creecy - swiftly responded. The department has been working with the various provincial departments and we went, together with MEC

Maynier in the Western Cape, to the launch of the deployment of the safety tourism monitors on Table Mountain. Thank you

Ms M L MOSHODI: Deputy Chair, my apology for speaking without my video. It is raining and lightning and no we have electricity on my side. Hon Minister, has the ...[Inaudible.]

... for the use of surveillance cameras and other advanced technological devices been made by the department and other stakeholders, as part of reinforcing security and the fight against crime at the Table Mountain and other tourist attraction sites? If not, why not and if so, what are the relevant details. Thank you.

The MINISTER OF TOURISM: Hon Deputy Chair and Hon Moshodi, the strategy in terms of responding and our strategy on tourist safety include the use of technology as a response because we do believe in lessons learned. And how Sanpark and the Department of Environment dealt with the poaching in Kruger National Park is one of the examples where we have learned a lesson.

With the Table Mountain issue, one of the things that we picked up ... One of the challenges from our side is that we are not the owners of these parks, so we can only recommend.

One of the things that we picked up there is that there were cameras at that time and the cameras were not functional. So, the MEC and the municipality worked together to resolve those issues, to ensure that the response is adequate. The link between us and the local police with the Table Mountain issue was quite good and that is why we have seen the decline in terms of the activities.

We actually launched the Tourism Safety Strategy towards the festive season in 2019 with the Minister Cele, if hon members can remember. And if we look at December 2019, we had a serious drop in terms of incidences of attacks against tourists. I think we had one incident and that was in Limpopo. In the rest of the country, we were able to see the level of support. We have had good feedback, even from Mpumalanga in terms of attacks and hijacking, because the Blyde River Route was part of our programme. There was police visibility, the scanners and everything. There were street lights not working. So, partnership worked in terms of our response.

We continue to monitor and we continue to work. Obviously, because of covid-19, the work suffered a bit because the police had to redirect their efforts and energy towards the implementation and the enforcement of the Disaster Management

Act, but we have not had incidences. So, we continue to improve and continue to invest resources to ensure that we sustain this area of work. Thank you.

Mr S F DU TOIT: Hon Chair, hon Minister, studies have proven that real and perceived crime and violence impinge on the well-being of the vast majority of the populists and restrain investment. Since the advent of covid-19 in South Africa, the majority of South Africans did adhere to restrictions. They did wear their masks, they did sanitise, the did adhere to social distancing. Minister, you witnessed first-hand how Minister Dlamini Zuma, assisted by Minister Cele, labelled law-abiding citizens as criminals, with unrealistic restrictive lockdown regulations that prevented individuals from visiting parks, beaches and tourist destinations, bringing the industry to its knees and elevating unemployment and hunger to new heights. Minister, did you at any time, since the advent of covid-19 engaged with Minister Cele or Dlamini Zuma to rather focus on real crime prevention in tourist destination areas, instead of theses corrosive restrictions that do not stimulate the industry?

The MINISTER OF TOURISM: Hon Chair, at some point, I was lost in terms of what this was about and whether it will go to a

question. Hon Du Toit, Minister Dlamini Zuma is not the Minister responsible. She is not even in the Safety and Security cluster. The matter of me engaging with her does not even arise.

We worked with Minister Cele, as a colleague. As I said, when we launched the Tourism, Safety ... [Interjections.]

Ms C LABUSCHAGNE: Chair, I don’t know if it is only me. We

cannot hear the Minister. [Intejections.]

Mr S F DU TOIT: Can the Minister please start from the beginning?

The MINISTER OF TOURISM: My apologies. I think it is because it is raining outside with lightning. I hope you can hear me, but my network has been stable. Can you hear me now, hon members? {interjections.]

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Loud and clear.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Hon Labuschagne, can you hear?

Ms C LABUSCHAGNE: Yes, thank you, Chair.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Hon Du Toit, can you hear?

Mr S F DU TOIT: Chair, yes, the Minister was audible just now.

The MINISTER OF TOURISM: Hon Du Toit, Minister Cele and I worked together. We launched the Tourism Safety Strategy jointly. As I alluded to, in 2019, after we launched it, we saw a positive response in terms of the police being on the ground supporting Tourism that festive season, being able to support us across the country and making sure that ... [Interjections.]

Mr S F DU TOIT: Hon Chair, we are losing the Minister.

The MINISTER OF TOURISM: Okay, let me close my video. Is that audible? I will close my video.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: You are audible. We are taking into account that you have bad weather. You are audible now.

The MINISTER OF TOURISM: I am saying that we worked closely with Minister Cele and we continue to work together to implement our Tourism Safety Strategy. It is through the support of Minister Cele that we have been able to see a decrease in the attacks on tourists in the country. Even at times - I used to share it with the sector - I would not even be aware and then he would say to me that they suspected that some tourists were going to be attacked, they have picked it up and dealt with it. He would call me, sometimes even in the middle of the night.

When we had one incident in 2019, for example in December, he was the first to call that a tourist has been attack and that I should beware and get my system in place and they would support me.

So, that is what we were able to do. That is one of the issues of working with Minister Cele. Minister Dlamini Zuma’s work is not within the safety sector. So, in tourism safety, there will be no need for me to engage.

In terms of the regulation, who made it and how it happens, we go to a National Coronavirus Command Council, NCCC, meeting and we make inputs. There would be proposals from all work

steams and we would make our inputs. We would go to the NCCC and we will make our inputs.

Consistently, if there are inputs, for example, like we did in December, there was a part of Cabinet and part of the NCCC. When we went to the meeting with Cabinet, we picked up that there were going to be restrictions. Hon members would not believe it, but on 25 December, Christmas day, I received a call that the health scientist team was proposing some restrictions because there were red lights.

We started working. I called my team and we were working together, preparing presentations. On 26 December, we called a stakeholder meeting. We finished around 22:00 with the Tourism Business Council of South Africa, TBCSA, and colleagues, in order to understand what they are saying so that I could convey the message to the NCCC on their behalf. I have to understand the do’s and don’ts. Not the do’s and don’ts, but rather what we are prepared to compromise and what can’t be compromised. We carried those.

Obviously, it is not every time that we get listened to, because, based on the risk adjustment strategy, we must have a balance between lives and livelihoods. When the risks are

high, the restriction becomes high; when the risk is low, the restriction becomes low.

So, that is the work we do continuously, as ... [Interjections.]

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: What is happening? The Minister is done with her response to the question. I am sorry if there is …

Ms H S BOSHOF: We have not heard the reply because there was somebody interjecting whose video was on or ... [Interjections.]

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Hon members, can you allow me, please. If your interpretation is on, and that person is interpreting, the voice of the speaker becomes very soft, so let us just check whether it is a problem. If not, we will make sure that we avail the records to the members, so that we have a better understanding. We must continue. We still have another Minister waiting.

*IsiZulu*:

Nk S A LUTHULI: Ngibonge Sihlalo, ngibingelele, Ngqongqoshe woMnyango idolobha laseKapa laziwa njengamanye amadolobha anoqhekeko kakhulu emhlabeni jikelele, ekubeni abase-Europe bafika bezojabulela lokhu okutholakala kuleli dolobha, kodwa iningi labantu abansundu abakhoni ukujabulela izinto ezitholakala khona ngenxa yamanani aphezulu ale mboni abekiwe avuna labo abavakashile. Umbuzo ke uthi: Iyiphi ingxenye engadlalwa yilo Mnyango wakho ukuthi uqinisekise nalabo abangenawo amasenti okuthi bakwazi ukuba bazijabulise bathole amathuba alinganayo kulesi sifundazwe, kunalabo abasuke bephuma emazweni angaphandle. Ngibonge.

*IsiZulu*:

UNGQONGQOSHE WEZOKUVAKASHA: Sekela Somlomo, ngibonge lungu elihloniphekile Luthuli. Engingakusho kakhulu ukuthi ngempela inkinga ngeyemali ngoba kukhona la uma ungumuntu walapha ekhaya kutholakale ukuthi ufuna ukuhlala endaweni ethile uthole ukuthi ibiza kakhulu. Lokho siye sakubona uma ukhumbula ngonyaka owedlule ngenyanga kaSephthemba njengoba besiqala sigubha iNyanga yamaGugu. Ngiye ngakhuluma ngokuthi ngiyafisa ukuthi kube nezingxoxo nabantu bomkhakha ukuthi singenza kanjani ukuthi kube nohlelo lwe-two tiered pricing. Lapho okuzoba khona namanani abheka labo abavela phesheya abaphethe amadola, futhi kube nalelinani elibheke thina abantu abansundu

balapha ekhaya ukuze nathi sikwazi ukujabulela iNingizimu yethu. Yilokho abanye asebakuqalile. Banawo amanani abawabekile awabantu basekhaya kanti futhi banawo abawabekele abantu baphesheya. Kodwa ke asigcinanga lapho ukukhuluma sicele.

Into engiyenzayo njengoba nginguNgqongqoshe ngibeke iphaneli elibhekene nokuguqula ingqubomgomo, i-White Paper Policy kanye nemininingwane ehambelana nemithetho yethu yeZokuvakasha.

Siyesacela ukuthi nalokhu bakubheke ukuthi singakwazi yini ukuthi sifane namanye amazwe, akwaziyo ukuthi uma umuntu evakasha kube khona amanani wabantu baphesheya namanani abantu basekhaya. Sizothi uma sesiqedile ngohlelo lwethu lokubuyekeza ingqubomgomo sikwazi ukumemezela ukuthi ithini uma sibhekene nalezo zokuvakasha. Ngiyabonga.

Ms C LABUSCHAGNE: Hon Chair, Minister, as you would know, tourism is the fastest growing sector in the Western Cape, growing five times faster than the rest of the economy. It is therefore imperative that the Western Cape government, together with the City of Cape Town, work towards seeking measures to combat crime against tourists, as it significantly damage the Western Cape Tourist brand. Minister, in your response, you mentioned the Safety Tourism Strategy and a plan

utilising a memorandum of understanding with SAPS as well as tourism monitors and technology like cameras. Is there a memorandum of understanding with SAPS in the Western Cape, specifically to tourism and are there other tourism centres except Table Mountain in the Western Cape, where the tourist monitors and cameras are being implemented? Thank you.

The MINISTER OF TOURISM: Deputy Chair, hon Labuschagne, we do work together with the provincial government and the municipality. As I said, when we went to Table Mountain, where we had a challenge, we were together with the MEC and the mayor there.

In terms of deployment of tourism monitors, it is not only on Table Mountain. I mentioned the figure of 306. Only 100 are at Table Mountain. We do have on Robben Island and others are deployed in the township areas. So, the deployment is based on hot spots where we have realised that there is a challenge and a need for visibility, so that tourists can feel safe. So, that is the first thing. So, that is done in partnership with the provincial leadership. As you know, it is a concurrent function. So, we work together with the provincial government, with the MEC for Tourism, MEC Maynier, in order for us to address this.

In terms of the memorandum of understanding, we do not sign with provinces, but with national. So, we signed with SAPS national. So, it was the director-general together with national Commissioner. Once it is signed at that level, it is expected that the provincial commissioners together with the HODs will replica and ensure that this collaboration is happening. As part of the steering committee team and the work that is being done, it is then filtered through down to the provinces.

So, from where we are sitting, I don’t think there is a need for a separate memorandum of understanding, because that memorandum of understanding incorporates all the areas and all the provinces.

So, the work that is being done continues. We will continue to monitor. We were looking at 2020 as a year where we would pilot a number of things and see how best to improve from there and we were hit by covid-19. We will continue as we recover, utilising the opportunity to learn and see how best we can improve. Thank you.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Let me thank you, hon Minister. We have now come to an end for questions to the

Minister of Tourism, and I would really like to express our appreciation as the NCOP for availing yourself and to also responding in such a comprehensive manner.

HON MEMBER: Well done, hon Minister, well done.

The DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Thank you, hon members. Let me now give over to the House chairperson of Committees, hon Nyambi, to continue with the Minister of Communications and Digital Technologies. We also want to welcome hon Stella Ndabeni-Abraham, and we will now give over to the hon House Chair, Mr Nyambi, over to you.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr A J Nyambi): Thank you, Deputy Chairperson of the NCOP. Greetings to colleagues. Let me also join you in welcoming the Minister of Communications and Digital Technologies, and also thank the Minister of Tourism for availing herself to answer the questions. As we proceed, let me remind the Minister that the for first question, you are given five minutes to respond to it, and dealing with the follow-up questions, you have less minutes. You are not coming for the first time to the NCOP. Hon Minister, Ndabeni-Abraham, you start with Question 37 asked by hon Ntsubi.

Question 37:

The MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES: Hon

Chairperson, let me thank the hon member for the question that has been asked. My response to the question firstly is to explain that as the department, we are responsible to create enabling environment, in order to enable digital economic thriving. As part of that, we’ve got to make sure that we do provide skilling for the people that we are responsible for, which is why we therefore make sure that we develop a national digital skill strategy, which has been approved by Cabinet.

Of course, at the centre of digital strategy, is ensuring that our people are trained with an understanding fully well that we are not the ones to deliver service ourselves, but through partnership with the Department of Higher Education and

Training, *State Information Technology Agencies,* SITAs, and of course, our training institute, *National* Electronic Media

*Institute* of SA, NEMISA, and lastly, ensuring that we partner with international bodies like *International Telecommunication*

*Union,* ITU, and Coursera.

As I’m speaking to you now, hon Chair, we are rolling out a programme of training 50 000 young people on data, science and related skills. Thank you, Chairperson.

Mr I NTSUBE: Through you, hon House Chair, let me thank the Minister for these points which reaffirms consistency of your department to expand access to *Information and Communication Technology,* ICT, services to the poor. Hon Minister, would you agree that the use of ICT facilities beyond making and

receiving calls or messages remains the challenge, especially,

among majority of our people who are under semi-literate.

To address this challenge, what are the envisaged plans of the department in partnership with the private sector, to provide

basic training on the ICT? Thanks, House Chair.

The MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES: Thank

you so much, hon Ntsube. As I said, as the department, we are

also responsible to facilitate enabling environment, and for

the partnerships that we enter into, with the Department of Higher Education and Training, NEMISA, our training institute,

SITAs, Department of labour and any other department because, you may understand, hon Chair, that the nature of work that we

do cuts across, it doesn’t matter whether you are in Social Development or Agriculture, but at the centre of it, is a digital skilling.

Of course, as the hon member puts it, ours is to make sure that the interventions that are targeted by South Africa, in rolling out the digital economy, relive a good social impact to the people that we are looking at. This is why we are looking at the new ways of manufacturing, we talk about the

likes of FreeD printing, the Laser cutting, virtual and

augmented reality, right now, hon members, we are engaging virtually, and it takes a digital skill to be able to engage

in a platform that we are talking about.

But we are saying that, there is more that we can do, which is why we appeal to the industry to also come on board and make

sure that they can contribute to this work that we must all commit to. Thank you so much.

Ms H S BOSHOFF: Through you House Chair, let me say good afternoon to the Minister. Minister, in spite of the much

spoken about SA Connect Project meant to connect rural schools, and by extension to communities, which has presently

piloted to various district municipalities across the country, and in the O R Tambo District, the implementation of this pilot project is moving at a snail’s pace, with only less than

200 after the 1400 schools connected.

Minister, how do you hope to roll out the SA Connect at a national scale, if your department can’t connect a handful of district? Also, Minister, you spoke about enabling environment, what is this enabling environment if you can’t even connect schools? Thank you very much.

The MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES:

Through you, hon Chair, hon Boshoff, when we talk of creating

enabling environment it means that there must be policy at place, it means that there must be regulation that must

responsive to that which must be done, and this is the work that then occupies that which we do. We are not implementing

urgently in terms of everything else. The project that we are talking about, as we are the department that is responsible to

provides connectivity to South Africans, we therefore approved

the SA Connect that you correctly referred to.

But let me correct you, it is not true that in the first phase of O R Tambo, because we have categorised the roll-out of the

broad and planned in different phases, that’s why we look at connecting certain sites in O R Tambo. We are talking about 975 connections on the first phase, and a remainder of the site is what is going to be a second phase that we will be

embarking on. Yes, I fully agree, hon member, that it is true that we have not managed to connect all schools.

But if you may understand the environment in O R Tambo in terms of the poor infrastructure, the instability in energy,

is one of the reasons that has led to the failure of

connectivity in the province, because when schools close, it means that they switch off their electricity because they are

trying to save. They forget that there is Wi-Fi that has been installed. This affect the connectivity.

That’s why now we have said, as we roll out the plan, we must

make sure that we involve all stakeholders, so that when we go there together, we understand the impact that each other has

on the product that we want to deliver to the people we are

working with. This is why we have established a steering committee. The President and the Cabinet has approved the

District Development Model, DDM, and we are working together to say that, these are the challenges.

The Department of Education, the community, the municipality and any other stakeholder should come on board, like the Department of Minerals and Energy. They all have a role to play. We are certain and committed to ensuring that we connect

the unconnected in South Africa, and this is why I said, as we go to the second phase that we will roll out, which we must roll out, that is why we are partnering with the private sector, because we do recognise the capacity that we have at this stage, and the lack where we do not have.

Our issue is to make sure that at all time we collaborate with those that can achieve the target that we have to meet. Thank you, Chairperson.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr A J Nyambi): The next follow-up question is from EFF. Is the EFF still connected?

Ms B T MATHEVULA: Yes, Chair, hon Motsamai will make the

follow-up question.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr A J Nyambi): Hon Motsamai, it’s your

turn, sir.

*Setswana*:

Rre K MOTSAMAYI: Tona ya Lefapha la Puisano le Diteknologi tsa Digitale, re bone ka nako ya kgatelelo ya COVID-19, fa lefapha la gago le tshamikileng karolo e tona ya go golaganya batho mo dikgwebong le puisano ka digitale. Ke matsapa le ditshweetso

di feng tse lefapha la gago le tla di dirang go oketsa digital emo dingwageng tse tlhano tse tlang?

*IsiXhosa*:

UMPHATHISWA KWEZONXIBELELWANO NOBUCHWEPHESHE BEDIJITHALI:

Lungu elihloniphekileyo uMotsamayi, uzakukhumbula ukuba

nangona nawe uvuma ukuba siye saneengxaki ezithile ngexesha le-COVID 19, apho siye safumanisa ukuba abantu bethu abakwazi

ukufikekela kwiinkonzo ezithile ekulindeleke ukuba bayazifumana, ngenxa yamaziko ethu angekho mgangathweni. Sithe

sizakuqinisa umqolo siqinise kwezi ndawo sibonileyo ukuba sithe sasilela kuzo. Ekuqaleni kwezinto nanjengoko uMongameli

athe wamemelela kwintetho yakhe kweyoMdumba, esitsho ukuba sizakukhupha i-spectrum. Esi si-pectrum sizakuncedisa kule

nkqubo sithetha ngayo ye-SA Connect, ukuqinisekisa ukuba ...

*English*:

... we enhance the capacity.

*IsiXhosa*:

Xa sisenza njalo, nanjengoko besitshilo ukuba le nkqubo siyiqale kuba sizama ukuvala le nto bayibiza njengomsantsa kwezonxibelelwano (digital divide). Sithi ke ngoku ngo-SA Connect siyakwazi ukufikelela emaphandleni.

Uzakukhumbula ukuba yiminyaka engaphaya kweminyaka engama-27 sazikhuphayo iimpepha-mvume. Kodwa nanamhlanje sisathetha ngamaphandle angakwaziyo ukufumana ezi nkonzo njengoko usitsho. Yiyo loo nto urhulumente esithi, senza kanjani ukuqinisekisa ukuba siyakha kwiindawo esithe sasilela kuzo

ukuqinisekisa umthetho nokuqinisa imimiselo. Ndiyabulela Sihlalo.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr A J Nyambi): Thank you Minister, but next time leave the video on because the session is live. The fourth supplementary question is from FF Plus.

HON MEMBER: Chair, the follow-up question is from the IFP.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr A J Nyambi): No, it’s from the FF

Plus.

HON MEMBER: Chair, we are covered for this one.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr A J Nyambi): If you’re covered, that’s good.

Question 47:

*IsiXhosa*:

UMPHATHISWA WEZONXIBELELWANO NOBUCHWEPHESHE BEDIJITHALI:

Ndiyabulela Sihlalo ngalo mbuzo welungu elihloniphekileyo u- handsome, chocolate Nhanha, ozimiseleyo kwinto yokuba silisebe sichazele abantu ngemisebenzi esiyenzayo. Ilungu elihloniphekileyo lifuna ukwazi ukuba ingaba senza njani ukuqinisekisa ukuba abantu bakuthi abashiyeki emva. Andiyazi nokuba ndiyavakala na Sihlalo.

USIHLALO WENDLU WE-NCOP: Uyavakala (you are audible) hon Minister except the video.

UMPHATHISWA WEZONXIBELELWANO NOBUCHWEPHESHE BEDIJITHALI:

Ndizama ukuyilungisa Sihlalo weNdlu.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: You can continue, if you are struggling in future to sort the video as the NCOP. Thank you, you are clear now Minister. You can continue responding to the question hon Minister.

*IsiXhosa*:

UMPHATHISWA WEZONXIBELELWANO NOBUCHWEPHESHE BEDIJITHALI:

Mandibulele ukuba amalungu ePalamente ...[Ngokungavakaliyo.] Sihlalo ohloniphekileyo, njengoko besenditshilo ilungu elihloniphekileyo uNhanha ubuza ngokucacileyo ukuba,

siqinisekisa njani ukuba kwezi ngxaki sinazi zokutshintshela kwidijithali abantu abashiyeki emva. Sizakuqinisekisa ukuba loo nto siyayilandelela ngenxa yokuba iingxaki esithe sanazo ezibangele ukuba kubekho uphazamiseko, yindlela yokusebenza yamaqela la ebesebenza phaya. Yilonto ngoku sithetha ngokuba

...

*English*:

... we are focusing on localising the services, so that the people who are working down there are the ones that are driving the work. Therefore, the beneficiaries become the ones that are able and call anybody that was rendering the service. This we do, of course with partnership with the municipalities. We have therefore, contracted one of our agencies which is called Sentech, that must help us in terms of improving the quality of the work that has been done. Thank you Chair.

Mr M NHANHA: Thank you very much House Chair. Tonight I will sleep a happy man, for once I have been told that I am handsome. [Laughter]

*IsiXhosa*: 16:04

Mphathiswa, ukufeda nokungaphumeleli kwalo msebenzi wokutshitshisa amaze omoya (analogue), kunefuthe nemiphumela engekho mihle kuthengiso esidlangalaleni kwamaqonga ezonxibelelwano. Lo msebenzi Mphathiswa usemva ngeminyaka ephaya kweli-10 kuba noko kudala kuthethwa ngawo, ungade wenzeke. Lo msinandozele ubambezela ukusiwa konxibelelwano olifikelelekayo ngokwasepokothweni eluntwini, kodwa ibe ilunxibelelwano oluzinzileyo.

Mphathiswa, oko wangena kweli sebe, ngokomsebenzi owenziweyo, ungazinika amanqaku amangaphi ukusuka kwi-0 ukuya kwi-10 ngokomsebenzi wakho ngokungqamene nalo msebenzi. Enkosi.

UMPHATHISWA WEZONXIBELELWANO NOBUCHWEPHESHE BEDIJITHALI:

Mandibulele Sihlalo kwaye ndizinike amanqaku njengoko esitsho. Mandiqale ngomsebenzi esiwenzileyo ukuze ilungu elihloniphekileyo liqonde ukuba kutheni ndizinika la manqaku ndizakuzinika wona.

Ukufika kwam ndifike inkqubo ithetha ngokunikezelwa kwee ...

*English*:

... set-top boxes ...

*IsiXhosa*:

... obekunengxaki, njengoko usitsho lungu elihloniphekileyo ukuba lo msebenzi usemva ngeminyaka eli-10. Okwesibini kukuba,

...

*English*:

... the set-top boxes ...

*IsiXhosa*:

ezi sithetha ngazo bezingekathengiswa apho wonke umntu nokwaziyo ukuzithengela ebenokuyifumana enganikwanga ngurhulumente, afake endlini. Okwesithathu, belungekho unxulumano nabenzi bazo ukuqinisekisa ukuba ...

*English*:

... we do understand the capacity or the capability of the manufacturers in South Africa to say, indeed when I commit to the nation and the country to say, by March 2022 we will be able to migrate South Africans, that is practical, because the manufacturers themselves would be able to provide the number that is required.

As I am talking to you right now, one of the challenges that we experienced was the issue of installers, the number of

installers that we had in South Africa. That is why it spoke to the poor workmanship. I have managed to engage the manufacturers, and they agreed to an extent that we have reviewed the standards, which was by the way finalised in October 2020. We engaged them in January, and by October 2020, the standards were finalised. Therefore, this tells you that the manufacturers are now ready to rollout massively in terms of producing the devices that we are talking about. The second issue, we have engaged the broadcasters and everybody in the ecosystem to an extent of establishing a work stream that looks at the entire ecosystem.

If there is a problem from the installation side, let’s make sure that we bring quality assurers. Even after the installation, we have established another work stream to make sure that, indeed the person who has been provided a set–top box or the ID TV is able to access the service that we are talking about, and for that hon member, yes, I have not been able to migrate the people of South Africa. The digital migration process started in 2008, but with my arrival in late 2018 and up to now, I can give myself five and confidently say, by March 2022, I will be having 10 out of 10. Thank you so much.

Mr M NHANHA: I object to that score Chair.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Thank you hon ...hon handsome, chocolate, no, no. Thank you hon Minister.

Ms L C BEBEE: Thank you hon Chair, babaa.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Oh mamaa!

Ms L C BEBEE: Thank you very much hon Minister. You will agree with me that, this process has experienced a lot of challenges and has really struggled to take off. Can the Minister clarify whether are there any possible disruptions in terms of access of our people to the television viewing associated with this transition? If so, how is the department going to mitigate such disruptions? What is the plan of the department to ensure that the youth, women and people with disabilities benefit from the procurement of the set-top boxes? Thank you very much Chair.

The MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES: I am

now tempted to want to be redeployed to the NCOP. Hon Chair and the hon member, thank you so much. Of course you are correct mamaa to say, there has been a lots of disruptions in

this project that we are talking about. In order to eliminate those that are threats to the target and the deadline that the President has set for ourselves which is March 2022, we have undertaken a preparatory work in terms of ensuring that there is local preparedness which becomes the integral part of the Broadcasting Digital Migration, BDM project work.

We are looking at registrations that have been too slow, we are looking at installations that has been taking too long, including the quality that was there. At the centre of it is raising public awareness on who must go where, and where to access even for those that are not going to be subsidised by government. We believe that if we do this and we participate 100%, and all households that qualify get to participate.

Indeed, we will be able to eliminate the threats which talk to the disruptions that we are talking about. Therefore, we will be able to really minimise that.

Hon member, at the centre of this is ensuring that we bring on board all those people that are coming from the poor households, that earn less that R3 200. They must be beneficiaries. We must make sure that, they have access not only to broadcasting services, but also to information. That is what we strive to achieve. Thank you so much Chair.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: You are more than welcome to come and Minister in the NCOP. We will call you sisii.

Mr A B CLOETE: Hon House Chair, just a question regarding the process until March 2022. I just want to ask Minister; what measures are there in place to ensure that there is no corruption in the set-top boxes distribution in taking them to the people. What measures are there in place that there is no corruption?

The MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES: Thank

you very much hon Chair and thank you hon member for that question. As you are aware that, as the ANC government we are committed to root out all corrupt elements in our government, we have therefore as the department put in place measures to eliminate and reduce any potential of corruption.

The first thing that we did hon member is that, we conducted an audit of the existing current set-top boxes that are seated at the post office to verify if indeed those that were delivered were in good quality and we also we paid the relevant service providers. On the second phase, what we are introducing as we are trying to eliminate this time that we spent more on procurement which is when we do all these

things, we are introducing a voucher system wherein the only thing that we are going to do, just like we do with food parcels, we issue a voucher to the relevant beneficiary as confirmed, not only by Statistics South Africa, but also verified by the local municipality and the ward councillors that we are working with to ensure that, indeed Stella Ndabeni-Abrahams qualifies to get the set-top box or whatever

device we are offering. So that, when you get your voucher you go and change your voucher in the nearby store. You choose, we don’t even tell you where to go. All we say is that the boxes and the devices are available in these retail shops. You can choose in terms of where you go to the one that is next to your area. We are trying everything.

We have again increased capacity in terms of our call centre, including all languages there. Previously we had only Sesotho speaking people. Now you do realise that people are speaking Sesotho, but there is Xitsonga speaking people that must be assisted and they won’t understand certain things, and of course you will find IsiXhosa speaking people. What we are saying is that, let there be all language representatives in the call centre so that when the beneficiaries want to call and inform us of anything, then we will be able to that.

We also appeal to yourselves hon members to make sure that, when you see that there is wrong doing please raise the flag so that we can respond and together we can fight the corruption that is trying to undermine the democracy that we have in our country. Thank you so much.

*IsiXhosa*:

Mnu T APLENI: Enkosi kakhulu Sihlalo. Mphathiswa, njengoko bekubonakala ukuba lukhona ushokoxeko kwezezimali lokuthi kuncediswane nabantu abangathathi ntweni kule nkqubo.

Kuyabonakala ukuba bekunyanzekelekile ukuba niye kukhangela inkxaso yezezimali ngaphandle. Ndicela ukuqonda Mphathiswa, ingaba niye nasebenzisa oluphi uluhlu lokukhetha abantu abanokuthi banixhase ngezimali kule nkqubo? Ingaba bangaphi abaye babonakalisa umdla wokunceda kwaye zeziphi izigqibo enithe nazenza kunye nabo? Ndiyabulela.

UMPHATHISWA WEZONXIBELELWANO NOBUCHWEPHESHE BEDIJITHALI:

Mandibulele kwilungu elihloniphekileyo uApleni. Eneneni njengoko siyazi ukuba imeko yezoqoqosho yethu imbi, uNondyebo weSizwe uye wasinika imali engange-R1,6 billion nto leyo ebonisayo ukuba kusafuneka enye imali. Njengoko usitsho lungu elihloniphekileyo, iCabinet iye yasivumela ukuba sikhangele ezinye izimali. Le nto siyenza sidibene nesebe eli linoxanduva

kule nto uNondyebo weSizwe kuba kaloku thina asiyazi imigomo ekufuneka ilandelwe.

Siyenza sikunye ne...

*English*:

...National Treasury and the Development Bank of Southern Africa, DBSA ...

*IsiXhosa*:

... kuba kaloku asizazi ezinye ezizakuthi zityunjwe kuba ngokwemimiselo nemithetho yaseMzantsi Afrika, sivumelekile ukuba singasebenza nayo.

*English*:

So, ours from our side it is to come with the project plan ...

*IsiXhosa*:

... sithi nantsi into esizakuyenza nokuthetha sicacise kuNondyebo weSizwe kwizibophelelo (commitments) ukuba sizakuyibuyisa njani le mali, ukuze uNondyebo weSizwe ibenguye osikhokelayo. Silapho ke lungu elihloniphekileyo, asikayifumani le ishotayo imali. Kodwa nangona ndisithi asikayifumani nje, sinayo la R1,6 billion esizakube

siyisebenzisa. Akukho nto imileyo kuba sisakhangela enye imali.

*English*:

This is why it was important for us to also engage the manufacturers to say, where there is a need, they must be patient with us. So, they understand that we may say for example, produce 500 000 but as you produce 500 000, it does not mean that we are going to pay you one-off. You know that you give three months until we consolidate the funding that is needed for the project. We are confident that by the time we come back to the NCOP, we will be having specifics to say, these are the companies, or these are the banks that we have partnered with and whatever that has been considered, in line with the regulations and the law in South Africa. Thank you so much hon member.

Question 38:

*IsiXhosa*:

UMPHATHISWA WEZONXIBELELWANO NOBUCHWEPHESHE BEDIJITHALI:

Mandibulele Sihlalo ngombuzo othe wabuzwa apha. Ngokwenene okwethu silisebe kubalulekile ukuba sense ngako okusemandleni ethu ukuqinisekisa ukuba abantu baseMzantsi Afrika bayazifumana iinkonzo ngendlela efanelekileyo.

*English*:

This therefore tells you that we are concerned when the post offices get closed. And as they get closed, we understand the negative impact that the closure has not only on the beneficiaries but also on the people who were generating income by virtue of them having access to the clientele of post office services.

Of course, what we are doing is try to engage the local authorities to raise awareness that, when we close a particular post office because of our current financial standing, we are able to negotiate and say people must be transported to the nearby post office. And this is something we understand is not of our own making. It is because of the challenges that we are facing, which we have inherited as the post office.

We appreciate that very few hon members amongst you still use the post office for the current services. That is why we spoke about repurposing the post office to drive ecommerce. This is something that again, in detail, we are appointing a panel of experts that is going to help us drive that process. We will be able to come and detail our investigation as to why the post office is not financially sustainable. What are the

things we need to do away with including the process of reviewing legislation and regulations to say, these are the things that we must do away with? And these are the things we must introduce in order to make sure the post office is financially sustainable. By doing that, this will minimise all these challenges.

We want to apologise on behalf of the post office, hon Chair, to all those people we are owing. We cannot be the ones, as the ANC-led government, who destroy small businesses. We believe that there must be engagement between the authority that is contracted i.e. the post office and the service provider to make sure that our people get the efficient services that they are supposed to have. Thank you, Chairperson.

Ms T C MODISE: Thank you very much, hon Minister, for your elaborate response. Minister, you have agreed that most of your offices in the country have been closed. Because you know that the poor urban people still rely on those post offices, my question is: How is it going to affect or impact on the rural poor in terms of accessing the services primarily provided by the post office?

The MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES: Hon

Chairperson, my apologies. I had to change my position. To respond to the question, I said, the closure of the post offices to the communities has a negative impact because this means the beneficiaries must now spend more time on the road, going to the nearby police stations. But also, it has increased costs to them as they need to take transport in certain areas.

Having said that, I said we are further engaging with local authorities in order to ensure that we minimise that negative impact. This is the work that is ongoing. We we are engaging with city municipalities, local municipalities and the traditional authorities in the areas that have traditional authorities. Of course - as I said - it is something that is very sad, that we have to let our people go through that. But because of our current financial status as the post office, we have no choice until we have turned the tide around.

We are committed to ensure that we revive all our services and make sure that our people can access the services in their closer areas because that is the reason we said for every

5 000km there should be a post office. That is the policy we have, and we are committed to ensure that it is realised by

making sure that people have access including, as we seek to minimise the impact, digitising the services by ensuring that people are asked to access their money through the bank or the cellphone banking that we are introducing. Thank you, hon member.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: I have just received a notice that hon Ngwezi is probably still at the doctor. If that is the case, then let’s go to hon Lehihi.

Ms S B LEHIHI: Post offices are central to the services of poor rural communities. What other preventative measures are there to ensure the backlog does not happen again?

*Sesotho:*

Ke a leboha.

The MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES: I

said earlier, hon member, that we are appointing a panel of experts that will conduct an investigation which must ensure that the post office remains financially sustainable.

Therefore, it talks to the introduction of new revenue initiatives. But for us to be able to be responsive to that and see what works for the post office, as the policymakers we

have to make sure that we conduct an investigation. This panel of experts will be working hand in hand with the board to make sure that they get to the root causes of all these challenges.

As I’m speaking to you, hon member, the ANC-led government has put about R8 billion over the past 10 years into the post office. That tells you there’s a challenge if we are still talking about the problems that we have. That is why we are saying, let’s change how we do things because, clearly, the challenges are not only at board or executive level, but they go beyond that. That’s why we are saying, once we get all that report, findings and everything, we are seeking other means to make sure that the post office is sustainable.

As I said, one of those is digitising postal services. Secondly, is to make sure that the post office becomes the logistics hub that it is supposed to be in order to be able to drive the ecommerce that we want it to drive. We believe that in doing so, indeed we shall have eliminated some of the costs that we incur which lead to us not being able to do what we are supposed to do. Thank you once more, hon Chair.

Mr T J BRAUTESETH: Minister, all this talk about the post office becoming the economic hub of the community – I’m sure

you’ll agree – it is very, very far away. I am concerned now with the functions of the institution during Covid-19 [Inaudible.] ... funds and assistance ... [Inaudible.] The pressure that you are under can only make things worse.

Minister, have you considered in your forward planning, the possible allocation of post office ... [Inaudible.] especially postal services to private companies in that space? Thank you, Chair.

The MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES: Thank

you so much, hon member, for that question. Of course, as the department we still believe that the post office can do more in the work or the area that the hon member is referring to in terms of the core business of the postal services.

As I said, the issue that we are dealing with is the issue we inherited in terms of the challenges that we are faced with, be it how money was spent. Instead of investing in the business, money was invested in other things and these are the things that we are trying to correct. But of course, hon members, as I said earlier, where we need ... As the ANC-led government, we believe that it is only when we work together that we can do more. Therefore, this means that where we need to collaborate with the private sector, we will collaborate.

As long as it is not at the expense of the state. I want to emphasise that.

As we seek to build a capable state, we are trying to strengthen and close the gaps. But we are appreciative of the capacity that lies within the private sector. That is why, where necessary, we will tap into that and find ways of partnering to make sure that our people get the efficient services that they are supposed to get. Thank you, hon Chair.

Question 35:

The MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES: House

Chairperson, thank you so much on the question asked by hon Cloete. And of course, yes...

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr A J NYAMBI): Hon Minister...

Mr M NHANHA: She muted.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr A J NYAMBI): Hon Minister, unmute yourself. Hon Minister.

Mr A B CLOETE: The irony of the Communications Minister going down. It is such an important question.

The MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES: Thank

you so much and apologies hon Cloete, to disappoint you that I came back and of course you may be aware that connectivity goes with energy and therefore there’s challenge from the energy side [Inaudible.] from the communication side. Of course, on the question that has been asked by the hon member, in terms of the unbundling of the post bank and the challenge that it will impose to the post office.

We are aware hon member, that this may cause a challenge if we do not pay attention to it in detail. Which is why together with the Treasury, we have said that let there be a clear business case, that looks at the stability of the post office, beyond the post bank. This is the decision that we had to take because if we are to make sure that we participate meaningfully in the banking sector, we got to make sure that the post bank is responsive to all aspects that are expected in the financial sector.

This therefore talks to the issue of the bank controlling company, that must be capable enough, including not only personnel, including the issue of financial stages to make sure that it can be responsive. This is the reason, we took that decision, to say let be the unbundling, so that we are

able to deal with all these things, for repurpose the post Office to focus on what as I said earlier, the ecommerce and [Inaudible.] of the region and make sure that the post bank becomes a collaborative platform, as we needed too, to be joined, because all the work that has being done by the post bank, is the work that relies from what post office does in terms of the infrastructure, but at the centre of it, is the appreciation that the post office has a critical role to play in the ecommerce platform. And the Post must indeed play its part in ensuring that it gives access to those that are not seen that they are supposed to have access in terms of the banking. Thank you once more, hon member.

Mr A B CLOETE: House Chair, thank you, hon Minister there has been some written about this in the media and we have too little information regarding what exactly this is going to be, are we looking at the state bank, is this a state bank that Treasury and Minister has alluded to [Inaudible.] because that means for the Minister, poor people don’t have money or they have very little money and unemployment is out of control, it’s been for years.

Even worse news is that state-owned enterprises, SOEs, and state-owned companies, SOCs have failed. An example of this is

the very same post office, you spoke about. It’s so bad that the bank needs to be on bond loan for it to meet Treasury’ s regulations to able to have a state-owned bank in the company. So the post bank will not be able to provide financial services for now, because of the issues at the post offices.

Now they are looking at unbundling the post bank to be able to provide financial services as basically loans, but the poor remain poor. Now, the question is, with the 1% market share at this stage for the post bank, Minister do you really think South Africans have the means, one, and two, the confidence to do business with the post bank? Thank you.

The MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES: House

Chair, thank you so much hon member, just to clarify few things that have been made on the statement. The issue of unbundling the post bank because there’s no money, that is not true. I said we are unbundling because the law says; a bank controlling company should be financial stable and that does not have any impact on the bank, I want to emphasise that. It doesn’t have any impact, if the hon member has seen the Post Bank Amendment Bill, that we gazetted two-week back, it talks to this and I do hope that hon members will make inputs on

that because we talk to the establishment of the post bank towards licensing.

This requires as I said, it requires us to look to the entire ecosystem. Now the hon member makes reference to our people being poor and that they cannot afford the services, the post bank is the bank that is closer to the poor. That is why most people still do not have access to bank but they use the post bank because it is the closest to them. Hon member, I want to assure you, the reason we are doing everything in our power within the law, to make sure that post bank gets its license is because it has to function like a fully-fledged bank that looks at the work that needs to be done, including the needs of those you referred to as unbankable in the society.

Many people hon member, cannot wait for the post bank to be licensed including businesses by the way, including businesses they see opportunity the post bank can play and bridge the gap that is there within the current industry and the work that they are doing. So, we are confident that the minute we bring to yourself the amendments on the post office, you will fast- track the process so that, you and I as you correctly put it, will look into the interest of the poor and we do not look anywhere else because we are public representatives that at

all times should have the balance between the industry players and the needs of the poor people that we are serving.

So, we are counting on you, hon member to make sure that our business becomes a success and post bank can finally take or occupy its rightful place in the financial sector. Thank you, hon member.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON FOR COMMITTEES (Mr A J NYAMBI): Thank

you, hon Minister, the next supplementary question is from hon Nhanha. Hon Nhanha.

Mr M NHANHA: That’s not good enough House Chair.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON FOR COMMITTEES (Mr A J NYAMBI): Hon

handsome, chocolate, Nhanha.

Mr M NHANHA: That’s much better.

*IsiXhosa*:

Mnu M NHANHA: Mphathiswa i-Postbank ibisandula kudandalalisa ukukhula koshishino lwayo ngeli xesha lokuvalwa kweentshukumo (lockdwown). Akukho nto sinokuyivuyela apho kuba liyinene eli lokuba lowo ngumlilo weendiza. Oku kukhula koshishino

kuphenjelelwe ziiakhawunti ezithe zavulwa ngabantu ukuze baxhamle kwisibonelelo sikarhulumente esingama-R350, kubantu abangaphangeliyo ngexesha le-COVID 19 (COVID 19 Social Distress Grant).

Mphathiswa, njengoko usazi ukuba loo ngowa-mali yinto nje yomzuzwana, kwaye kwayona iPostbank ayikwazi ukuthembela kulo mjelo wemali ixesha elide. Kulo nyaka uphelileyo, iKomiti eKhethekileyo ikhe yadlan’indlebe kunye nePostbank, iBhodi yasePostbank kunye nabalawuli kula bhanki.

Le nto ithethwa lilungu elihloniphekileyo uClote asinto ayikha emqaleni, Mphathiswa. Basichazela ukuba oko kwaqala lo gilikanqo we-COVID 19, imeko yebhanki imbi kakhulu kuba abantu ababefudula begcina imali kulo vimba, baphulukana nemisebenzi kwaye bayacutheka ebhankini.

Mphathiswa xa ujonge isimo soqoqosho kweli lizwe, iimpawu zicace gca okwekati emhloph’ehlungwini ukuba le bhanki, ayinakho ukuphumelela. Xa ucinga Mphathiswa, kule meko sikuyo elizweni, umbono wePostbank ingaba ngumbono ophuhlileyo?

Enkosi kakhulu Sihlalo ngokundipha umzuzu, ndiyabulela.

The MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES: House

Chair, let me first register my concern of the members that do not have confidence in a state-owned bank, that is the post bank. It tells you that the members never even tried to utilise the post bank that they are here to talk about today. And I will encourage hon members to utilise those services so that they can see the capacity at the post bank.

As I talked about that, I said at the centre of banking, is to ensure that an institution is liquid in terms of the financial standing and the post bank is. Whether there are the R350, or not- the reports if the hon members have followed – every time we report on the balance sheet of the post bank, that post bank has always been doing so well, yes, it’s doing extremely well now, because there’s more money that goes to deposits, although it’s money in transit this one, because we have deposit money that is there by the depositors, which even ourselves we are able to say, we are investing. As I am speaking to you, we have invested a some of R1 billion in the Nedbank, that is not the bank that is struggling, you cannot say that we are struggling if we are able to invest a some of R1 billion, that’s one of the investments we are making.

All we are asking from you, hon members, is that just have faith in the state and the capability of the people of South Africa. That indeed, the state can have a role to play in the financial sector, in order to transform the sector but most importantly in order to avail access to financial services to those that are poor in our areas and those that are in need of the post bank services. We believe that by the time we get the license, if the hon members are not going to block it, that the post bank is here to prove everyone wrong, who does not believe in the capability and the patriotism of people of South Africa, who say if it belongs to the state you got to use it, you got to protect it and we going to invest in it.

Thank you so much House Chair.

Mr A B CLOETE: House Chairperson, on the point of order. The Minister can’t say members cannot stop this, because we are the Legislative branch and ...[Interjection.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON FOR COMMITTEES (Mr A J NYAMBI): That’s

not a point of order. Hon Dangoor.

Mr M DANGOOR: House Chairperson, Minister, banking for those people who are so called unbankable, has proved successful in many countries. With Grameen Bank in Bangladesh and the very

President Obama, was launched from the bank called the South Shore Bank in Chicago, which was a community bank.

Similar at the post bank, looking at the people and the other banks that they have been ignored, as being unbankable, those banks became very successful and Minister, if I can advise and the question is; can we look at what happened in Grameen Bank with Prof Yunus and what happened with South Shore Bank, and banks like that, to see if we can’t replicate for the poor people who have no banking services at the moment, to actually provide banking services for them? Thank you, House Chairperson.

The MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES: House

Chairperson, thank you so much to hon Dangoor for that advice, of course will consider, as we seek to learn from those that have walked the path before us but most importantly in order to strengthen all the efforts that we have, we welcome all the ideas and indeed we will make sure that we strengthen the work that we are doing. Thank you, once more House Chairperson.

Mr M S MOLETSANE: House Chair, Minister when the post bank is unbundled from the South African Post Office and becomes a standalone state-owned bank. How do you plan to ensure that

this does not become another opportunity for the ANC-led government to loot? Thank you.

The MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES: House

Chair, thank you so much hon member, for that question. Of course, as we are aware the ANC-led government is doing everything in its power to ensure that we root out corruption, and therefore when we introduced measures like these, that we are clear in terms of the objectives that we want to make sure that we provide access to the people that did not have access to banking services. It therefore tells you that we have to put stringent measures, that is why it is something that from the regulation, the point of view of [Inaudible.] Reserve Bank, Treasury, Auditor General, AG, and everybody that is working on that process, we joined hands to say let’s look into policies, let’s audit the existing systems that we have, so that we make sur that indeed they are tighten.

Of course, hon member I have not forgotten as we talk of this environment we are also looking at digitising the post bank services just like the other banks that are found online and are able to do well. So we also cognisance of the fact that there may be cybersecurity elements that we need to look at, which is why we are inclusive in our approach. To say let’s

bring the security element into the technologies that we are talking about, try to eliminate anything that can be a threat to this that we want to do. But most importantly, we wet and we call upon hon members to make sure that, if they see anything and hopefully, they will not be found amongst those that are trying to corrupt the banking people that we are talking because this corruption does happen on itself.

As much as the members says; the ANC that is looting, it is has been proven beyond doubt that many people that have been mentioned, they are not only belonging to the ANC. Which is why as the ANC, we are clear on one thing, that we are going to allow anyone to undermine the service delivery that we must take to our people by engaging on corrupt activities. The President has been very clear, you’ve seen the law enforcement agencies – which why say, when you see anything, make sure that you whistle blow, so that together we can fight corruption and make sure that our people get the best service that they are supposed to get. Thank you, once more.

Question 31:

The MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES: Hon

House Chair, in response to that question of course, we have seen lots of challenges that we have experienced, and as I

said earlier on one of the things that we experienced was the fact that we have not had tighter measures in ensuring that we avoid irregular or wasteful expenditure which is why now as the Post Office has tried to apply for intervention from the National Treasury although we were not successful we said let us review on how we are doing things. For I understand as I said earlier that the National Treasury has pumped about

R8 billion plus and therefore at all times there are lots of monies that go to wastage there is a reason for people that are putting money in the purse to say no, no it means there is something wrong that we are doing. That is why we said let us review the contracts that we have and undertake an audit of the services that we are rendering including overhauling the

infrastructure challenge that we have in order that we can eliminate the wastage that we find. Thank you so much, hon Chairperson

Mr A ARNOLDS: Hon Chairperson, greetings to the hon Minister and then also to all the hon members of the NCOP. Hon Minister, every financial year, year after year there are unauthorised, irregular, fruitless and wasteful expenditure. The Public Finance Management Act is very clear in terms of the accounting officers and the politics responsible for

preventing such expenditure. It also stipulates the process that needs to be followed.

What are the reasons for not taking effective preventative measures to prevent this wasteful expenditure and in terms of the consequence management also for those involved? Thank you.

The MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES: Hon

Chair and hon member, firstly let me say the Post Office has taken measures against those who have been suspected because others are still under investigation and other have been released because they have been found guilty of certain offences in relation to the matter we are talking about.

Of course as I said, as long as we have not addressed the issue of information and technology, IT, systems are at the centre. As long as we have not made sure that including the property evaluation is done because one of these things which led to these are when we get to move to another area that we own to the particular area that we are going to lease and therefore that talks to irregular expenditure when the National Treasury and the Auditor-General, AG, are looking at to say: Why did you move from a building that you own and you had to pay these monies? However, most importantly the fact

that we have not managed to digitise services that there is lots of paper trail that cannot be followed. These are the things that we are saying now we are appointing a team to look at those and make sure that we digitise those. State Information Technology Agency, Sita**,** has been brought on board in terms of availing the 56 e-services that are available in the government work portal to make sure that at least we can eliminate the potential threats. However, we are working together with all law-enforcement services, including the AG to address the challenges that we are faced with at the Post Office. Thank you, House Chairperson.

Mr T J BRAUTESETH: Hon House Chairperson, I must thank the Minister first of all for the joke of the day today. She really amused me very, when she said we must have faith in the state. For the past 25 years leaves me a little faithless.

Also just commenting that if the ANC did everything in their power to fight corruption, they must be feeling quite weak at the moment.

However, anyway Deputy Chair let me continue.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP (Mr A J Nyambi): Hon House

Chair.

Mr T J BRAUTESETH: So Minister, based on your response to the hon Arnolds’s question it is quite clear that you are not really doing much to go after the officials that are responsible for the irregular, fruitless and wasteful expenditure. So I just want to know: When will your culture of your current officials volunteer, to appear before the Zondo

Commission for thorough interrogation of their nefarious activities? Or have they been already subpoenaed? Thank you.

The MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES: Hon

House Chairperson, I am happy that the hon member does recognise that people do not just go to the Zondo Commission they get to be subpoenaed. For as long as we have not received anything that people must go there, we cannot indeed force anyone to go there. It is not true that we are not doing anything to ensure that people are punished when the need be. I said that there are people sitting at home. That is why we are now finalising those investigations to say we cannot be paying you because we are taking too long to investigate. One of those things that led to that is because there has been a lot of instability at the Post Office which is what we are trying to address by filling in the critical positions. As we have seen last week we appointed the chief executive officer,

CEO, of the Post Office. There are other positions that are being filled as I am speaking to you. These are meant to bring stability to the Post Office so that we can be able to hold everyone accountable. Especially those who are really undermining the law of our country and therefore utilising the funds according to how they like to do.

However, the second thing hon member, I like the fact that I was able to make the hon member laugh. Indeed, it can be a joke to compare 25 years, as compared to from 1948 to 1994. You may think that it is easy to do it because when you had inherited a system that only accommodated the minority in our country at the expense of the majority of the people, you will not understand the challenges that people go through. What I said earlier on, one of the critical challenges faced at the Post Office they are hereditary to a Post Office that was created then not to service everyone because right now we have people even in the suburbs that are using the postal services. A Post Office that was merely meant to then identify gaps in terms of saying who is doing what because people were looking for spice when we are talking about our liberators because that was our only way of communicating. Now we are saying make the Post Office do the right thing. Let the Post Office be the centre not only of communication, but of government services

that is closer to the people. Indeed, to a person who has never experienced that it is a joke. To us it is the past that we must learn from, as we built on the future.

The last thing of course hon member, as a South African, it is my responsibility to make sure that at all times I do best in ensuring that the state becomes better where ever I am deployed or where ever I participate. Which is what I expect also from hon members to have faith in South Africa.

Hon members cannot come here and pose all these questions. Talk about unemployment and poor people whist they themselves by their own conviction they do not believe in what they are talking about. Unless that they think it is important that we politic on the matter that affects the majority of our people and to that I will take offence. For if you are going to play politics about the state of our people it tells us that there is something wrong in your thinking and your ideology.

Of course as the Minister of Communications and Digital Technologies under the ANC government, mine is to tell our people of South Africa is that they have been resilient all these years. From 1910, 1948 up to 1994. I know which is why they constantly reject anything that wants to contest the ANC

to make sure that it improves on the services that they have started to render. I have not given up hope because I know among South Africans there is the best of the best that still want to do good. There may be few elements that undermine the good that we are trying to do. However, as the ANC government we are committed in ensuring that we work with every one, but most importantly we deal with all the corrupt elements. Thank you so much, hon House Chairperson.

Mr T J BRAUTESETH: On a point of order.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr A J Nyambi): What is the point of order, hon Brauteseth?

Mr T J BRAUTESETH: Hon House Chairperson, my point of order is: I do not believe that it is parliamentary for the hon Minister to cast aspersions from anybody who criticises the work that the government that is doing. It is the work of the members of this House. When we raise issues it does not mean that we were part of an apartheid regime. It does not mean that I was born in 1910 and I supported apartheid. I think it is very unfortunate that the Minister refers to that. I am actually doing my job, hon House Chairperson.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr A J Nyambi): Hon Brauteseth, you asked the question and the hon Minister responded.

[Inaudible.]

We now move to Question 39.

Question 39:

The MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES: Thank

you so much once more, hon Chair. Let me apologise to the previous hon member for stating the facts of what is happening in my country. I really apologise if the member felt otherwise. I was just telling the reality of the story of South Africa. As I come to the question by hon Matibe, of course, at the centre of SABC challenges that we are faced with, you will recall hon members, that at some point we took the nation into confidence in terms of the turnaround strategy. You have seen on TV we were toing and froing, fighting and agreeing later. That was all meant to ensure that we get the best turnaround strategy that we can get with the resources that we have.

In that turnaround strategy at the centre of it whilst eliminating anything that is so cost consumptive in the SABC,

it is also trying to find ways of saying let’s look at other revenue initiatives just like payment of TV licence fees. I do hope that hon members are paying their TV licences because before we come and talk about SABC sustainability here we have a role to play especially as leaders although the role is for all of us as South Africans.

The first thing is to enhance our model or our strategy in terms of the collection of the TV licence. As the policy-maker in the department we’ve to look into all the legislatives and regulatory elements that are hindering SABC from participating meaningfully in the digital space that we are talking about.

That is why we are reviewing the laws. We have introduced some like the audiovisual that many people are unhappy with.

Unfortunately, as the policy-maker we cannot choose to be popular. We have to do what need to be done including disrupting the status quo for the benefit of the public of South Africa. So, we are doing everything. Yes, the turnaround strategy seeks to make sure that SABC can be sustainable.

Thank you once more, hon Chair.

Mr T B MATIBE: Thank you very much, House Chairperson. Thanks Minister for the response. Just to start, yes, indeed, I pay my TV licence. I do not owe anything in terms of the TV

licence. I think it is a very good initiative and it must start with us hon members that we pay TV licences - all public representatives either in legislature or local government. If we do that, of course, it will assist SABC to turnaround.

There is no doubt that SABC remains one of the critical and strategic state-owned entity. Therefore, it requires funding by the state. Indeed, for us as the ANC government we need to prioritise that. Is there any long-term view or plan of the department to strike a balance between the imperatives of minimising job losses and the sustainable turnaround strategy of SABC? If there is, what are the relevant details in that regard? What is the long-term vision of the department in terms of the sustainable funding model for SABC because, hon Minister, we need a sustainable funding model for this critical state-owned entity. Thank you very much, House Chairperson and thanks Minister.

The MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES: Thank

you so much, hon Chair and hon Mathibe. As I’m speaking to you right now the department is in a process of finalising the review of polices, legislations and regulations that affect the broadcasting sector. As I said, at the centre of it is the review of the funding model that must make sure that at least

it provides sustainability to SABC. When we do it we are looking at the international best practices which is why we are talking of a complete overhaul.

Right now, mumbles, we pay about 3% that goes towards the public mandate. It is high time that as the ANC or the governing party in its conference resolved that government must pay more money, about 70% towards the public mandate. Therefore, as the department we are working with the National Treasury in order to assist. We are busy to be able to carry the public service mandate that they have a responsibility towards. We are doing that in order to ensure that we can determine the required and of course explore funding mechanisms for the unfunded mandate.

Everyone wants to watch their favourite match on SABC, everyone wants to see. If it is a funeral it must be covered. When political parties have their rallies they want to be covered. Now we are calling that. Yes, that is important because those are matters of national interests. What we are saying is let us join hands in ensuring that. Therefore, we must be able to fund the SABC accordingly including exploring other initiatives so that SABC, in the future as we envision,

can be able to be a true and pure public broadcaster that is suppose to be. Thank you once more, hon Chairperson.

Mr A B CLOETE: Thank you, hon House Chair. You [Inaudible.] with the SABC. Therefore, on practical reasons SABC can just close its doors because it can’t and the Constitution applies that we have a public broadcaster. In the final analysis we are simply stuck with a state-owned, SOE, that we cannot get rid of. In the meantime we’ve TV license holders who have stopped paying their fees. Any turnaround strategy involves financing something SABC has lost. There should be a number of reasons for this [Inaudible.] the fact that the provincial media has changed, the [Inaudible.] has changed and another is its content and it should be a debate on its own.

The fact of the matter is SABC has lost income and we have seen campaigns after campaigns to fix it, but to no avail. Now a service provider has been appointed to handle the debt collection. The agency has been appointed. Some of whom that owes TV licences are government departments. Maybe we shuld start there. In fact, in December the South African government alone was owed R57 million on TV licences.

Minister, what are the details of the service level agreements with these debt collection agencies? Have they been successful, in other words, have they been able to meet their targets?

The MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES: Thank

you so much, hon member for that question. In my earlier response I have spoken about the review of the models that we are using at SABC when it comes to TV fee collection. I said we are introducing. That’s what the turnaround strategy amongst other things mentions. You are asking me a question, have they been successful. As we speak here you just acknowledged that many people have stopped paying because of different reasons including the fact that we have not managed to generate content that is appealing just like our competitors. At the centre of that is the fact that you want to compare SABC, which is a public broadcaster, with a commercial broadcaster. Again, you are not moving to the right direction because they are different. Look at the number of headcount that we do not have in SABC including the finance methodology in terms of the Public Finance Management Act, PFMA, and everything that they must subscribe to. It is completely different from how the commercial broadcasters work. Therefore, we shouldn’t be comparing the public

broadcaster with commercial broadcasters, but we should compare the public broadcaster with other public broadcasters. That is why we are saying now that the state and other initiatives must find the way of funding the public service mandate of SABC. It also talks to the structural challenges at SABC that the state must be able to resolve.

At the centre of that once more, hon member, is the fact that we have to make sure that we bring business to SABC, including ourselves. You are mentioning a very important point that municipalities are not paying; government owing so much millions. Yes, that is why we wrote to all premiers, Cabinet Ministers, mayors and everyone to say, you are owing SABC and SABC cannot afford a blackout because it is the only hope of the hopeless in terms of bringing access to information to our people. But most importantly there is an entire ecosystem of small businesses that are benefiting from the existence of SABC, not only on driving information as the platform.

As we do this we are saying we are joining hands calling upon the private sector, the public, citizens, including the public representatives to say what the best methodology is. Including this we are bringing legislations that must be amended or reviewed. We will appreciation that hon members will

contribute meaningfully for the interest of South Africa irrespective of who is in government right now. That requires us to work together.

The first step, of course as the governing party that we have taken after the turnaround strategy, is that we have called the board to say let there be a panel that should be established to look into everything that we were talking about whilst the department and the National Treasury are exploring other avenues. Of course at the centre of this is the strategic direction that must be provided by SABC board as the accounting authority of SABC.

We are looking at this that SABC has its own independence, but as the government that has a responsibility to fund, we should make sure that the funding that we provide talks to the service that our people get and that is what our story which leads to us to say there is a need for us to review the policies, review the legislation including the regulations hence I made mentioned earlier on the introduction of the audiovisual and we are working on the amendments of the SABC Bill that we are going to present to Parliament. Thank you once more, hon Chair.

*Xitsonga:*

Man B T MATHEVULA: Ndza khensa, Mutshamaxitulu. Holobye...

*English:*

...the management failures at SABC have resulted in a lot of job losses. What guarantees are there that this new turnaround strategy will not involve job cuts?

*Xitsonga:*

Ndza khensa, Mutshamaxitulu.

HOLOBYE WA SWA VUHLANGANISI NA THEKINOLOJI YA DIGITALI: Ndza

khensa, muchaviseki.

*English:*

Thank you so much. Of course, hon member, at the centre of the turnaround strategy, if you look into it, it was the issue of the headcounts as we look at the cost drivers within the SABC. In the previous bailout that have provided by the National Treasury, on the bailout condition it was clear that there is a need to undertake staff optimisation with clear defined objects or steps that had to be undertaken by the broadcaster. So, the turnaround strategy does look at that. At the centre of it, it doesn’t say that we are not going to retrench

people, it says, if there is a need. Everybody agrees that we have seen all the wrongs that we are talking about at SABC and we are taking responsibility both as Parliament, because the boards that we are talking about are appointed by Parliament, the executives that we are talking about in terms of the management that we are saying it has failed, is appointed by the same board that is appointed by Parliament. That’s why we are saying lets jointly take responsibility for the failures at SABC. But whilst we are doing that we shouldn’t say because...

*IsiXhosa*:

... sele iwile, mayihlale ife, lungu elihloniphekileyo.

*English:*

Because the fact that wrongs that happened at SABC, of course, some of the people are just affected by that but what we are saying if you need to make sure that as you read repurpose SABC the starting skills that you see that you do not need make sure that you up skill people. As the department we are also undergoing the programme of digital migration and we still going to need more channels and in those channels we are able to redirect people to particular skills so that we can tap into the capacity that we would have been released. So

that’s what we are doing to say, yes, one of the components in the turnaround strategy is staff optimisation with clear objectives and outputs of how it must be done. Thank you so much.

*IsiXhosa*:

Mnu M BARA: Masibulele Sihlalo.

*English:*

Minister, the last person who ran SABC profitably was Mr Peter Matlare who passed on last week, and we want to pass our sincere condolences to his family and friends. With his passing any hope of this failed project which has deteriorated into a propaganda mouthpiece for the ANC has also expired.

Minister, to protect the jobs and livelihoods, is there a plan to sell off SABC or part of it to private businesses where it is likely to become a viable project again? Thank you, House Chairperson.

The MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES: Thank

you so much, hon Chair and thank you, hon Bara. It is a pity that you choose to say that SABC is the ANC propaganda’s platform. I do understand that you may feel like there is lots of coverage, but unfortunately the majority of this country

have chosen the ANC which tells you that the majority of these people belong to the ANC and therefore in their little corners SABC has to cover the work that they do including the messaging that they would want to hear. The SABC is a public broadcaster. As we have seen that they are trying to balance everything that must be done. But again, those that are unhappy unfortunately they should try to come up with ways of ensuring that SABC can provide the coverage that they want without confining them to the minority groupings. But it has to balance.

When it balances it means if we have 59 million people in South Africa and 30 million or 11 million of that are ANC, unfortunately that tells you that the dominance will be by the ANC programmes in terms of government that is happening.

Of course, hon Chair, you are talking about the late Peter Motlhare and may his beautiful soul rest in peace. As government and as South Africa we have really lost someone who contributed immensely to the work that we are talking about to date. This is why, again hon Chair and hon member, we are doing everything in our hands within the confines of the law to make sure that SABC goes back to reclaim its glory of being the best public broadcaster but at the centre of it going back

to efficient management that will respond positively to the work that is supposed to do. So, yes, there are plans to make sure that we do an audit of all the assists that we have.

There is no reason for us to keep assets that are no longer adding value whilst we are also complaining about the increasing costs in terms of expenditure. We are doing that audit. Yes, where necessary we will have to dispose off such assists. Of course, we will come and brief Parliament once those things are approved.

You may have heard that in the North West SABC has already started in terms of saying we no longer need this building and we need to make sure that we make use of it and take the money from it and reinvest it in the business. All we want to do is to make sure that SABC continue to be the best and improves from where it is today so that every child that we give birth to can take pride and be able to say, I want to watch SABC and not anything else as the majority are doing today. So, yes, we will tell you. We are forging partnerships which is part of the turnaround strategy - partnerships with Telkom among the strategies that seek to enhance our revenue initiatives.

That’s what we are looking at.

In terms of sterling I don’t know if the sterling was just off the assets as I have already responded to that unless you are referring to something else, hon member. But that’s how far I can go as per the information I have received from SABC. As you understand I am not an operative from SABC, but I am the Minister in the department and I rely on my reports that must be aligned to the policy direction that we are giving as a country and as government. Thank you so much.

The Council adjourned at: 17:11