**UNREVISED HANSARD**

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**THURSDAY, 17 NOVEMBER 2022**

**PROCEEDINGS OF HYBRID NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

The House met at 14:00

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

**ANNOUNCEMENT**

The SPEAKER: Order! Order hon members. The only item on today’s Order Paper is Question to the Deputy President. Order!

*IsiXhosa*:

Mcweyi nenza ntoni apho?

*English*:

There are four supplementary questions on each question. Parties have given an indication of which questions members wish to pose a supplementary question on. Adequate notice was

given to parties for this purpose. This was done to facilitate the participation of members who are connecting to the sitting through the virtual platform.

The members who will pose supplementary questions will be recognised by the presiding officer in allocating opportunities for supplementary questions, the principle of fairness amongst others will apply. If a member who is supposed to ask a supplementary question through the virtual platform is unable to do so due to technological difficulties, the party Whip on duty will be allowed to ask the question on behalf of their member.

When all the supplementary questions have been answered by the Deputy President, we will proceed to the next question on the Question Paper.

Members asking supplementary questions or raising points of order may remain seated when doing so. The first question has been asked by the hon N.F Shivambu to the Deputy President.

*IsiXhosa*:

Kudala wena wagqibela emsebenzini sele ubuya uthetha nje, lungu elihloniphekileyo uHlengwa.

*English:*

Hon Hlengwa, I have not seen you in the House in a while and now you are making noise. Take your seat. Proceed Deputy President.

**QUESTIONS: DEPUTY PRESIDENT**

Question 19:

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you hon Speaker and thank you for the opportunity. To begin with, the public sector under the democratic government has never had a deployment policy. We should not conflate formal public service policy concerns with party consultations aimed at increasing capability of the state.

Indeed, the President, as leader of the governing party, made a submission to the Commission of Inquiry into state capture, corruption, and fraud in the public sector, including organs of state on issues and clarifications sought by the commission regarding the party's position and practise of pursuing its strategic transformation imperatives under cadre deployment.

However, the President was not outlining adopted government policy but the position of the governing party. For our

purpose and for the purpose of this question, let us focus on the National Framework for the Professionalization of the Public Sector, as adopted by Cabinet on the 19th October 2022.

Hon Speaker, the framework is a response to a discussion about reforming and professionalising the public sector, and emphasises a single public administration across all three spheres of government.

In line with section 195 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa that demands an effective public administration, the framework highlights the government's strategic commitment to build a capable, ethical, and developmental state. A state with substantial economic growth, structural changes in production patterns, and social equity measures. This capability will ensure our country's growth and prosperity for all citizens.

Through intergovernmental relations structures, there is consensus that the government should strengthen the skills, expertise, and capabilities of the public service at all levels and improve the quality of services. This includes developing leadership capacity, managerial competence, financial management skills, spatial planning skills,

technical skills, and project execution skills, especially infrastructure projects.

While acknowledging the need for demographic representation, there is also emphasis on meritocracy. In this regard, entry requirements would be tightened under this framework and be based on rigorous screening and appraisals that lead to merit- based middle and senior management appointments.

That is why, even though Cabinet appoints directors-generals and their deputies, recruitment and selection is guided by rules, and is carried out within strict recruitment procedures of public service and administration. To further enhance competencies, those in the public service, will be from time to time subjected to periodical assessment for up-skilling and retraining in order to enhance service delivery.

In this respect, this framework is a concrete response to a discussion about reforming the public sector by enacting measures to advance its professionalization. Thank you very much hon Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Thank you hon Deputy President. Hon members, I have been informed that the hon N.E Ntlangwini will take

charge of the second supplementary question in terms of Rule 137 (10) (a).

Mr N S MATIASE: Hon Speaker, I will be taking the question on behalf of the Deputy President, Floyd Shivambu in his absence.

Deputy President, you and I would know that once cadre deployment’s party policy is manifested in implementation through state power, the idea of deployment into government officials who have close understanding and ideological affinity to the party in government is well established globally. In America they call it a spoilt system.

The idea that seems to be taking hold in South Africa is the so called cadre deployment leads to corruption and incompetence and is rooted in the racism of whites who cannot make peace with being out of government power. Broederbond used the same system.

Does government have any evidence that all that has gone wrong in the public service today is as a result of cadre deployment, if so, what are the details of that evidence? Is government also of the view that cadre deployment has delayed the country’s progress and causes corruption?

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you very much hon Speaker and thank you to the member. I have stated in the question that we are not here to discuss the policy position of the governing party as an organisation. We are here to discuss the framework of government as adopted by Cabinet.

Now, this framework, seeks to improve the recruitment and the selections of people that should work in the public service to ensure that proper qualified people with necessary skills are appointed in all levels of the public service especially in senior management.

I have made an example about the director-generals’ appointment. It is Cabinet’s role to appoint director-generals but that does not mean this would evade the selection process.

Firstly, the post will be advertised, requirements will be stipulated to say; we are calling for applicants who possess these skills and a shortlist will be done, interviews will be done, there will be assessments written and at the end of the day, the best suitable candidate will be appointed.

This is the system that we are using a country but beyond that, we have gone a step further to support the public

service by creating the School of Government so that from time to time, all those appointed as public servants should be upskilled from time to time and be updated on their knowledge so that they serve the public.

Of course there are instances where people will try and obviate and disregard the selection processes. However, those are minor incidents which probably happen at municipal level, which is wrong because that is where leadership is being challenged.

But in the case of national government, I have never seen anyone who is appointed outside these protocols and rules that have been set. Thank you very much.

Mr W M THRING: Thank you hon Speaker. Hon Deputy President, the ACDP has long argued that one of the key determinants of good governance is a professional public sector that is not accountable to a political party but to government and the public that they are called to serve.

So, the ACDP supports the draft national implementation framework towards the professionalization of the public service which aims to build amongst other things a better

state which serves our people and one that insulated form undue political interference where appointments are made on merit.

As we know many a good draft has been blown away by the drafts of ill-conceived popular political opinion. How can the Deputy President reveal the timelines and the spheres of government targeted for the implementation of a professional public service? Thank you.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you hon Speaker and thank you for the support of the framework. Now, because we have already adopted the framework as Cabinet, that means it is now going to be implemented but the first thing we have done is to extend the term of office of all director-generals. The term of office was five years at first and we have now extended it to ten years.

The simple reason is that, when a director-general is appointed, the first year of acquainting himself or herself with the environment, the second year starts with implementations, by the third year, he or she must be looking for spaces elsewhere because he or she is aware that he is on the exit.

Now, we want to create stability within the public sector by appointing director-generals for a longer period that we think will bring stability. That does not mean performance management will be set aside. From time to time we are going to conduct performance management where these director- generals are going to be assessed for their performance. If they are not doing well, it is up to the executive authority at that level to determine their fate. Thank you very much.

Mr A M SHAIK EMAM: Thank you hon Speaker. Deputy President, I am glad you talk about a capable, ethical and developmental state which is something that we currently do not have. Why, particularly due to cadre deployment and I think the state capture has said that loud and clear.

I know you have adopted this framework. My concern is, will we be able to get politicians in political parties completely out of the recruitment and appointment of office-bearers or officials, whether it is director-generals, deputy director- generals and things like that.

It is currently a norm that political parties whoever they are, wherever they govern, only appoint people associated and aligned with their parties and that is why we have what we

have. Would you be able to ensure that politicians are completely out of the appointments of all officials? Thank you.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you very much hon Speaker and hon Shaik Emam. I think if you read the framework in its entirety, you will see that there is a set of rules and procedures that will guide the selection criteria, the recruitment. Beyond the recruitment, there is very little that politicians will be able to change in the recruitment process because of the various steps that will be taken to support a candidature or not support a candidature.

What is brought to a politician is a recommendation based on all the processes that have been undertaken in the recruitment process and then the politician must say yes, this is the first candidate and we support it.

I have never seen a situation where they come with a recommendation to say here is the first candidate who has qualified and then we all take the third candidate. It is impossible and I have never seen it. Maybe it happens in other areas where some parties are governing but not where the ANC is governing. It does not happen. Thank you very much.

Dr L A SCHREIBER: I would like to know if the Deputy President would take a question from the floor?

The SPEAKER: Deputy President, would you like to take a question? No, no, sit down. Take you seat! Deputy president, I am sorry, let me protect you. He knows that this is Question session and not a debate. Thank you very much.

Ms H DENNER: Hon Deputy President, the National School of Government has taken the report on the framework that post 1994 there was a failure to institutionalise a merit based public service system where appointments in the administration of the state are based on competence and ethical disposition and the framework seeks to correct this.

The policy position of the governing party aside as you have mentioned, do you agree that an entire framework of the professionalization is now necessary because the ANC government has failed for 28 years to appoint people in the public service based on merit and ethics, if not why then is the public service in this unfortunate state that warrants this framework? Thank you Madam Speaker.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you hon speaker. I do not agree entirely with that assertion that the ANC government has

failed and we have a number of institutions that can attest to what I am saying now.

The first institution that can attest this is the Auditor- General. The Auditor-General will tell you about our managers’ performance and failures in the system. Yesterday we got a report from the Auditor-General about the national and provincial government.

The picture that has been painted is that there is progress in the right direction because more and more departments are getting clean audits. Of course there are departments that are still getting adverse disclaimers and some are failing to meet the deadline to submit their audits. Those are areas that we need to attend to but it does not paint a very bleak and dim environment.

Yes, the School of Government from time to time is there to support these managers so that they upskill and be retrained in areas because our public service is not static and is always evolving depending on the challenges and demands of a particular time and people. That is why the School of Government is there to support these public servants.

My take is that as much as we are adopting this framework, we are enhancing, we are building on capabilities that were there, we are improving so that as a developmental state, we keep pace with the changes and adapt. Thank you very much.

Question 20:

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you, hon Speaker. Our history as a country was characterised by repression, violence and bloodshed, which is why we consider diplomacy the best way to achieve peace, sustainable development, prosperity and nationhood. Therefore, our government’s philosophy and foreign policy remains firmly based on dialogue and peaceful means to the resolution of conflicts. We remain committed to finding and pursuing African solutions to all African problems. This we do in all platforms where we participate in, wherein we see our role as representing the voice and the interests of the whole of Africa. Such a posture is about mutually reinforcing co-operation on development issues than competing with the rest of our continent. We remain convinced that conflict stunts development, and it is a recipe for disaster.

The conflict in the Tigray region which has resulted in the fatalities, widespread displacement of many people which is on the brink of famine and humanitarian crisis, has the potential

to destabilise the entire continent. The role of South Africa in line with our foreign policy objectives of a secure and a very conflict free continent, was to host the talks after accepting the African Union’s request to direct peace talks between the Ethiopian Federal Government and the Tigray People’s Liberation Front following the outbreak of the conflict in November 2020. The mediated talks held from 26 October to 02 November 2022, were facilitated by the African Union Special Envoys, led by former President of Nigeria, President Obasanjo, and supported by former President Uhuru Kenyatta and our former Deputy President Phumzile Mlambo- Ngcuka.

South Africa welcomes this historic agreement reached between the Ethiopian government and the Tigray People’s Liberation Front, for a permanent cessation of hostilities, the restoration of law and order, a co-ordinated programme of disarmament, and demobilisation and reintegration of the Tigray People’s Liberation Front combatants into their National Defence Force. The parties intend implementing transitional measures that will include the restoration of constitutional order in the Tigray region, a framework for the settlement of political differences, and a transitional

justice policy framework to ensure accountability, truth, reconciliation and healing.

A committee chaired by the African Union will be established to monitor and verify implementation of the agreement. The committee will include representatives from the government, the Tigray People’s Liberation Front and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development in East Africa. It is our hope that the two parties will continue with negotiations and find common ground on all the outstanding issues, in a spirit of reconciliation in order to reach a long lasting political settlement, silence the guns, and put the country back on the path of peace, stability and development.

South Africa will, therefore, continue to work with the African Union as a member of the Peace and Security Council, and share the country’s expertise in conflict resolution and negotiations. Such assistance could be made available, or facilitated by government itself, or nongovernmental organisations in support of the African Union’s mediation efforts. Thank you, hon Speaker.

Mr S H MBUYANE: Thank you very much, Speaker. Deputy President, we note the peace agreement signed by the parties

to the negotiation in South Africa to permanently silenced the gun and end the two-year conflict in the northern part of the Ethiopia. Subsequently, the parties met in Kenya and a deal was signed to start implementing the truth. From the presentation to the African Union, AU, the situation and Tigray requires humanitarian support and this has been frustrated by the conflict. Will there be the consideration to prioritise humanitarian support as part of the peace agreement and will South Africa as part of the AU contribute to the humanitarian support if requested? Thank you.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you, hon Speaker. I don’t think we’ve got a choice, we’re part of this family as the continent. Anything that affects the family affects us. You remember that we have deployed troops in a number of areas in the continent in pursuit of peace. This is a very expensive exercise but we do it in the interest of the continent, and in the interest of pursuing peace. We’ve supported South Sudan until we reached an amicable resolution to their problem.

We’ve supported them with all humanitarian efforts that you can think of and even in this case if we are called upon to do so we will, because we regard this as part of our problem because we are part of the AU, we are part of the signatory that says we must silence the gun and we must work all of us

collaboratively to end conflicts in Africa. Thank you very much.

Mr D BERGMAN: Deputy President, the Democratic Alliance applauds South Africa on this wonderful achievements for lifetime and as we have said before South Africa should be using the post-apartheid Madiba magic to spread reconciliation, human rights and peace. However, you must agree we seem to be far more successful ... [Inaudible.] ... when it comes to areas further away was to have Members of Parliament, MPs, being beaten up in jails in Eswatini and opposition politicians being beaten up in Zimbabwe. What is your Cabinet doing to ensure that what we have learnt now in the Ethiopian election war will be prevented from taking place in Southern African Development Community, SADC, countries?

Thank you.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, hon Speaker, and thanks to the question. The hon member must appreciate the fact that as the African Union we’ve created platforms and institutions that are meant to deal with conflicts. It’s not going to be based on the whims of a particular country at any given time to jump into the affairs of another country. All of us are guided by the African Union and its institutions.

Therefore, the situation in Mozambique is under the direction of the African Union, that’s why we’ve participated under the directive of SADC. These are platforms that we must respect, we cannot act in isolation as a country, and we must act within the collective. Thank you very much.

Mr M HLENGWA: Madam Speaker, humbly, I requested yesterday that in using these microphones I remain sited because I’m too tall. Madam Speaker, with your permission if I may remain.

The SPEAKER: Okay.

Mr M HLENGWA: Thank you very much, hon Deputy President. In light of cause of the fact that ... [Inaudible.] ... forces have been amongst the major ... [Inaudible.] ... in the conflict, yet were never mentioned by the name and the agreement nor their party to end off the peace negotiations. Do you have full confidence while we applaud the agreement that the agreement will be sustainable and viable and meet the outcomes in which it has intended for considering that not all the players are there. However, on top of that, hon Deputy President, you have touched on an important factor of us being a family and Ethiopia is not rid of all its problems, right now the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance ... [Inaudible.] ...

matter which affect Ethiopia, Sudan and Egypt remains a problem and did may pose a humanitarian crisis if not resolved. So, how are we actually assisting in resolving that particular impulses? Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, hon Speaker, and thanks to the hon member for the question. The biggest challenge that is facing the continent is that we should start to respect ourselves. We must respect the structures that we’ve created as the continent, above all what I’m trying to say that the African Union must be respected, there is no one who’s going to act outside of the African Union if we are to achieve development, and if we are to achieve peace in the continent. So, I’m happy that this kind of an agreement is reached within the auspices of the union and it is facilitated by the union. Therefore, there are all possibilities of a success because it is supported by the entirety of the African Union. So, I hope that it will succeed. I once participated one conflict in South Sudan supported by the African Union and it has succeeded because we were led and supported by the African Union.

This very same agreement I think that it will last if you look at the former President Uhuru, he was a neighbour, he

understands all the parties that are in conflict. If you look at the former President of Nigeria, a very seasoned leader, and very respected in the continent. If you look at our former Deputy President Mlambo-Ngcuka, she’s much respected. So, it’s not by chance that we have managed to reach this agreement, is because of the capability of the African Union and its people. It’s high time that we should not undermine ourselves. That’s why I said that let’s allow African solutions to our African problems. Thank you very much.

I*siXhosa*:

Mnu N L S KWANKWA: Somlomo, andizityanga kakhulu ke mna iimbotyi ...

*English*:

... so I will stand. The second issue Speaker is, ...

*IsiXhosa*:

Sekela Mongameli, ize nibe ngamagwala kule nto ye ...

*English*:

... cadre deployment ...

... ningayenzi kakuhle. Niza kuqesha iimpangampanga ezingamaziyo urhulumente wenu

*English:*

Deputy President, UN backed investigators and the Commission of Human Rights experts on Ethiopia reported that it had reasonable grounds to believe that in several instances there were widespread violations, human rights violation in northern Tigray, which is an amounting to war crimes and crimes against humanity. The experts listed a long list of horrific violations from ... [Inaudible.] ... judicial killings to intentional starvation rape, sexual violent and sexual slavery, perpetrated on staggering scale. The question is that while we commend this agreement and while we are happy that there will be an immediate cessation of all hostilities, but people who committed human rights violations need to be held to account at some point. Are we going to have that discussion when government is going to facilitate the discussion in future to ensure that people ... for violations. [Time expired.]

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thanks, hon Speaker, and thanks the hon member for the question. Definitely, as I said from the main response that the work of this team is proceeding and from

here onwards the African Union is going to take over and chair a committee that will ensure that the work of reconciling that community proceed. However, at the heart of this work people have lost lives, people have been displaced, they are everywhere. Somewhere there should be a point where this nation, and this community is reconciled. Therefore, there should be a platform where the truth will be told about what happened so that fully ... [Inaudible.] reconciliation can happen. There can’t be reconciliation, repatriation if the truth is not allowed to be told. In this case the country has lost a lot, lot of people have died. So, they’ll have to go through that painful process of telling the story, the story of how people died so that reconciliation can then happen.

Therefore, I don’t think we’ll sweep this matter under the carpet. This matter will have to be discussed if that’s community must eventually find peace. Thank you very much.

Question 21:

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you, hon Speaker, the history of our struggle for freedom and democracy cannot be told in its entirety without paying tribute to the bravery and selflessness of our military veterans, who sacrificed their lives for the cause of freedom, the freedom that we enjoy today.

Since November 2020, as the Presidential Task Team on Military Veterans, we have held continuous provincial consultations with various military veterans associations in order to solicit concerns and grievances of military veterans. In this regard, we have made tremendous strides, especially in the socioeconomic support, housing, and pension benefits. Through these consultations, we were able to consolidate the concerns of military veterans on a variety of issues, including but not limited to housing and pension benefits. The consultations have also assisted us a great deal in understanding challenges that are faced by our military veterans on a day-to-day.

We have also established different workstreams that are drawn from cross-sections of government departments and provinces. These workstreams are specifically tasked to streamline certain service delivery nodes. These workstreams are the legislative review; pension and benefits; database verification; cleansing and enhancement; heritage; memorialization and burial support; socioeconomic support; organizational design; and communication.

Furthermore, the Presidential Task Team has held consultations with premiers and representatives of military veterans in the Eastern Cape, Limpopo, Free State, Gauteng, North West,

Mpumalanga, Western Cape, and most recently, in KwaZulu-Natal. We are also planning to visit the Northern Cape before the end of November. During these consultations, we have discussed ways through which various provincial stakeholders could better support the Department of Military Veterans in ensuring that quality services are provided to our military veterans.

We have also agreed on the necessity to develop a co- ordination framework that is located within the Offices of premiers, so that the affairs of military veterans across the provinces could be best co-ordinated at that level.

In relation to progress towards the delivery of socioeconomic benefits, including that of pension and housing, the Presidential Task Team has established the socioeconomic workstream, and tasked it with the responsibility to facilitate the provisioning of pension, health, education, economic empowerment and housing benefits to military veterans.

In this regard, it is important for the House to note that the provisioning of military veterans pension has already been prescribed in the legislation.

It is in pursuance of this legislative provision, that the Presidential Task Team on Military Veterans approved the payment of this military veterans pension, which led to the National Treasury to allocate funds for the current financial year and three outer years that will come. We must thank government and the Minister of Finance for this step.

In order to facilitate payment of this pension, we have tasked the Department of Defence and Military Veterans to finalise the enactment of the prerequisite regulations that are necessary to guide the payment of this pension benefit.

The legislative review workstream is yet another important workstream which is tasked with the responsibility to develop implementation plans that are aimed at addressing policy and legislative shortcomings. This includes gathering submissions from the very same military veterans community to ensure that this Military Veterans Amendment Bill is amended with the views and concerns coming from military veterans themselves.

In this regard, the Minister of Defence and Military Veterans has emphasised the need to review the narrow definition of a military veteran, and the enactment of polices that will set the qualifying criteria for beneficiaries.

It is also important to note that military veterans who had for one or other reason been omitted from the military veterans database are currently undergoing a new verification process. The Database Verification Panel, which is responsible for the verification task has already visited Gauteng, Eastern Cape, and Limpopo.

Currently, there is a total of 44 369 military veterans whose details are contained in the Certified Personnel Register, who already qualify to receive benefits as prescribed in the legislation. There are also 1 225 new applications that have been assessed by the Database Verification Panel.

The department is also busy establishing an appeals board that will provide those that are not happy with the outcome of the Database Verification Team, to give them an avenue to lodge an appeal.

The provisioning of the housing benefit to military veterans is regulated by a housing policy that has been approved by the military veterans themselves. According to this policy, military veterans are eligible to receive a house of 50 square meters. It has come to our attention that in other cases, different provinces offer military veterans with houses of

higher meterage and some small. As a Presidential Task Team, we continue to encourage provincial governments to conform to national norms and to build houses for military veterans that are of the same standard.

With regard to the provisioning of the health care benefits, all military veterans can access support from the SA Military Services. Currently, it is only military veterans, and not their spouses nor dependents that are eligible for assistance. This is a challenging situation which is receiving our attention.

In addition to the work we have outlined above, the Department of Military Veterans is working with the Department of Sports, Arts and Culture on the programme of repatriating the remains of the fallen military veterans that have been left in other countries. A cost-effective model for the repatriation of the remains of our fallen heroes and heroines is currently being considered for Cabinet approval.

Working together with military veterans will hopefully provide positive results that contribute to their wellbeing and their socioeconomic improvement. Thank you very much, hon Speaker.

*IsiZulu*:

Inkosi R N CEBEKHULU: Ngiyabonga, Somlomo, mhlonishwa Sekela Mongameli, usuyichazile indaba yakho kodwa-ke okusalayo, mhlonishwa, kungekudala sibone amasosha eKwaZulu-Natal eqhwage ihostela, ahleli kulona, linokungcola okwesabekayo. Ehleli lapho kuyavela ukuthi umbango omkhulu owokuthi wonke afuna ukunikezwa amathenda okwakha lezi zindlu ahlala kuzona.

Ngifisa ukwazi-ke, mhlonishwa, uma ungatshela nje leNdlu nezwe lonke, yini umnyango oyenzayo ukuyongenelela kulesiya simo la khona abantu bakithi behleli khona endaweni enokungcola okuloluya hlobo? Nanokuthi-ke basizakala kanjani odabeni lokuthi bakwazi ukunikezwa izinsizakalo zabo kunokuthi kube nokubanga laphaya ukuqhwaga leliya hostela elingcolileyo vele. Ngiyathokoza.

USEKELA MONGAMELI: Ngiyabonga, ukuphendula lowo mbuzo loyo ngoba-ke ngivela khona eKwaZulu-Natal, iye yavela indaba, indaba yezindlu. Ngiyethemba benisibona komabonakude ukuthi siya saba matasatasa laphaya singezwani umhlangano wase uthembisa ukuchitheka kodwa-ke saphinde sazwana saqhubeka. Indaba enkulu ekufuneka siyazi sonke singabantu baseNingizimu Afrika ukuthi asiyihloniphi imvelaphi yethu.

*English*:

We don’t respect our past. As a result, we don’t respect these people that fought for freedom. I found out that in all the provinces, these people are suffering. In KwaZulu-Natal, some of them are sleeping under bridges and some are sleeping next to the sea. These are special people that at one stage took it upon themselves to step forward and fight for our freedom. I thought we should respect them as for that decision that they have taken in their lifetime. I found that we don’t accord them the same respect. Some of us think that this freedom just came from heaven. This freedom was through sacrifices of many of our people. Some paid the highest price and some died. If all of us can respect that understanding, I think these military veterans will be treated with dignity. I mean, this is a community that is not growing. It is a community that is diminishing. I don’t see us as a country having a problem to give them the necessary dignity that they deserve.

I discovered that the squabble there where people invaded hostels was not because they wanted tenders to build, they wanted shelter, and they wanted a place to live in. They have been promised houses many times. Money was not spent, and somewhere this money was put in a separate account so that it cannot be returned to Treasury whilst their problems are being resolved.

This time, we are going to work with the province and the Department of Military Veterans and ensure that the houses are being built. We have confidence in the provincial government and the MEC for Human Settlements that these houses are going to be built. I am saying, these people can be seen to be rowdy because they are not getting their benefits according to the Act as it stands now. That is their source of concern. They are treated as a “by the way” case. Every time, for the little thing that they must get, they must fight. This is the situation that we are trying to correct. It’s a painful situation. Some of them are dying. They don’t have houses.

They have spent their beautiful lives in the battle trenches and forests. Coming back, they are told they don’t have any pension and don’t have any livelihood. I can tell you, it is a very sorry site. I met them, talking to them is not a pleasing situation. Thank you very much.

Ms R M M LESOMA: Thank you very much, hon Speaker, hon Deputy President, section 3(1)(c) of Military Veterans Act, Act 18 of 2011 states that the registered military veterans must be subjected to a means test to ensure that they qualify for the stated benefits from the state. This is to ensure that the system is not abused by chance-takers who are not necessarily military veterans. The aid is provided to ensure those in

need. Has the Presidential Task Team raised this clause during the interactions as you stated earlier on with the military veterans community and other stakeholders that have a role to play to ensure that it is being implemented effectively by the Department of Military Veterans? Thank you very much.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, maybe what we must state that it is a question we debated extensively in the task team, and as we were debating about pensions, the question of means tests came up to say there are people that were once military veterans, who were in the bushes, who fought, and today they are working. Some of them are Speakers, like the one behind me. They should not get this pension. I don’t think this is a correct understanding because this pension is given to people on the basis of their recognition of what they did whether this person is gainfully employed elsewhere, but he or she must get this pension because it is a recognition of the service. This is the understanding and that is the clause that we are going to amend in the Act so that this means test must be put aside, because we are recognizing that this person was a military veteran at one stage. And the manner in which this person is going to be buried, it is going to be different. His or her grave is going to be marked, it will be different from

all other graves because of the service they provided. That’s our thinking as the Presidential Task Team. Thank you.

Mr S J F MARAIS: Thank you very much, Speaker, Deputy President, it is now more than 10 years since the Military Veterans Act was adopted by the department, but the department is still struggling to fully implement the Act, which failures have a negative impact on the rolling out of benefits to military veterans. Another challenge facing the department is the failure to fill critical positions, especially under socioeconomic support services. While the deputy director- general post was advertised on 28 January, this year, and the chief director-general position on 25 June, this year, to date, no appointments have been effected.

As the chairperson of the Presidential Task Team, what have you done to ensure that these and other vacancies are filled without further delay? Can you give us timeframes as to when will this be done? If not, how do you see the department delivering on your promises to the military veterans? I thank you.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you, hon Speaker, it looks like hon Marais is one of the military veterans. He knows very well

what is going on there. That is the situation. Correctly speaking, that department existed only by name, it wasn’t functional, that’s why you hear the beneficiaries are up in arms demanding the services, and that’s why the President appointed the task team as a result of the failure of the Department of Military Veterans to dispense the services.

We were subjected to a situation where we must listen to the military veterans, a process which took us too long. They were fighting amongst themselves. It took us time to calm them down, sit and discuss. Some of the military veterans have left their recognized associations and formed other associations which they now want them to be recognized. In terms of the Act, we only recognize a certain number of associations. We are dealing with the matter. We are talking to all military veterans without exception. It is difficult if you don’t understand the scope and scale of the services that must be provided and for us to be able to design an organizational structure that would be fit-for-purpose. As I was reading the workstreams, there is one workstream that is busy with the organizational design because this design must speak exactly to what must be cared for so that we deliver the services to the military veterans. Whether we should create a section in the Military Veterans Department that will deals with housing,

health and socioeconomic empowerment issues, will depend on the problems we find, then we will design a structure that will suit the needs of the military veterans. I think that now we are taking the last lap, we will be able to finalize the structure, and then advertise the posts. We will make money available so that we can fill these posts. We will fill the posts with people who have the necessary skills to serve the military veterans. As we are talking now, I don’t think the people who are serving there have the best interests of the military veterans at heart because we are making an extra effort by a structure that was appointed by the President to assist a department - to assist people that are getting a salary on daily basis. It is very unfair. Thank you very much.

Mr N S MATIASE: Thank you, hon Speaker, Deputy President, the time you spent to answer this question confirms the importance of the people you are talking about. These are people that understands the concept of cadre deployment as a military concept. You spent a lot of time in addressing their plight because you know the role that they play in agitating society, and get it right or get it wrong.

Hon Deputy President, sitting here next to me is Anita Marais, a widow of a military veteran, Tony Marais. The Military

Veterans Act, Act 18 of 2011, stipulates that: “the state must role out free access to military veterans health services.” The military veterans health services have been downgraded to a level where critical operations cannot be performed in military hospitals. Most of these services have been outsourced and that has become too expensive

The SPEAKER: Hon member ...

Mr N S MATIASE: The question to you, hon Deputy President ...

The SPEAKER: Your time is up.

Mr N S MATIASE: What measures are you taking to ensure that the state of desperation that the military veterans find themselves is attended to with speed immediately ... [Interjection.] ... [Inaudible.] ... on the plight of these former soldiers? It’s an important matter.

The SPEAKER: We know it is an important matter, but when I say your time is up, please ...

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thanks, hon Speaker, the hon member is correct. The health benefits of all military veterans are

provided by the Department of Defence, meaning every military veteran must use the military hospitals. There are few military hospitals, which means they must catch a bus and go to military facility in Pretoria. We found that to be very cumbersome for military veterans. It is a discovery uncovered as we were consulting with military veterans. We then proposed a memorandum of understanding with provincial departments on hospitals and clinics under their jurisdiction. We would say to the premier of a province that these number of military veterans are going to be provided with services in your provincial hospitals and you’ll then bill the Department of Military Veterans for any service that you have provided to the military veterans. This is the kind of an arrangement we want to make because it will be very difficult for all the military veterans to go to Pretoria for all the services that they want because that is the head office of the Department of Defence.

We entering into an agreement with provinces. Provinces must now build the houses. We will give them money to do so, and we put timeframes so that these houses can be delivered on time. The sad part ... what we are discovering as we go is that this community is growing every day. There are people who are claiming to be military veterans and they are not military

veterans, hence the verification process. We started the verification process, they stormed in and disrupted the verification process. We are going to put down our foot. This is going to happen, like it or not, so that we can serve the people that we must serve. Thank you very much.

Question 22:

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon Speaker, reports of municipalities unable to fulfil their constitutional mandate generate our attention, and call for collective action to improve lives of our of people under the jurisdiction of this municipality.

In this way, the 2021 State of Local Government Report says that Kopanong Local Municipality is one of the municipalities that has been deemed dysfunctional and is facing many problems with service delivery, administration, financial management and governance.

According to the Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs, the Kopanong Local Municipality owes Bloem Water, R550 million, resulting in a 30% water restriction being imposed by the water board.

Subsequently, the municipality is unable to service its debt and has resorted to water rationing to control its water supply. As part of a targeted intervention, the Municipal Infrastructure Support Agent has started to drill boreholes in areas such as Madikgetla, Trompsburg, and Springfontein, with completion expected to be at the end of this month. We hope this project will bring the required relief to the affected areas.

We have further been advised that the municipality is presently unable to pay salaries and they do so consistently. The inefficient collection of revenue is directly to be blamed for the financial difficulties faced by the municipality. Because of this, the municipality has not been able to function, as well as it could, as a result, municipal grants have been used to pay salaries.

To this end, the Minister of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs, and the Minister of Water and Sanitation, are currently consulting with the Free State provincial government on whether to invoke section 139 of the Constitution together with section 63 of the Water Services Act for targeted intervention in the water and sanitation affairs of the municipality.

In order to fix this problem, in the meantime, the National Treasury has issued a directive intended to prevent financial bailouts for municipality. The Free State government has also decided to implement section 154 of the municipal support in Kopanong, which includes the following initiatives:

A technical advisor stationed at the Provincial Treasury was appointed, in October this year under the Municipal Finance Management Programme, to support the municipality.

The Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs has seconded senior officials to stabilise the administration, to act in the positions of municipal manager, chief financial officer, and the director responsible for corporate services.

The Provincial Treasury will continue to provide support through training on revenue, budgets, accounting practices, supply chain management, risk and internal audit matters.

Furthermore, the SA Local Government Association will provide councillor support, capacitation and financial management.

This is in addition to other measures that include the Municipal Infrastructure Support Agent seconding a professional engineer and a professional town planner to the municipality for technical support. We hope this support will eliminate backlogs in the municipality funding and implement a water project from its budget.

All these measures are aimed to help the municipality turn around and are likely to deliver positive outcomes over time, given that the political and administrative leadership are committed to correcting the identified difficulties through national and provincial support.

However, we should emphasise that municipalities must use the money they are allocated effectively and efficiently for the intended purposes. If not, there should be consequences for their actions. Thank you, hon Speaker.

Ms H DENNER: Hon Deputy President, let me sketch or draw you a little picture of what is actually going on in Kopanong Local Municipality. You have mentioned that water supply has been throttled by 30%, but the towns in this municipality has been throttled for the past five years. There are towns that do not have access to any water. There is no water in their taps.

You have also mentioned the problems with the salaries or indications that they will not be able to pay salaries even up to the end of the year. So, there is no service delivery.

The Jagersfontein disaster recently occurred and you know about that. So, what there was, there is not anymore, in terms of service delivery.

So, what I would like to know hon Deputy President, as you mentioned inefficient revenue collection for instance as a reason, but you cannot revenue collection if you do not deliver services.

Many plans have been mentioned, but are there concrete timelines for specific targeted services to supply to these residence of the municipality and where is the urgency in this? Thank you, hon Speaker.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon Speaker, I think the problem of that municipality has been ongoing for some time. Now, what has happened is that the Free State government and National Treasury have deployed officials. Now, it is not enough to deploy officials if services are not being rendered.

Electricity and water are a problem in the municipality.

I have said the municipality is owing the water board and Eskom. Now these institutions and public entities cannot continue to provide these services if they are not paid. So, there is a commitment through the intervention of national government and the Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs, the province and the deployment of senior officials to take over the municipality and direct the affairs of the municipality to ensure that the little water that is given out is paid for.

The leadership that is deployed there, to go and fix the problem - I can see you are very happy when I talk about deployment. “Ja,” the leadership to use the correct word - the leadership has been transferred from the Department of Co- operative Governance and Traditional Affairs, provincially to the municipality.

This is not a new appointment. All these people that have been seconded to the municipality, are already people that are working, but they are meant to go and support the municipality. Now, what must happen is that ...

The SPEAKER: Order, man. Order!

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: ... this leadership must turn around the municipality. That means, as they provide services, they should start collecting revenue. This revenue that they will collect, will be staggering because they are starting from zero. However, they must start paying the money that the municipality owes the water board and Eskom.

Hon member, we are agreed that this municipality together with almost other 65 municipalities in the same category are dysfunctional. Now, the cause of this dysfunctionality is at the leadership level. The infighting between the troika, mayor, speaker and the chief whip, in some instances that trickles down to the administration.

Now this is what the Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs has identified. We are attending to these leadership problems. Some of these lead ears their parties must take responsibility. It is not all of them that belong to the ruling party. Some belong to other parties. Some belong to the DA. A very disruptive situation where vote of no confidence are being passed, mayors are being removed and they come back. That distabilised the services that must be rendered. Thank you very much.

The SPEAKER: The second supplementary question: What is wrong with you now? Hon member, order! Order!

The second supplementary question will be asked by the hon D R Direko.

What is wrong with you, hon member? No. Come on, stop it!

Hon Direko.

Ms D R DIREKO: Hon Speaker and hon Deputy President, from the facts that have just been provided, it shows that Kopanong Local Municipality is technically bankrupt.

So, I would like to check with the Deputy President that: Are there any plans in place to assist that municipality to recover financially and also to increase its tax base? Thank you?

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon Speaker, unfortunately hon member, there is no free lunch. Wherever you can go, there is no one who can just provide you food for free. You must pay for the lunch. A municipality is the business. They provide you services and you must pay for the services, so that they can

maintain and continue to provide these services. They cannot just give you the services and you do not pay and hope to receive the services again and again. No.

That means what is going to happen is that these people that have been assigned to turnaround the municipality are going to ensure that they fix the revenue collection. Whether is metering, they must start collecting revenue, because there are businesses that are receiving these services. There are businesses that are receiving wood and electricity, so they must pay. They must be metered and they must pay. Then in that way, gradually the municipality will come out of its debt.

That is the only way out.

However, government does not have an open ended pool of money just to throw in, without people paying for services. No.

Thank you.

The CHIEF WHIP OF THE OPPOSITION: Hon Speaker and hon Deputy President, I am actually glad that that you mentioned the issue around stability in local government. We know that it is common course that local government across the country is ultimately broken. This has been because of years of mismanagement and corruption, mainly by the ANC.

The greatest tragedy, hon Deputy President, is that local government is closest to the people who need services the most. Considering the prevalence of local government across the country and municipalities and metros that are falling into coalition governments and the sentiments that they are here to stay, it would seem to me that it is important that we stabilise these governments for effective delivery and free people from poor or nonexistent services like we have in Kopanong.

In your efforts to assist the President in the implementation of the Rapid Response Intervention on Service Delivery: Would you and your party support a legislation that is introduced in Parliament to stabilise coalition governments for effective service delivery? Thank you.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon Speaker, I am not going to dismiss this one. It is a point that I think we must think about, because I have seen this thing, it is very disruptive. As parties, we cannot govern together. All the coalitions that are set up are not working. Today there is one mayor here, tomorrow the mayor is not there. It is not stable. Now, that affects the people that we lead. We are all here as parties. Why can’t we govern together?

I just want to understand that what makes us to fight there? If it is not the people and the services, we must render to the people? So, it is not really the question of the governing party, because in instances where we are governing together we are also failing.

So, it is a political problem that we must resolve amongst ourselves. For at any given point, they would be a party and a leader that would lead. Those that are supposed to be in the opposition benches, they must be in the opposition benches, because the people have decided so.

So, I welcome an idea that is going to be debated, but it looks like our people are not getting the necessary services that they need because of us fighting every day. There is no certainty in these municipalities and metros and our people are suffering. If you go around Johannesburg, Tshwane and Ekurhuleni, sewerage is spilling over in the streets. People are fighting. Unacceptable!

I do not want to say who is governing those municipalities, because I am not here to apportion blames. I am saying that local government is an area that we must collectively fix. Thank you very much.

The SPEAKER: Order, order!

What happens in this House after lunch? Is it that people have had tea or coffee?

Hon members, order!

The last supplementary question will be asked by the hon Matiase.

Mr N S MATIASE: Hon Speaker and hon Deputy President, last week in this House, Minister Dlamini-Zuma indicated that in total there are 66 municipalities in this country that are completely dysfunctional. These municipalities cannot provide any services to the people. In some case such municipalities are Amahlathini Local Municipality, in the Eastern Cape, Kopanong Local Municipality in the Free State, where Jagersfontein town is located. These municipalities have struggled to pay salaries to their own employees. These municipalities need comprehensive strategies to root out corruption and incompetency and ensure that they are functional and financially stable.

Deputy President, what interventions has the government made to ensure that it roots out corruption and brings back stability and functionality in these municipalities, particularly ensure that action should be taken to address the funding problem that are the core of rural municipalities?

Thank you.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon Speaker, the 66 municipalities that have been dapped dysfunctional we have identified the problems. The problems rage from political interference, irregular appointments of people in those municipalities, interference in the procurement processes, poor service delivery in those municipalities and so the list is endless in those municipalities.

However, the proposal from the Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs is that utilise the District Development Model as the platform that you can intervene in these municipalities. Pool these municipalities at a district level, so that in a district, if there are four of five municipalities that are dysfunctional, you pool them together and deal with them at a district level.

Now, these municipalities, help them to plan and manage their finances. I am talking about the things that are happening now. We are able to monitor them at a district platform. We hope that these municipalities will get out of this problem.

However, again, we want to insist that political parties, because we are talking about political interference, political parties must desist from interfering. Now, that would help these municipalities to get out of this dysfunctionality that we are talking about.

The issues have been identified. They are all man made and they can be fixed. So, if all these municipalities can co- operate with the Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs and with all officials that have been deployed to assist them, this kind of a multidisciplinary approach can help these municipalities to get rid of their problems.

However, this will require all of us as political parties to come together and save service delivery. Our people deserve better. All of us must stand up and defend service delivery and be on the side of service delivery. Thank you.

Question 23:

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you, hon Speaker. HIV and Aids and TB remains a key health challenge particularly for our country which still carries one of the highest burden of the epidemic in the world. We are however encouraged by the strides we have made in our national response to end HIV and Aids and TB as public health threat by 2030. The implementation of our national strategic plan for HIV, TB and sexually transmitted infections, STIs 2017 ‑ 2022, has had a positive impact on combatting HIV and Aids in the last five years. To date, South Africa has the largest antiretroviral treatment in the whole world that has resulted in a significant increase in people who are living long.

As at August 2022, 90% of the estimated number of people living with HIV know their status, and 76% of those people who know their status are on treatment, and 90% of those people who are on treatment have suppressed viral loads. That means that they can leave longer.

Despite the progress that we have attained to date, however, we remain concerned with the high rates of HIV infection among young people, especially adolescent girls and young women.

These new HIV infections occur in young people between the age of 15 and 24. According to the Thembisa 4.3 model, in 2019, there were roughly 14 000 new infections in young males and

55 000 infections in young women.

In this regard, the SA National Aids Council launched the National Youth HIV Prevention Strategy for South Africa in June 2022 as a three-year youth HIV prevention campaign that focuses on the integration of key health and social services and youth development programmes, social and behavioural change communication and mobilisation for increased access to and improved quality of health products and services. The campaign's ultimate objective is to reduce by 40% the prevalence of HIV and sexually transmitted infections among South African youth, primarily those between the ages of 15 and 24 and particularly among young women.

We are also implementing a targeted social behaviour change programmes like, “You Only Live Once,” which aims to provide a secure and supportive environment in which young people can safely engage in conversation about HIV prevention. These conversation platforms allow young people to learn, share their challenges and perspectives and receive assistance where

required. I am happy to have attended one of the sessions and listened to young people talking in this programme.

The establishment of youth zones within our facilities have contributed to ensuring that we broaden access to services targeted at young people. Youth zones are dedicated spaces providing a suite of services to young people who visit our facilities to interact with health professionals. These services include, among others, reproductive health, safer sex and risk information, HIV testing, treatment, mental health and substance abuse support.

Despite South Africa being acknowledged internationally for its positioning and responsiveness to human rights, the national strategic plan admits that there are still large gaps to be overcome in the full implementation of the human rights agenda, particularly for key and vulnerable communities. In response to the disproportionately high prevalence of HIV among key and vulnerable populations, the SA National Aids Counci, Sanac, has developed the national sensitisation training, which aims to reduce stigma and discrimination against those who are HIV positive or TB vulnerable. This is meant to make it easier for them to access justice and redress, and to foster an environment that upholds and

protects their legal and human rights while preventing stigma and discrimination. In collaboration with our partners, this programme has been rolled out in provinces to ensure that implementers are sensitised.

In addition, explicit inclusion and support of needle and syringe services in the country's national strategic plan is another hugely important intervention that we have done as Sanac. The Global Fund 2018 baseline assessment, indicated that people who inject drugs experience stigma and discriminatory behaviour from healthcare professionals, which creates a barrier to accessing HIV and TB treatment. For this reason, we have focused on holistic support to ensure that people who inject drugs have access to services given the fact that they are at high risk of HIV infection.

Indeed, we have made strides. There have been some impediments in our efforts to reduce HIV infections in the whole country. These include the COVID-19 pandemic that has hampered our ability to reach the 90-90-90 United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, Unaids, targets. This happened especially during the hard lockdown periods.

The interruption of service delivery especially in the KwaZulu-Natal province due to the April 2022 floods also had a negative impact on the entire country’s performance in terms of HIV response since you are aware all of you that KwaZulu- Natal has the highest number of people living with HIV in the country.

Gender-based violence and femicide also continues to be the main contributor to the increasing number of HIV cases.

Together we must fight this plague to promote healthy and cohesive communities. Stigma and discrimination at various levels of delivery in the health system also remain a major impediments, especially for key and vulnerable populations including people with disability, sex workers and people who inject drugs, among others.

The fight against HIV and Aids can never be achieved without considerable effort, hard work and dedication. It cannot be achieved without human agency and change in our behaviour. It requires all of us to pause, think and reflect in order to ensure that regardless of our station in life, age, class or gender, we must all take responsibility for testing for HIV, tuberculosis and other ailments.

It is for this reason that Sanac has been holding a series of engagements with civil society. We have interacted with interfaith leaders, traditional leaders, traditional healthcare practitioners and the private sector in particular in addressing the social and structural barriers and social determinants that are causing the spread of HIV and Aids. It is in working together that as a country we can make the necessary contribution towards the global goal of ending HIV as a public health threat by 2030. I thank you, hon Speaker.

Mr T B MUNYAI: Thank you very much, Your Excellency the Deputy President D D Mabuza. Female adolescent girls and young women between the age of 10 to 19, make up 12,67% of the total population. This is a worrying challenge. The Unaids 2018 estimated that the global number of female adolescent girls, young women and women living with HIV globally are at

19,1 million, making it more than half of the global infections. The 4,4 million of the infected female adolescent girls and young women are South Africans constituting almost 23% of the global average. There is approximately 1 300 HIV infected female adolescent girls and young women in South Africa per week. What are the identified critical factors creating these anomaly, and how will our 2023-2028 strategy

comprehensively target this age group going forward? Thank you, Your Excellency.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you, hon Speaker. I agree with the hon member this is a problem. Our young people are more and more are becoming infected mainly because these are young people, they are generally active, they are generally experimenting everything in their lives and they are bound to get in to trouble.

But we must understand the fact that there are social drivers that are behind these infections especially if you look at young girls. Their number is very high. You will agree with me that some of the structural drivers like poverty, inadequate education, unemployment, gender inequality and in our traditional communities patriarchy is still a problem. Some are very harmful cultural norms and practices that are still being practiced. That is why we have to take time to go and talk to traditional leaders so that we can save the girl-child from all these harmful cultural norms that we continue to practice especially against young girls.

The main problem that is another pandemic is gender-based violence. We are talking about this violence, but we are not

looking at the impact that it causes. That means men are imposing themselves on women. They are imposing themselves on women, they are forcing themselves into women, and of course, women are taking the brunt. That is why more and more women are getting infected. Some men refuse to use preventative measures when they conduct their sexual activities. They refuse to use a condom because according to them it is not necessary.

It depends on a society. These structural drivers depend on a society and we can deal with this problem as a society. In the main it starts from a family. We have children that do not have parents, those that are leading their households. Child- headed household is very difficult. We have seen many of them.

Substance abuse in our communities is the order of the day. All these are the problems that are behind this high rate of infections. It cannot be left alone to government to deal with these problems. These is societal problem and therefore it will need all of us to stand up and join hands and help our young people so that we can all of us save our future. By saving the future of our young people, we are saving our future and we are saving the future of our country. Thank you very much.

Ms M O CLARKE: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Mr Deputy President, there is an alarming large number of people on HIV and TB treatment who were often interrupted during the pandemic due to a variety of factors like the unavailability of ARV medication. Does this national strategic plan addresses this in any way? What contingencies had been put in place to mitigate similar situations should another global pandemic or disaster arises as very little was done during the pandemic in those two years in terms of the availability of treatment for HIV and TB? Thank you.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you, hon member. I think all of us must admit that COVID-19 has in any way disrupted services. We have noticed that in the Health department. The number of people who were collecting their drugs went down mainly because they could not reach their health care facilities to access their drugs. That has created a problem. We lost a lot of people during that period who defaulted and they complicated and died. That was a setback and we have taken it upon ourselves to extend the life of the strategic plan which was supposed this year, but it is going to end next year so that we can recover. We have proposed some strategies to recover, to test more and to reach out to those who have defaulted. That is working. The number is not satisfactory if

you look at people that we have tested. Ninety-four percent of our people went to our facilities to go and test, but 76% are taking treatment. Out of the 94% that have been tested, only 76% is taking treatment. This is a problem that says there are more and more of our people that are resisting to take treatment. We must encourage them, and we must find the way to follow them up so that we reintroduce them into treatment.

But there is a new problem where we see young people this time are getting more and more infected. We have started some programmes that I have mentioned, but these programmes are not included in the strategic plan that is going to end next year. That means in the new strategic plan we must find ways and means and strategies to deal with this current problem that is developing where young people are getting infected in their numbers. We must find programmes that will go out and reach young people and deal with this scourge that we see. Thank you very much.

Ms P MARAIS: Thank you, Speaker. Deputy President, the increasing rate of HIV/Aids infections is directly related to the growing continuing attitude towards the condom use.

Together with early sexual debates for many of our young people and the growing trend of old people preying on young

girls, why has there been such a dramatic decrease in the government public education on HIV/Aids and the need for the use of condoms? What message does it send to the public when we have leaders such as your Minister of Finance fondling women at massage parlours and doing that with impunity? Thank you, Deputy Minister.

Mr B A RADEBE: Hon Speaker, on a point of order. I am rising on Rule 85. The member must raise what she has just said in a substantive motion. She cannot just cast ... attack the character of the Minister. Thank you.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much, hon Radebe. Hon Marais!

Ms P MARAIS: Speaker, I am saying that the Minister was found fondling a woman ... [Interjections.]

THE SPEAKER: Found ... I beg your pardon. [Interjections.] Wait! Hon members, please, don’t get excited, wait. Hon Marais, “Uthini?” [What are you saying]?

Mr N S MATIASE: Hon Chair! Hon Chair!

The SPEAKER: I am talking to hon Marais.

Mr N S MATIASE: I rise on a point of order.

The SPEAKER: On a point of order? Yes!

Mr N S MATIASE: It is impossible for hon Marais to apply her mind to answer this question with these howlers shouting at her. Can you please protect her.

The SPEAKER: I am protecting her that is why I said, point of order

Mr N S MATIASE: You are not doing enough to protect her.

The SPEAKER: Hayi, ke! Hayi, no! Hon Matiase, I am protecting hon Marais. Hon members, please, please, tone down. Hon Marais!

Ms P MARAIS: Speaker, at the President’s imbizo it was the same thing that was discussed and you are still covering up while things are going wrong.

The SPEAKER: Hon Marais, will you please withdraw what you have just said. If there is an issue you have information, you can submit a substantive motion.

Ms P MARAIS: Speaker, can you please explain to me which part must I withdraw?

The SPEAKER: Just what you have just said. That which I will not repeat. Hon Matiase, please, please, don’t do that. Hon Marais, would you please withdraw ... [Interjections.] Hon members, what’s wrong? “Kwenze njani na?” [What’s wrong]?

Ms P MARAIS: The Deputy President has just said now that we have a problem of gender-based violence. We are having the same problem of gender-based violence here, and it is a woman who is now covering up this things. It was in the newspapers and everywhere, and after that the case was retracted. So, we need to discuss these things here in the House.

The SPEAKER: I have requested you to withdraw what you have just said. Hon Marais, I said please, withdraw.

Ms P MARAIS: Can you please explain to me which part must I withdraw.

The SPEAKER: If you don’t want to withdraw may you please leave the House.

Ms P MARAIS: Please, explain which part ...

The SPEAKER: Leave the House! Leave the House!

Mr N S MATIASE: Is that the principle you are prepared to use?

The SPEAKER: I did not ask you to speak. I did not give you the floor. Hon Marais, please, leave the House. Will you please leave the House.

Mr W T LETSIE: Let them go!

The SPEAKER: Hon members, no, no!

*Tshivenda*:

An hon MEMBER: Kha vha bve.

The SPEAKER: Hon members to my right you are not helping the situation. You are not helping the situation by screaming and heckling at people whom I am throwing out of the House. You are not helping me. I really beg you please stop it. Stop it!

Hon members, we proceed. It was now the hon the Deputy President. But I don’t know what are you going to respond

because the hon member has refused to withdraw the statement. Shall we then proceed rather and recognise the hon M D Hlengwa.

Ms M D HLENGWA: Thank you, hon Madam Speaker and Deputy President. A quality ending approach is needed to end Aids. During the pandemic many people living with HIV and Aids were not able to access health care and even today many people living in rural areas with few clinics and bad roads struggle to access health care and medication. Has the Department of Health taken steps to rectify this issue through the use of long acting injectable? If not, why not; and if so please, provide the details. I thank you.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you, hon Speaker. Let’s acknowledge the concerns and the question raised by the hon member. We have all agreed that there was a disruption.

Through the pandemic services were disrupted especially for those people who were from time to time collecting their treatments.

Beyond COVID-19 we have introduced a programme called: Go find the missing people. According to the figures there are only 76% that are still remaining on treatment while we have tested

94%. That means that there is a missing link. We must go and find this missing link.

But the bottom line here is that for us to really fight the HIV and Aids pandemic is to note that this is a behavioural problems. It remains to individual people to take a stand to deal with their behaviour. By behavioural problems I mean that if you are not infected try by all means that your behaviour helps you not to be infected. Prevent, prevent and prevent! If you are young, abstain from sexual activities. Young people can only be supported by their parents. Parental guidance in such a situation is required because all these children are from a family; all these children have parents. Parents cannot stand back and say the government must deal with this problem.

It is worse with adults. Adults must take responsibility for their lives. Whatever you do in dark corners where we don’t see you, you must protect yourself - you must protect yourself. People are pushing hard for government to trace people, but it takes two to tangle, it takes two people to go and dance. Those people that we are tracing have equal responsibility to present themselves. We have done enough as government. We went to communities, we went to traditional communities and we spoke to traditional leaders, but it is up

to our people. We have conducted enough public awareness campaigns for our people to stand up and present themselves.

It is worse with our children. We have created the Youthzones and we have also created the, You Only Live Once. All these are platforms we have created for young people to take discussions about how best to protect themselves.

As I have said, for us to win this fight all of us need to act together as a nation and as a society. This is a societal problem that is hampering the development of this country going forward. It is a problem. Thank you very much.

Question 24:

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you, hon Speaker, it remains our firm belief that the executive accountability to Parliament will always promote national unity and give meaning to public the participation policy in our legislative processes. In underscoring this fundamental democratic principle, we once more affirm the centrality of Parliament in ensuring that accountability of the executive is always upheld at all times.

In line with this principle, in October 22, 2022, the President gave Parliament the Cabinet’s response to the

recommendations of the Judicial Commission of Inquiry into the allegations of state capture, corruption, and fraud in the public sector.

Consequently, the President outlined the work and actions that has already been done by government departments, law enforcement agencies, state-owned enterprises, and Chapter 9 institutions to give effect to the Commission’s recommendations, including the required reforms to prevent any future acts aimed at state capture.

Certain recommendations have a bearing on the interplay that exists between Parliament and the executive branch as a result of the commission’s investigation of the role and the oversight responsibilities of Parliament.

Some of these recommendations amongst others, are the following:

Parliament must consider establishing a committee for oversight over the President or the Presidency; Parliament to introduce a suitable tracking and monitoring systems for implementation of corrective actions proposed for Parliament; Parliament to consider the principles of amendatory

accountability in an Act of Parliament; Parliament to consider additional measures involving the Speaker and the President to sanction non-compliant Ministers; Parliament to consider legislation or rules to deal with the late submission of reports by representatives of the executive to Parliament; Parliament to consider legislative measures for non-attendance to parliamentary responsibilities by members of the executive; Parliament to implement rules to assist it further in sanctioning Cabinet members for non-compliance; Parliament to put in place mechanisms to prevent unlawful use, or abuse of power by the executive.

Collectively, these issues are crucial to the accountability, transparency, oversight, and improving legislative and executive democratic norms and practises.

In response to the commission’s findings and recommendations, government departments, law enforcement agencies, state-owned enterprises, and Chapter 9 institutions are working on a wide range of interventions.

We are mindful that Parliament will employ its very own procedures and processes in order to implement recommendations concerning the effective interplay between Parliament and the

executive branch. This includes issue of strengthening existing oversight mechanisms over the executive.

As the leader of government business in this Parliament, we will make every effort to cooperate with the presiding officers in order to put the commission’s recommendations about the work of the executive and the ministerial branches into action.

We will also assist in advancing government’s efforts to combat fraud and corruption across public and private sectors thereby improving public confidence in the value of democracy

and the rule of law. Thank you very hon Speaker!

*IsiXhosa*:

Nks S GWARUBE: Sekela Mongameli ...

*English*:

... three institutions were on dock during the state capture commission. Number one, your government, number two Parliament and number three the ANC at large. We heard in graphic details how money meant for South Africans was stolen. This was done through strategic placing of people who were political aligned to the governing party in key senior positions in government

to facilitate this theft. We know that corruption is not victimless crime, it robs ...

*IsiXhosa*:

... abantu iinkonzo ezibafaneleyo. Sithetha nje ngoku, ayikho imali yokunyusa iSibonelelo sokuXhasa uMntwana (Child Support Grant), ayikho imali yokuphucula ezempilo, ubusitsho ngoku,ingekho nemali yokunika isidima kubantwana abafundela phantsi kwemithi.

*English*:

That is the true cost of corruption. This is why I find it difficult to believe you when you say, you don’t know anyone who is politically aligned, who has been hired in key government position. It cannot be true; you are personally the Chair of the ANC deployment committee.

*IsiXhosa*:

Siyayazi loo nto.

*English*:

In light of this findings, it is clear that Parliament must strengthen its oversight role over the executive. As the Leader of Government Business, LOGB, responsible for working

with Parliament to implement the President’s Implementation Plan, would you support the call for the portfolio committee to be established, to deal solely with the Presidency to prevent this kind of abuse of public money and trust that we have seen in the past?

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you very much hon Speaker, firstly I must agree with you that the recommendations and the wide range findings of the commission represent a dark side of us, the bad side of us. And of which we are ready to allow this to be exposed because we don’t agree with that, we don’t agree with it.

It took courage from our side to say, this commission must happen, we want to know because this thing must not happen in future. So, there’s an undertaking from our side that really we want to deal with this once and for all. Because it will stunt our development, it will hinder progress.

So, there’s a commitment on our side to really deal with the findings of this commission. Honestly, not for the sake of the ANC, but the for the sake of this country ... [Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: [Inaudible.] ... please allow the Deputy President.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: ... not for our sake as the ruling party but for the sake of our beloved country. This is a phenomenal, corruption, fraud, these must be wiped out in our vocabulary. It must not happen, regardless corruption and fraud knows no colour, knows no political party ... [Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Hon members, please!

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: ...it must be fought wherever it exits, period. Now, I am not going to interfere in the work of Parliament, as much as I am a member of Parliament, I cannot dictate to Parliament what to do. Because, partly I am member of this Parliament but I belong to the executive.

I must be held accountable by yourself and I cannot come and dictate to you what to do, how to hold the executive accountable, no, I am sorry, I am sorry. Yes, it’s very important but we are presenting ourselves as executive, we are committing ourselves to co-operate with yourself but let’s allow you space to create your own rules so that you can hold us accountable. Thank you.

Mr B S NKOSI: Thank you Deputy President, without going into details on the plan of Cabinet, my comment is as follows, that:

The presidency must ensure that the recommendations made by Judicial Commission of Inquiry into allegation of state capture, corruption and fraud, in the public sector including organs of state, once they are put in place must contribute towards decisive efforts, to enhance transparency accountability and openness in the drive to prevent fraud, maleficence and corruption in both the public and private sectors. Thank you.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you very much hon Speaker, we must really assure this House that as the executive we will do our best. Our best to respond to these recommendations, to the best of our ability. We are mindful of the past where we come from, mindful of the crucibles and shackles of apartheid, that we are still trying to get rid of.

We cannot therefore entangle ourselves and enslave ourselves again, while we are in the process of liberating ourselves from that bad past. So corruption and fraud are going to be

fought with all our mighty, by all our efforts so that this does not define the South African nation. Thank you very much.

Mr S N SWART: Thank you Speaker, Deputy President, the ACDP played a key role in the Electricity Supply Commission, Eskom, oversight inquiry while at the Public Enterprise Portfolio Committee. And this oversight inquiry was highlighted in the Zondo Report as the one shining example of the effective oversight and accountability, during this dark state capture period. Sadly, many ANC members of that committee including Chairperson hon Dorothy Rento were punished by not being

re-elected.

So, this is clear that this substantial changes including legislature amendments, as pointed out by you, need to be included. And this includes legislation that protects Members of Parliament from losing their party membership, merely for exercising oversight duties reasonable as hon Dorothy Rento did.

But in the end would you, hon Deputy President not agree that Parliament can amend its rules and pass laws to protect Members of Parliament but if there’s no political will and strong ethical leadership within the majority party, all these

steps will amount to nothing and effective oversight will not take place as the Zondo Commission points out? Thank you.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank very much hon Speaker, I can safely speak on their behalf. There’s a commitment on the part that I belong to, to really deal with this. I said when I started, it took us a very painful part that we have taken, to investigate ourselves, to investigate ourselves. And agree that this commission must be instituted and we knew very well that the people that are in government is the ANC. So, the commission is going to speak about us and we were prepared to listen to that.

But, we are not going to allow our failures to define us. Not going to allow our failures to define us, we are going to learn from these failures and do better. We are here to learn from these failures and do better. Thank you.

Mr N L S KWANKWA: Thank you very much, one of the failures from which you should learn something Deputy President is that

...

*IsiXhosa*:

... abantu bethu ingathi bangakhe bayeke ukuba imali nokuba babe ngamasela.

*English*:

Deputy President, one of the issues that is trying to strengthen oversight... [Interjection.]

*IsiXhosa*:

USOMLOMO: Usuka apha, uyaphuma, ungena kwintlanganiso ngevidiyo (virtual) uyokubhoxa.

*IsiXhosa*:

Mnu N L S KWANKWA: Hayi mama andibhoxi. Yintshayelelo le (preamble).

USOMLOMO: Uphuma apha, ingathi uya kwindlu encinci kanti uyokubhoxa ngaphandle? Uphi Kwankwa?

Mnu N L S KWANKWA: Ndikhona ngevidiyo, Somlomo.

USOMLOMO: Ubalekile apha.

*English*:

The SPEAKER: Continue hon member.

Mr N L S KWANKWA: Thank you very much, Deputy President, DP, the issue for us is really to say, for example if you were to consider that one of your responsibilities as a Leader of Government Business ...

*IsiXhosa*:

... kukuqinisekisa ukuba ...

*English*:

... Ministers and members of executive really, do indeed account to Parliament. But if you were to consider attendance alone, without actually considering their inputs and submissions in Parliament, it means the focus is really procedural rather than substantive.

*IsiXhosa*:

Umbuzo ke ngoku ...

... that is linked to this issue of recommendations of Parliament is, as executive do you actually sit down and consider whether the departments and Ministers consider and implement recommendations that come out of Parliament, without you waiting for the executive authority of Parliament to bring those recommendations to your attention, because they intended

to improve your work also intended to ensure that government departments are indeed effective? Thank you.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, I am battling to see the hon member, I can hear the voice, but I’ve heard the question. Now, the presentation that was presented by the President, firstly it’s a collective presentation that was agreed by Cabinet. That means all Ministers, all public entities are part and parcel of this.

Now, we are committed, we might have our own failures which we are happy to improve. But as Cabinet we are committed to be accountable to this House. There is no one that would take a deliberate step not to account here, there’s no one, there’s no one! Now, what happens here ... [Interjection.]

The SPEAKER: Order, order!

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: ... which is a continuous problem that we are working on with the presiding officers, especially on Wednesdays. On Wednesdays, when there’s a Cabinet day, like yesterday there was a Cabinet, and you are starting your sitting, members will be here to answer the questions at three.

But in terms of our mutual understanding was that, that day must be reserved for Cabinet. So that you allow us to do our business. All the other days we devote them to be available to account. But we also understand the pressure that Parliament is facing and we don’t want to be above Parliament. All us, we serve here. We cannot pick and choose how we want to serve Parliament.

But, I am saying at times there are conflicting programmes and then you see some Ministers not here. And at times you become hard and fast that you want a Minister not a Deputy Minister. I don’t know why you reach that point, at times. In portfolio committee you want a Minister not a Deputy Minister, that’s why the President has appointed a Minister and a Deputy Minister so that they can be able to help one another.

So, I beg you to accept a Deputy Minister in your portfolio committee because the Deputy Minister represents the Minister, represents the department and is also a member of the executive. There won’t any deliberate attempt from the side of the executive to undermine this House. If we undermine this House, we are undermining ourselves.

Well, I am happy to take individual cases and I listen to your debates every day. I listen, there are some Ministers that you don’t like, they are not in your good books, you pursue them even if there’s no matter. I listen, I listen and some of the Ministers are being called names, I listen. They are no longer called hon members, they are called by other names, I listen. And I think we must find a way of respecting one another and concentrate on the work of this House.

But, I want to assure you, the Cabinet where I serve under the President, would never take a deliberate decision not to serve this Parliament. This Parliament is supreme, we become members of the executive after, but the first call is, you are a member of this House, we belong here. Thank you very much.

The SPEAKER: That concludes questions to the Deputy President. I thank the hon Deputy President. Hon members, that concludes the business for the day.

The House adjourned at 16:27.