**UNREVISED HANSARD**

**NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES**

**THURSDAY, 20 APRIL 2023**

***PROCEEDINGS OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVIINCES***

The Council met at 14:02.

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

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Hon delegates, before we proceed I would like to make the following announcements. The hybrid sitting constitutes the sitting of the National Council of Provinces. Delegates in the hybrid sitting enjoy the same powers and privileges that apply in a sitting of the National Council of Provinces.

For purposes of the quorum, all delegates who have logged on to the virtual platform shall be considered present. Delegates must switch on their videos if they want to speak. Delegates must ensure that their microphones on their gadgets are muted and must always remain muted.

All delegates in the Chamber must connect to the virtual platform as well as insert their cards to register on the Chamber system. Delegates who are physically in the Chamber must use the floor microphones. All delegates may participate in the discussion through the chat room. The interpretation facility is active. Delegates, members of the executive and special delegates in the virtual platform are requested to ensure that the interpretation facility on their gadgets are properly activated to facilitate access to the interpretation services. Permanent delegates, members of the executive and special delegates in the Chamber should use the interpretation gadgets on their desks to access the interpretation facilities.

Hon delegates, in accordance with the Council Rule 229(1), there will be no notices of motion or motions without notice.

Hon delegates, before we proceed to the questions, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the Deputy President, His Excellency Mr Paul Mashatile. I’m told that the Premier of the North West is also expected. Members of the executive council, MECs and all permanent and special delegates are welcome to the House.

**QUESTIONS: DEPUTY PRESIDENT**

Question 1:

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon Chairperson, in our view, sustainable provision of essential services such as water, electricity and sanitation must be the hallmark of developmental local government. The task delegated to the Deputy President, working with the Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs, National Treasury and other departments, is to ensure that municipalities deliver critical services. In the immediate, we have been helping municipalities to pay debts owed to Eskom and water boards. At the end of December 2022, municipalities owed Eskom

R56,3 billion and the debt is rising. Government has introduced a debt relief package for Eskom which is intended to improve the utility's balance sheet whilst proposing that Eskom write off some of the municipal debt under strict conditions with guidance from the National Treasury.

On 01 April 2023, the National Treasury published the Municipal Finance Management Act Circular Number 124, which deals with the relief strategy regarding a municipal debt owed to Eskom. As a government, we recognise that debt relief alone will not return Eskom to its financial sustainability. A key

assumption considered in the debt relief determination is the implementation of the recent tariff increase approved by the regulator - an increase of 18,65% in 2023-24, and 12,74% in 2024-25. Without these increases, the debt relief arrangement is not sustainable.

Municipal debt relief will be conditional and application based. This relief is aimed at correcting underlying behaviour and operational practices in defaulting municipalities.

Parallel to this process Eskom is introducing a smart metering solution to change consumer behaviour by reinforcing a culture of payment for services rendered. The culture of nonpayment, not only by municipalities but also by all organs of state and individual household customers, is concerning. As the government we cannot overemphasise the need to enforce the culture of payment for services rendered.

The National Treasury has further developed the Eskom Debt Relief Bill 2023, as a measure to improve Eskom's financial situation. In terms of section 2 of this Bill, government advances to Eskom, which are over the revenue’s Medium-Term Expenditure Framework period, will amount to a loan.

Hon Chairperson, municipalities and water boards are responsible for 65% of the debt to the water trading entity. As of December 2022, water boards were owed R16,1 billion by municipalities, and this includes R10,9 billion that is overdue for more than three months. The escalating debt in the water sector is attributed to the absence of an economic regulatory regime for infrastructure investments, costing and pricing, a culture of nonpayment of services, water losses and unauthorised connections.

The government has put in place the following measures to strengthen billing and revenue collection to address the escalating debt of municipalities to water entities, namely, the adoption of credit control and debt recovery measures across all the water boards and the installation of bulk prepaid meters by water boards in municipalities especially with a poor payment record. The success of all these relief measures is dependent on co-ordination across all spheres of government. This is why the government will continue working with all sectors of society to increase and build sustainable economic activities in all municipalities to create viable tax bases to develop revenue for social and economic development. I thank you.

Ms S SHAIKH: Thank you very much, hon Chairperson. Thank you very much, hon Deputy President for your comprehensive response to this question. I think it is an important question and it is also your maiden question in the National Council of Provinces. We are noting various initiatives that the government is undertaking to address municipal debts especially the immediate, medium and long-term as you have indicated. But as you may be aware, there has always been what is called one size fits all approach in terms of the current funding model to municipalities despite the fact that there are serious crisis in terms of the revenue base essentially between rural and urban municipalities. On the one hand we have a low revenue base while at the other hand there is high revenue base. Against that backdrop, are there any policy considerations by the government to develop and adopt context specific funding model for rural and low revenue base municipalities going forward? Thank you very much.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, Chairperson. Hon member, as you know there are almost 257 municipalities throughout the country and obviously when government allocate resources they have to take into account the different challenges that municipalities are facing. At the moment there is a review to the allocation of grants to municipalities by

the National Treasury. The approach that the government want to take is to ensure that we don’t go the route of one size fits all. Government wants to ensure that allocation of grants should be disproportionately directed particularly to lesser resourced municipalities, particularly the poorer ones more in rural arears. So, yes, indeed, I agree with you that we should take into account the challenges that the municipalities are facing. The same way that the National Treasury does when it allocates resources to national departments and to provinces when they do the division of revenue. So we would allow allocation to municipalities to also take into account the various challenges, the capacity that the municipality requires, etc. That is the case at the moment. Thank you very much.

Ms H S BOSHOFF: Thank you very much, hon Chair, and good afternoon to the Deputy President. Just to enlighten you, Deputy President, there are 44 districts, 205 local municipalities and 8 metros and is 257, and not almost. In order to address the problem of poor financial management and financially distressed municipalities which has unfortunately been exacerbated by your government’s discredited cadre deployment policy, it is very, very important that qualified candidates are employed to manage a municipality’s financial

affairs. To address skills shortages, will your government consider exempting financially distressed municipalities from the recently enacted Employment Equity Amendment Act’s requirements? Thank you.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, hon Chairperson. I have said earlier that there is a review that the National Treasury is working on. Let me say, hon Boshof, that we as the governing party do not interfere with the appointment of people in government at all. The hon member does not understand the issue of cadre deployment. It has nothing to do with just appointing people in government. When people are appointed in government they go through the necessary processes of application and interview. Don’t just say it is the government, but even in municipalities when you appoint so and so they go through the necessary processes.

The challenges that municipalities face including metros and districts in the main has to do with local economic base. Some of the municipalities where they are, they don’t really have good revenue base because of local economy. They don’t have a big base of revenue generation, and as I’ve said earlier they get into distress. That is why the national government has been supporting municipalities as I’ve said earlier we will

even meet some of the debts owed by municipalities just to help them. In the main it has nothing to do with the personnel per se. Thank you very much, hon Chairperson.

*Xitsonga*:

Man B T MATHEVULA: Ndza khensa, Mutshamaxitulu.

*English*:

Deputy President, the amount owed by the municipalities continue to grow with each financial year as the collection of municipal debts require more in depth approach. Which step of intervention has the Deputy President taken in looking into the cause of financial mismanagement and misconduct in the

ANC-led municipalities as it has become clear that the existing lack of leadership and ethical governance ultimately impacts the functioning of municipalities and their ability to pay Eskom?

*Xitsonga*:

Ndza khensa, Mutshamaxitulu.

*English*:

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, hon Chairperson. Hon member, we are taking various steps to help municipalities

as I said that the National Treasury looking at the debts in municipalities and we are taking steps to come with initiatives that will cushion a lot of these municipalities including how they pay Eskom and various other challenges.

As I’ve said to the answer while answering the hon member that it is not so much lack of leadership that creates distress in municipalities. In fact, the governing party, as you may be aware in the last years when various mayors were appointed to lead municipalities, most of those mayors were interviewed. So it was not just like we like our comrades to get there and lead. They were interviewed and they showed their qualifications. Because we do take the issue of municipalities very seriously and that’s why we went through that painful process to be sure that we have the right people.

At the moment because of the process that we have introduced I am quite sure that in most of our municipalities we do have the right people leading at these municipalities.

So hon member, you will see a lot of improvements going forward.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Are you done, hon Deputy President?

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Yes, I am done.

Mr M A P DE BRUYN: Thank you, Chair. Hon Deputy President, with regard to municipal debts to water entities, especially in the Free State where for example, the Kopanong Local Municipality owes Bloem Water more than R600 million and the Mangaung Metro owes Bloem Waters more than R700 million ...

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Hon De Bruyn, may you please speak little bit louder and slower.

Mr M A P DE BRUYN: Am I audible now, Chair? Deputy President, as I was saying, it is with regard to municipal debts to water entities, especially in the Free State where, for example, the Kopanong Local Municipality owes Bloem Water more than

R600 million and the Mangaung Metro owes Bloem Waters more than R700 million. Hon Deputy President, this could have been prevented if we had functional provincial and national departments with functional oversight and consequence management over municipalities as well as entities, like Bloem Water, that doesn’t always play by the rule. As we all know,

Deputy President, this was not the case in the last 28 years. Deputy President, would you agree that service level agreements across the board between municipalities and service providers should be reviewed to ensure that not only the entities benefit from these agreements, but municipalities as well; and that for a start all interests on debts should be written off in order to assist municipalities in settling their debts? Thank you.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, hon Chairperson. Hon member, we are aware of the challenges in Kopanong in the Free State. Two weeks ago, I sent a team from my office to visit Kopanong to look at what problems they are facing. In the main you are quite right it’s water problem and also the amount of money that the municipality owes to Bloem Water. We are looking at the solution as we are doing with all municipalities.

I will be visiting Kopanong next month to look at how we can resolve the problems to ensure that people have uninterrupted access to water. We would like to ensure that all municipalities, and not just Kopanong, do pay for the water that they receive from the water boards. The issue of Kopanong and Bloem Water is something that we are working on to resolve

and I am hoping that by the time we return from Kopanong we would have found a solution to deal with that problem. Thank you very much, hon member for that question.

Question 2:

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon Chairperson, the Financial Action Task Force is a global inter-governmental body that promotes policies and sets international standards relating to combating money laundering, terrorist financing and financing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

During its Plenary held on 24th of February this year, the Financial Action Task Force greylisted South Africa based on the evaluation conducted in 2019 and the report was released in 2021.

The report identified South Africa as one of the countries with strategic deficiencies in relation to anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism.

In 2021 South Africa was put under a one-year observation period, allowing the country to address 67 of the recommended actions.

According to the Financial Action Task Force, South Africa has made significant progress by addressing 52 of the 67 recommended actions. And we are now focusing on the remaining

15 actions which we should meet by January 2025; so, that’s the deadline that we have been given to finalise the remaining 15.

Furthermore, Cabinet has mandated the Inter-Departmental Committee on Anti-Money Laundering and Countering Terror Financing to address the identified deficiencies expeditiously. This includes overseeing the implementation of the National Strategy on Anti-Money Laundering and Countering Terror Financing and tracking progress in addressing the identified deficiencies.

Our Law Enforcement Agencies, including the National Prosecuting Authority, NPA, are implementing an integrated action plan to ensure a sustained increase in investigations and prosecutions of serious and complex money laundering cases. The action plan focuses on cases involving professional money laundering networks and also third-party money laundering as well as identifying, investigating and prosecuting terror financing activities in line with South Africa’s risk profile.

Through the Cabinet Committee on Justice, Crime-Prevention and Security, JCPS, which I chair, we will continue to enforce the implementation of the high-level goals, ensuring that all relevant agencies and departments are addressing these deficiencies as identified by the Financial Action Task Force.

So, we are busy with that, hon Chairperson. Thank you very much.

Mr D R RYDER: Deputy President, thanks for your answer, such as it was given. South Africans are asking many questions about these high-profile cases that are not being prosecuted or not being seen to be prosecuted.

The questions that South Africans are asking are: When will President Ramaphosa be formally charged with money laundering? Will we arrest the Russian war criminal, Vladimir Putin, when he sets foot in South Africa? Will DD Mabuza be charged for his corrupt activities before leaves to Russia? When will Zuma be arrested again, to finish his jail term? What actions will the NPA take against Arthur Fraser for undermining the criminal justice system and releasing JZ from prison without reason? Which Minister will be prosecuted for involvement in Bester’s jailbreak?

These are the questions South Africans are asking, Deputy President. And now you’ve mentioned that in your role as the Chair of the Cabinet Committee on justice, Crime-Prevention and Security that you will enforcing the action plan of the NPA.

But, Deputy President, while you can’t answer these questions, it’s up to the NPA to be answering these questions. What tools are you helping them with, in your role as the Chair of that committee, to help them ... [Inaudible.] ... achieve these high-profile prosecutions? Thank you.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon member, as I said, we will be enforcing the action plan of our law enforcement agencies. Now, we want our law enforcement agencies to do their work without fear and favour. So, there is no one that is special. They must just do their work.

I’m not going to be chasing certain high-profile leaders and so on. The duty of the executive is not to investigate cases, is the law enforcement agencies and they must do so.

I did say earlier, when I answered a similar question in the National Assembly, that with respect to our own President we

know that he has subjected himself to the causes of the law enforcement agencies; he has said so. There is SA Revenue Services, SARS, that has given a report; there is the SA Reserve Bank, SARB, that said they are investigating; the Public Protector gave a preliminary report, she’s still due to give a final report. So, let’s give that a chance. Let’s not

... [Interjections.] ... ya [yes] ... let’s not interfere. Let’s allow these agencies to do their work; they will do so. Thank you very much, hon Chairperson.

Ms A D MALEKA: Chairperson ...

*IsiZulu*:

... ngiyabonga, Sekela Mongameli, ngezimpendulo zakho ezigculisayo ...

*English*:

Hon Deputy President, whilst we share the collective desire to see those implicated in corruption speedily prosecuted, we do so with great sense of caution because our rule of law requires non-interference by anyone in the work of SA Police Service, SAPS, and the National Prosecuting Authority.

It is also important to agree that greylisting of countries should apply to all countries of the world, developed and undeveloped.

*IsiZulu*:

Umbuzo wami, Sekela Mongameli ...

*English*:

... has government conducted an audit on the capacity needs of SAPS and NPA for them to successfully discharge their constitutional mandate of identifying, arresting and prosecuting those implicated in the crimes identified by the ATM?

*IsiZulu*:

Ngiyabonga, Sihlalo.

*English*:

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon Maleka, I can’t agree with you more. We must never interfere, especially the executive, in the work of the institutions that we have set up.

I did say earlier that these institutions are working together. They are taking what we call the multi-disciplinary

initiative. So, there is collaboration between the NPA, the Asset Forfeiture Unit, the Special Investigating Unit, SIU; they are working together. And I agree with you that let’s allow them to do their work.

Where we realise that there may be capacity problems, indeed, government must show that we support. But at the moment I know that all of them do have capacity to do the work they are busy with. They will come with an integrated approach, coordination and to ensure that, indeed, they are able to perform this task and government’s role is to ensure that we support them, to ensure that they have enough capacity; and we are doing exactly that. Thank you very much, hon Chairperson.

Mr N M HADEBE: Hon Deputy President, considering the reputational damage and consequently the lack of trust has been caused by South Africa’s greylisting, I would like to know you have capacitated the financial intelligent centre to effectively manage ... [Inaudible.] ... for financial intelligence from law enforcement agencies concerning money laundering and terrorist financing investigations? Thank you.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon Hadebe, as I said earlier, we want these agencies ... we support this approach they are taking,

the multi-disciplinary initiative. So, the Anti-Corruption Task Team is located at the financial intelligence centre. So, they are working together to ensure that they have this capacity. I’m not been alerted it the fact that they may be struggling with capacity. I think there has been more coordination in the main, but definitely, we are bringing attention to that.

The JCPS, which I chair, will be particularly looking closely at the work of these institutions so that we are able to address the deficiencies. We believe that we can, as South Africans, in fact, address the deficiencies identified longer before 2025. In fact, we think by next year we would have addressed all these, and of course, that will require that we have the financial intelligence centre that does its work optimally and we are doing everything in our power to support them. Thank you very much, hon Chairperson.

Mr K MOTSAMAI: Deputy President, South Africa was greylisted because of failure, articulately, investigated, prosecute, money laundering and terrorist financing.

Which assurance can the Deputy President provide that South Africa will be removed from the list when the president of the

country, Mr Cyril Matamela Ramaphosa himself, is a criminal who stands accused of money laundering in his Phala Phala farm? I thank you.

The CHIEF WHIP OF THE NCOP: Hon Chair, the hon member grossly violated the rules of the House. The President of the country has never been found guilty at any court of law and I ask that the member withdraws the statement.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Hon Motsamai, I’m sure you know that you can’t really use a language that’s not in keeping with how we run business of this House. I call upon you to withdraw ...

Mr K MOTSAMAI: What must I withdraw, Chairperson? Because he is involved ...

*Setswana*:

... o na le letsogo moo. Ke tla be ke ...

*English*:

... withdraw what, Chairperson? Can you please highlight me! Because the people who were arrested on that day, on the case of Phala Phala, he was involved. Where must I withdraw?

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Hon Motsamai, I’m sure you know that this is not the first time that this matter has been raised in the House and you’re supposed to be fairly familiar with how to deal with these matters. And, indeed, I mean if you want to raise an issue of criminality and so on, you have a right to submit a motion in this House so that the issue then is openly debated. But until that happens, you have to withdraw this remark. And if you don’t, hon Motsamai, you know what’s going to happen to you?

Mr K MOTSAMAI: Which one? Which one must I withdraw?

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Sorry?

Mr K MOTSAMAI: Which word must I withdraw?

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Criminal! Referring to the President as a criminal!

*Setswana*:

Rre K MOTSAMAI: ... [Go sa utlwagale.] ... legodu ...

*English*:

... because criminal ...

*Setswana*:

... ke sekgoa akere?

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: It’s the same thing. Leshodu ke [A thief is a] criminal. It just sounds ... [Inaudible.] ... you’re still speaking to the same word.

Are you sticking to what you’re saying? Are you going to withdraw?

Rre K MOTSAMAI: No, I ...

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Are you withdrawing?

Rre K MOTSAMAI: No, I don’t withdraw!

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: You’re not withdrawing? You like to leave the House, sorry. Please leave the House, Mr Motsamai. Please leave the House. I’m ordering you to leave the House.

Ms M DLAMINI: Chairperson, on a point of order.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Thank you very much. We will ... [Interjections.] [Inaudible.] ... ask hon Motsamai to leave the House. Please leave!

Ms M DLAMINI: Chairperson, on a point of order.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Hon member, what’s your issue? On what point are you rising?

Ms M DLAMINI: No, but this is ... [Inaudible.] ... it’s censorship, what you’re trying to do. It’s censorship, what you’re trying to do, Chairperson, by members not expressing what they want to express fully.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Hon member, on what point are you rising?

Ms M DLAMINI: It’s a point of order that it was freedom of speech he was expressing and you want to censor what the members are saying so that it can suit the agenda of the ruling party.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Unfortunately, hon member, you’re missing the point altogether ...

Ms M DLAMINI: No, but we need you to know, Chairperson, you need to do better.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: There’s no point of order ... [Inaudible.] ... it’s not a point of order. You just oppose to the ruling or something but it’s not a point of order. Thank you very much.

Question 3:

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon Chairperson, following the 2021 Local Government Elections, political coalitions among various political parties became necessary because of hung councils, where no single political party gained a majority of votes in those municipalities.

Acknowledging that coalition governments have not been institutionalised, the South African Local Government Association, Salga, in 2021, developed a framework for coalition governments that can be used as a guide by political parties in practically structuring their coalitions.

The issue of coalitions is part of the discussion on improving the quality of our democracy. While working towards the dialogue, the government will review the negative impact of

dysfunctional coalition arrangements and its effect on service delivery.

Chairperson, we are particularly concerned that, although some municipalities are weakened because of low economic growth, approval of development proposals that would boost local economic growth that are derailed because of endless disruptions of coalition governments. The results of this process that we have undertaken will form part of the dialogue on coalitions to determine appropriate mechanisms to guide how coalitions function collectively.

So, hon member, we are emphasising here that prior to 2021, other than what the Speaker did, there wasn’t a strong framework that everybody agreed on nationally and we want to take from the Salga framework, strengthen it and come up with a framework that will guide all municipalities nationally as they do coalition. The emphasis should be good service to the people, we must put the people first.

You can see that when some coalitions are setup, it is not really about the people, it is almost like making deals. We want this framework to be able to guide all municipalities and put the people first and ensure that coalitions are put in

place for the benefit of the people to improve service delivery. Chairperson, I thank you.

The CHIEF WHIP OF THE NCOP: Deputy President, thank you for providing clarity on this matter on how the democratic government is approaching the important question.

Hon Deputy President, due to the governance instability and disruptions caused by current local government coalitions some citizens have begun to lose confidence in local government as a whole which my increase lower voter turnout in the future elections.

As part of our regulatory framework on coalitions, will government consider participatory processes of taking into account the use of communities in line with the injunctions of the Freedom Charter that you mentioned in your response about unifying vision for the people and that no government can justly claim ... [Inaudible.] ... unless it is based on peoples’ will?

Linked to that, how do we avoid and prevent capture of state power by people and parties with no real democratic voters of residents of our municipalities as demonstrated by the 2021

outcome of Local Government Elections outcome? I thank you Chairperson.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Indeed, local government is the closest government to the people and I think it is important for us to emphasise that point. Because local government is the closest to the people, we need to minimise disruptions as much as we can at that level. So, I agree with you that the participatory approach is correct.

We are dealing with these matters because we need to ensure that our municipalities are accountable to the people. We must ensure that whatever they do is about improving service delivery to communities and therefore, the way they are constituted must be at the core of their mandate to be able to serve communities.

I agree with you that we must ensure at all times that those involved at local government level are only informed by the approach that, we are here to serve our people, we are accountable to them and all arrangements made must always be to put the people first. Thank you very much Chairperson.

Mr S F DU TOIT: Hon Deputy President, it is true that coalition politics are the future of South Africa. The oversight role that all political parties play in the three spheres of government can never be stressed enough. Unlike hon Dodovu’s statement that, political interference is the key driver of underperformance, maladministration and corruption that hampers service delivery development and not coalitions. Coalitions is not the reason for failing local municipalities. The ANC has governed this country for decades without coalition parties and they managed to govern into the ground, on their own without putting the people first. Cadre deployment also plays an unfortunate degrading and counterproductive role.

Hon Deputy President, would you agree that more stringent government designed regulatory framework for political management in coalition governments will take away the democratic freedom of the coalition partners and that coalition partners must have the choice to determine on what grounds and values they are willing to participate in a coalition government, if not why not? Thank you Chair.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you very much for the question hon du Toit. I think hon du Toit agrees with me because I did say

earlier that we must put a framework that will guide how these coalitions are being set up. So, hon du Toit, I agree with you when you say we need a regulatory framework because we cannot always say we blame local government’s challenges on coalitions.

But the point you are making is that the way these coalitions are setup in some of these areas lead to these problems. We need to fix the way coalitions are setup because we are in era where local government coalitions in particular have now become the order of the day in South Africa. There is no single party that is winning out rightly.

We need to get the model right to ensure that when the coalitions are setup, they are setup in a proper way. There should be no interference from anybody. The local government is another sphere of government. Those parties must come together and be able to setup those coalitions working together with other spheres of government for support.

We believe that when coalitions are setup, the parties are willing participants. Nobody is being coerced or dragged on, all the parties come together, discuss and agree. I think that should always be the case. Thank you very much Chairperson.

Mr S F DU TOIT: Hon Chair, I think the Deputy President misunderstood me. I said that I would like to know if the Deputy President would agree ... [Interjections.]

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: What is the point of order hon du Toit?

Mr S F DU TOIT: The Deputy President is misleading the House stating that I said that I support more stringent regulatory framework. That is not what I said. I said that if more stringent regulatory framework is put in place, that would take away the democratic freedom of coalition partners.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: That is definitely not a point of order hon du Toit.

Ms M DLAMINI: Reliable service delivery remains one of South Africa’s biggest challenges. Will the dialogue which the Deputy President refers to, also include a focus on the high levels of corruption and mismanagement which under the leadership of the outgoing ruling party played municipalities for, for decades? If so, please provide details.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon Dlamini, when parties come together for a coalition at a local government, they take into account good governance amongst others, it’s part of that. So, if you understand good governance, it means at the core of that, they will ensure that they deal with corruption if it exists. They do this together as parties, they look at service delivery and they look at accountability to the communities.

So, yes, the issue of corruption should not be singled out to a particular party because there is often an attempt to say the ANC is the corrupt party which is not the case. Let us deal with those corrupt officials in institutions and municipalities where there are challenges. Let us not single out political parties. I think it is important that we move away from that notion.

Already on the ground, your party is part of these coalitions and I am sure working together with us they do not endorse corruption, together with us we will deal with corruption.

There should be no finger pointing at the ANC. We, as the ANC have always been an anticorruption party.

Hon Chairperson, in fact, the many laws of this country initiated by us are anticorruption. We want that to be

implemented right down to the ground. So, the dialogue will include it. Thank you.

Mr T J BRAUTESETH: Deputy President welcome to the House, it’s a pleasure having you here. Deputy President, the reality coalition politics in South Africa is reflected in the fascicle situation in Johannesburg where a 0,6% party is holding the mayoral chain. It is the second largest party in South Africa.

The DA initiated two Private Members’ Bills designed specifically to stabilise coalitions based on best practice internationally. Deputy President, we want to see coalitions work and our two parties together can work together to pass these Bills. Would you be willing to work with us as the DA to make coalitions work by supporting these legislative proposals? Thank you?

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon Tim, yes, there has been challenges in many coalition governments on the ground but coalitions by their nature do accommodate small parties. So, I am not shocked if a mayor comes from a small party. If the spirit is to work together we shouldn’t say to small parties, yes, we want you, but you have no role. I think you will agree with me

that Johannesburg is currently stable, even with a mayor from a small party.

Hon Tim, indeed, our approach on the ground must always be a constructive one where we appreciate to work with anybody who has constructive proposals and we have done so in the past. I know for instance that in the past, there are things that our councillors in Johannesburg agreed upon with all parties that, those are the correct things to do including the DA.

It must be the right proposals that advances not only the council’s work but also ensure that we can deliver services to our communities. If proposals do not advance our work, to reach out to people to deliver services then you are going to have problems at local government level.

Small parties have a role to play so, let’s bring them in, where they must hold positions, let it be. As long as those positions are used to serve our people. Thank you very much hon Chairperson.

Question 4:

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon Chairperson, this question of hon Hadebe is very timely because it comes at a time when we are

planning a visit to KwaZulu-Natal. We are going to KwaZulu- Natal, amongst others, we will have engagements with the Human Resource Department Council. This trip will happen next month before the end of May. In the main a visit will be undertaken together with business, labour and academia focusing on assessing the impact of human resource development strategy in the province by identifying gaps and solutions to fast-track our developmental agenda.

However, we would like to start by expressing our sympathies to the families and the community of the Dakota informal settlement in Isipingo, who were displaced because of the recent flood tragedy. As government, we will continue to support the affected families through rebuilding livelihoods from this and other disasters that have engulfed KwaZulu-Natal and other provinces. Our comprehensive response to these disasters has demonstrated that success depends on our ability to forge and strengthen partnerships across all sectors of society including collaboration with nonprofit organisations, NPOs; nongovernmental organisations, NGOs; traditional leaders; organised labour; the private sector and faith-based organisations.

The government intends to deepen the participation on nongovernment organisation, NPOs and the private sector in local government development and service delivery programmes. This work also includes targeted training and skills development programmes to empower local communities. Regarding the Expanded Public Works Programme, the government recognises the centrality of multistakeholder collaboration to improve skills development and job creation. Through the Expanded Public Works Programme, eThekwini Metropolitan has created over 16 000 work opportunities between April 2022 and March 2023.

Furthermore, the municipality has highlighted some decal initiatives on community empowerment and job creation. As of March 2022, this included the following: the Zibambele road maintenance programme aimed at breaking the cycle of poverty in families by contracting households to routine road maintenance. This programme benefited 5 877 community members; the second one, the Sihlanzimvelo programme where 106 co- operatives participated in cleaning streams and surrounding areas of their localities to protect the environment; the third one, the catalytic project in Westown Shongweni 1A Oceans Umhlanga and brickworks aimed at transforming the local

spatial footprint that has also created employment and business opportunities for the community.

All these initiatives are designed to offer the acquisition of skills that enable beneficiaries to lead and to be placed in employment and entrepreneurship opportunities. Furthermore, the Presidential Youth Employment Initiative is another key government programme demonstrating the value of collaboration with the private sector, labour and civil society to respond to the challenges of youth unemployment. This programme creates pathways opportunities for young people in training, work experience and income generation. At the end of December 2022, the Presidential Youth Employment Initiative benefited

5 787 young people in KwaZulu-Natal through the national pathway management network.

In conclusion, the Human Resource Development Council serve as one of the platforms for institutional co-ordination of various partnerships aimed at creating skills pipeline to meet the needs of the industry and development. Lastly, working with the members of the House and all civil society formations the government is ready to work with every sector to advance our common national agenda of fast-tracking and addressing the

triple challenges of unemployment, poverty and inequality. I thank you, Chairperson.

Mr N M HADEBE: Hon Deputy President, it has been published in the report by the Auditor-General that about 400 recipients of the Public Employment Programmes have already benefited from other government programmes before, making this an unfair beneficiation. If correctly managed and proper oversight was done this should not have been allowed to unfold. I would like to know what steps is government taking to address these irregularities and vet all recipients of this programme? Thank you.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you, hon Hadebe. One of the engagements that I will have in KwaZulu-Natal next month will be - as I said, hon Hadebe - to meet with the Human Resource Development Council because we want to ensure that these programmes are implemented properly. I agree with you that they should benefit many of our people in communities. If indeed, the programme is not benefiting many people but is kept in one place we will intervene to ensure that this broadened.

That is why we emphasize even the issue of training so that nobody can say, no, we didn’t extend to this part of the community because they don’t have skills. We would like to work particularly with the Sector Education and Training Authorities, Setas. A lot of our Setas have been scaling up the placement of particularly young people, those who come from the Technical and Vocational Education and Training, Tvet, colleges, etc. So, we will be looking into this, hon member, to ensure that these programmes benefit as broadly as possible many of our people in those communities. Thank you, hon Chairperson.

Mr F J BADENHORST: Hon Chairperson, thank you for the opportunity. Hon Deputy President, I was to say welcome but I’ll say hello.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: [Laughter.] Hello.

Mr F J BADENHORST: It would appear that your government, Deputy President, has a serious knowledge deficit when it comes to transfer of particular skills. On the other hand, the DA-led City of Cape Town identified, for example, ... [Inaudible.] ... industries as the growth area. Over the past few years, more than 70 000 people have been trained by the

city and are employed in these industries. Not warm and fuzzy promises but real jobs. People skilled and employed, 70 000 in the city. Deputy President, would you, please, follow the DA example and start turning this country ... [Inaudible.] ...?

Thank you, hon Chair.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon Badenhorst, in fact, the DA copied that from me. I introduced call centers when I was MEC for Finance in Gauteng ... [Interjections.] ... No, it is true, you can check on record, the first province to introduce call centers was Gauteng when I was MEC for Finance you can go and see it. In fact, in a space of 18 months, hon Badenhorst, we had employed 1 800 young people through what we called the Gauteng Shared Service Center.

Later on, the DA is doing it in the Western Cape. So, welcome, DA. You have seen that we are doing the right thing. [Laughter.] We are doing it very well in Gauteng. The numbers in Gauteng has doubled. You can check that programme is continuing. Hon Chairperson, it is good that the DA learnt from us. They always think we must learn from them. Thank you, hon Badenhorst, for learning from us. Thank you very much.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Thank you very much, Deputy President. Because hon Motsamai was ordered out of the House I want to take this opportunity to give the EFF a chance. Now is the opportunity, the EFF.

Ms M DLAMINI: Deputy President, South Africa is currently experiencing a continued shortage of critical skills particularly in the nursing and in the information technology fields. Which immediate medium term and long term strategies has the Deputy President taken to alleviate this challenge faced in these two fields in KwaZulu-Natal? Thank you.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you, hon member. As I said earlier, we would like the provinces also to look at their own environment. The reason why we decided to have a meeting with the Human Resource Development Council in KwaZulu-Natal is because we want them to guide us so that we don’t impose and say: In KwaZulu-Natal this is what we think you need. We want to meet with them and they will be able to say to us, we think these are the critical skills that we need in these province.

You will appreciate, hon member, that KwaZulu-Natal also has vast rural areas, so, it might be different from provinces like Gauteng. So, a meeting with them will be very important

to look at what their needs are. What I want to emphasise, Chairperson, is that we want collaboration. There are number of universities in KwaZulu-Natal, we want the Setas to work with those institutions. Even the Tvet colleges they are ... [Inaudible.] ... a lot of skills as well. It will be something that we will discuss with them. I am sure the next time I come to the NCOP I will tell you about my good trip to KwaZulu- Natal and what we have agreed upon in terms of the critical skills that we will prioritise there. Thank you very much, Chairperson.

*IsiZulu*:

Nk L C BEBEE: Ngiyabonga, Sihlalo weNdlu, ngibonge nakuSekela Mongameli, kepha, umbuzo wami ebengizowubuza bekungulowo omayelana no-Seta, usungiphendulile kuwona, kepha kimi, ukukuhalalisela ngoba ukuchaze kahle konke njengoba kunjalo ngoba wazi futhi ukuthi KwaZulu-Natal ibe nokukhahlamezeka okukhulu yizinhlekelele nakhokonke lokho nomnotho washona phansi, imisebenzi ibingekho kodwa ngiyajabula, Sekela Mongameli, ngiyabonga. Wayihlaba esikhonkosini. Sizwe sonke ukuthi uthini ngendaba ka-Seta ukuthi igenge encane ingene phela emisebenzini. Ngiyabonga kakhulu lapho ... [Akuzwakali.]

USEKELA MONGAMELI: Kubonga mina. Ngijabule kakhulu ukuthi ngizothola ithuba lokufika le KwaZulu-Natal sibone ukuthi singalungisa kanjani. Kubaluleke kakhulu ukuthi sisize kakhulu intsha yethu, laba abancane ngoba uma ubheka izinga labantu abangasebenzi liphezulu kakhulu kulaba abancane.

Babuya emakolishi, babuya emanyuvesi, bangayitholi imisebenzi. Kumele sibanikeze amanye amakhono azobasiza ukuthi bakwazi ukusebenza ezindaweni ezehlukene. Ngibonga kakhulu ukuthi sizoba nethuba, sizoba nesikhathi, laphaya KwaZulu-Natal sokuthi sibonisane nabe-Human Resource Development Council kule nyanga ezayo. Kubonga mina.

Question 5:

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon Chairperson, the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development is working with the Onderstepoort Biological Products to expand South Africa’s vaccine manufacturing capacity through contract manufacturing. To this end, Onderstepoort Biological Products is currently in discussion with Aspen Pharmaceuticals to investigate the entity’s capacity and technology improvement. Through these ongoing discussions, it is hoped that an agreement on a partnership will be reached by the third quarter of this year. However, the agreement would depend on granting permissions by

vaccine regulators for human and animal health vaccine production.

We have also been advised that Onderstepoort Biological Products is working with co-operatives, veterinary companies and wholesalers to forge deeper partnerships with the Biotechnical Vaccine Manufacturing Industry. Furthermore, Onderstepoort Biological Products is also pursuing linkages with the private sector through collaboration with veterinary companies to allow the sharing of norms of best practice, as well as institutional knowledge. The Department of Higher Education, Science and Innovation in partnership with the National Biosecurity Hub, and the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development in collaboration with the University of Pretoria, are also working together on developing mechanisms to improve ways of addressing biosecurity threats.

In this regard, the biosecurity hub will enhance and improve the capacity of the department to identify, analyse and mitigate against biosecurity threats and risks. The partnership will also assist with augmenting and availing sufficient research capacity and science on which the department bases its biosecurity work, and its regulatory

function and mandate. The hub will significantly enhance collaborative working arrangements between government and stakeholders that are affected by biosecurity threats, rather than having these groups act independently and in isolation.

We remain confident that through partnerships with the private sector and support from the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development and Land Reform, Onderstepoort Biological Products will be in a better position to conduct tests and trials and develop vaccines that will save livestock and thus contribute to food security in South Africa. Thank you very much.

Ms C VISSER: Hon Deputy President, for the plan that you had for the medium and the long term, at this current stage we stand with a crisis. A crisis that was brought to the attention of Onderstepoort Biological Products already in 2016, and which legislation says it needs to be reported immediately and acted upon it. We are losing animals on a daily basis, all the African horse sickness has taken a lot of our horses and ways of people travelling with that. We haven’t got antisnake venom and things like that.

When will your government start meeting with private manufacturers to get them acting now? We need immediate action

to save the animals of large spectrum right through South Africa where we always delivered. Therefore, at this stage we are at a point where farmers can start receiving more vaccines for their livestock immediately to save our country which have dire food security situation. Thank you.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, Chairperson and hon member. Yes, indeed, I have made inquiries through my office and I was told that these initiatives have already started as I said earlier that the engagement with Aspen has already taken place. Therefore, perhaps what we will have to do, because I agree with you that we need to ensure that we can hold the crisis, we will push fast to ensure that not only Aspen, but we open up for private sector players who have capacity to come in and work with the department to develop these necessary vaccines. Therefore, we’ll definitely do that. We will give ourselves a timeframe to ensure that in the next few months there should be, if not weeks, a tangible process that we can talk about that something is happening because this is a very critical resource. Thank you very much, hon Chairperson.

*Setswana:*

Moh T C MODISE: Motlatsa Moporesidente, ...

*English:*

... I fully agree that the country’s capacity to manufacture agricultural vaccine is critical for both economic development and food security. In addition to the important measures you have outlined in your response to strengthen the capacity of the Onderstepoort Biological Products, are there any additional measures in place to strengthening the capacity and the role of ... [Inaudible.] ... such as Biovac in vaccine manufacturing for our country?

*Setswana:*

Ke a leboga, Rra.

*English:*

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon Chairperson, through you to hon Modise, indeed, I agree with you. We need to ensure that we increase the capacity. This is important for the economy and food security. Hon Modise, Biovac is one such example of a ... [Inaudible.] ... public-private partnership established by government. Therefore, I agree with you that we as government should work fast to ensure that we can bring this capacity on board so that we can revitalise human vaccine manufacturing strengthening the capability of our vaccine prevented disease in Southern Africa region because this is important. Food

security is very important not only for our country, but for the region and the continent. Therefore, I agree with you that government must run with these partnerships, bring in state entities on board and we will be able to save a lot of our livestock from dying but in particular as you said this food security. Therefore, we will do exactly that, hon Chairperson. Thank you very much.

Mr M A P DE BRUYN: Hon Chairperson, through you to the Deputy President, in light of the fact that the private sector intervention will not happen overnight and we are still facing shortages of vaccines. In an answer to a colleague in the National Assembly, the Minister said, for example, the African horse sickness vaccines will be available by the 7th of this month, which is unfortunately still not the case. However, Deputy President, what measures are being put in place to ensure that these animals are being kept alive, and those who don’t have a full-blown outbreak on our hands as you seemingly already vacation in Gauteng and will farmers receive compensation for the loss of livestock as a result of the shortages of vaccines? Thank you.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you, hon member. I don’t know if I heard you very well about who said this will be ready by the

7th of this month. However, let me put it this way, government is encouraging the involvement of the private sector to work with government and with our department to develop these necessary vaccines. Therefore, we are encouraging that and as I speak this process has started and we will work with speed to ensure that there are no further delays on this. Therefore, if there was a deadline put and was not met we will look into that, but as far as I know work has started and government is taking it seriously and we will ensure that there are no further delays.

We need to develop these vaccines to ensure that we can protect our animals and ensure that, indeed, there is food security in our country and also the region and the continent because we are also involved in intertrade within the continent. Therefore, this is not just important for us, but for the region and the continent. Thank you, hon Chairperson.

Ms B T MATHEVULA: Deputy President, the availability of vaccine ... [Inaudible.] ... in ensuring that outbreak of diseases are prevented. Yet, farmers have been subjected to decade’s long shortages. What reason lies between the inconsistent supply of critical animal vaccine which will

assist in ensuring that outbreak of diseases are prevented and which timeframes can be provided in this regard? Thank you.

*Xitsonga:*

XANDLA XA PHURESIDENTE: Ndza khensa, muchaviseki Mathevula.

*English:*

I agree with you, vaccines are very important. I think all of us agree. Our intervention at the moment is to actually deal with this long shortage that you are talking about. Therefore, we have been made aware and that’s why we are intervening with the department to make sure that we can address this once and for all. I can’t put a timeframe today because I’ll need to engage with the department. However, certainly, we will put a timeframe when we once we meet with them to ensure that there is a turnaround that is visible that we can work towards, because it is always good to work towards a particular timeframe.

Therefore, once I meet with the relevant Ministers we will do that so that we can assist our farmers who you say have been struggling with long shortages. We want to ensure that very soon it should be something of the past. Thank you, hon Chairperson.

Question 6:

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: The theft and vandalism of public infrastructure have far-reaching consequences for the economy of South Africa.

To combat illegal electricity connections, meter bypassing, tampering with operations of Eskom network, theft and vandalism of infrastructure, and other electricity-related crimes, Eskom has increased existing measures such as audits, maintenance education and awareness campaigns.

Additionally, the government has adopted an integrated security approach with law-enforcement agencies to protect infrastructure such as electrical cables from theft and vandalism.

Together with Eskom, the government has taken the following steps to safeguard critical infrastructure:

The first one is Eskom and the National Joint Operations and Intelligence Structure, Natjoints, have established what we call the Energy Security Priority Committee and, more than 50 infrastructure-related arrests have been made since January of this year.

The second one is the enforcement of the Criminal Matters Amendment Act has been bolstered, resulting in the imposition of strict and severe penalties for infrastructure offences.

The third one is a Tactical Joint Operations Centre has also been established in Mpumalanga, in addition to a Mission Area Joint Operations Centre at the Sunninghill headquarters of Eskom. These facilities are staffed by SA Police Service, SAPS, and Eskom personnel.

The fourth one is the Joint Operations Centre at Eskom Megawatt Park has received additional support from specialised SAPS units, the Directorate of Priority Crime Investigations, and other specialised units across the country, such as Provincial Essential Infrastructure Task Teams.

The fifth one is the National Prosecuting Authority, NPA, the Department of Home Affairs, the Special Investigating Unit, the SA Police Service, and mining companies also collaborate on high priority projects.

The last one is the government departments and agencies such as the SA Revenue Service, Asset Forfeiture Unit, Department

of Mineral Resources and Energy, the Hawks, the National Prosecuting Authority, State Security Agency, Special Investigating Unit, the Financial Intelligence Centre, and many others are participating in the multidisciplinary approach that I hinted to earlier to investigating infrastructure crimes.

Hon Chairperson, this model’s effectiveness in combating organised crime necessitates the empowerment of these departments to ensure enhanced performance.

In addition to the measures we have highlighted above, an integrated operational approach has also been established within organised crime investigations.

This approach to organised, is a model that targets organised crime syndicates in relation to theft and vandalism of critical infrastructure in all provinces.

Our Government has taken a tough stance on the pervasive problem of illegal water and power connection. We urge local government to take stricter measures against water, electricity theft and vandalism of infrastructure.

We will continue implementing all actions required to ensure the safety of our infrastructure for the benefit of the community because infrastructure is essential for building resilient, inclusive, and prosperous societies. Hon Chairperson, I thank you.

Mr M DANGOR: Hon Chairperson and hon Deputy President, the current reason of our courts in several cases that involve theft and vandalism of critical public infrastructure does not support the importance of ... [Inaudible.] ... these crimes as either sabotage or terrorism. In many instances the courts turn to treat these cases, serious cases of economic sabotage and terrorism on the basis of Criminal Procedure Act, thus defeating the importance of meeting harsher sentences.

Are there initial measures that the government responding to strengthen the current legislative framework to ensure harsher sentences in courts on all cases of vandalism and theft to critical public infrastructure that is linked to it?

And are there any plans to invest more on the use of technology such as drones’ monitored 24 hours on all strategic economic infrastructure of the country such as energy and water resources, national which involves bridges and ports?

Hon Deputy President you partially answered my question, but this is a matter of emphasis.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon Chairperson and hon Dangor, we will consider the issue you are raising about the classification of these crimes and the way you are suggesting. It is something that it will be looked into. However, let me just indicate that with respect to technology there is something that we have already discussed in one of our Cabinet meetings. We have already discussed that. It is already in motion. We would like to use technology to be able to assist the government in policing various areas where we want to protect our infrastructure. We are still looking at which once would be more appropriate. In some instances, we are considering using drones and to be able to monitor these areas because you know we have vast infrastructure in South Africa. So, warm bodies alone may not cope with all the areas. So, technology indeed will help us in monitoring because for us as government, it is important that we do not intervene after the fact. Monitoring and making sure that we are there is very critical to avoid vandalism before it even takes place. That is what we will be doing. With respect to classification, we will consider that.

All I can say is that government must be tough with this. Whether we classify it as part of terrorism or whatever we can look into that, but we cannot continue to not intervene in a tough way when this is happening. The destruction of our infrastructure will affect our economy in a way that will really put this country backwards in a bad way. So, we have to prioritise this and we need to act against these people who are destroying the infrastructure. Thank you very much, hon Chairperson.

Ms M DLAMINI: Hon Chairperson, illegal water and electricity connections and vandalism of infrastructure cause South African taxpayers millions of rand. Will the government wide response which the Deputy President refers to also include initiative to provide sufficient involvement in infrastructure which has been left neglected since the outgoing ruling party came into power and will the response bring the end to the privatisation of water services which has made the situation worse? Thank you.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon Chairperson and thank you very much hon member for your question. The issue of investment most definitely is something that we are doing because we do not just want to protect old infrastructure. We have to invest

more in the infrastructure. So, you are quite right, but you always take a swipe at me on the side which the ANC has neglected.

Your question was quite right until you added that part. It is not correct that the ANC neglected infrastructure. We inherited vast amounts of infrastructure that over in time some of them were to serve a minority of people in this country. We expanded them to reach to many of our people. So, it is a big task to do that.

When the ANC took over, this country, very few of our people had access to electricity, to water and all others. We had to expand these services. So there is nothing that we are neglecting, hon member. I agree with you. We are not neglecting, but we must invest. Thank you very much, hon Chairperson.

Mr N M HADEBE: Hon Chairperson and hon Deputy President, besides additional financial costs, Eskom incurs from repairing vandalised electrical infrastructure, those most affected in these acts are the South African citizens living in areas prone to the theft and vandalism of electrical infrastructure. Considering this: I would like to know

measures you have in place for residents of these communities and other stakeholders to work together with the SA Police, besides the already over reliance on neighbourhood watch groups to uncover the organised criminal syndicates behind these crimes? Thank you.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon Chairperson and hon Hadebe, some of the communities already, communities are working with law- enforcement agencies. We commend them and it is happening in a number of areas. We are encouraging it that that should be the norm where law-enforcement agencies are complemented by efforts of organised communities. For communities see these things happening where they live. However, sometimes they are not able to intervene if they are not supported by law- enforcement agencies. For we know that some of these people you know are criminals that are armed. They threaten communities. So, we need indeed to support these affected communities.

That is why the Minister of Finance was saying in discussion with Eskom that we will help Eskom in such a way that it can also assist residents who are burdened by serious debts to write off some of those debts, but ensure that they can

connect residents properly so that they are able to pay. We must ensure that infrastructure is not vandalised.

So we are definitely prepared as government to work with citizens in affected areas, even those who feel vulnerable they need to get visible government support. We will engage provincial governments and local governments to be able to do so, so that we can as well make sure that particularly in those outlying areas and those residents also must feel that they stay in a government that cares about them. Thank you, hon Chairperson.

Mr W A S AUCAMP: Hon Chairperson and hon Deputy President, cable and infrastructure theft are continuing unabated. This despite the burn on cable metal export. Yet the burn that the government instituted was supposed to bring an end to this. We are now more than a halfway into the initial six month period of this burn. Surely by now you knew the effects of this burn.

Hon Deputy President, can you provide feedback on the efficiency of this scrap metal burn to date. I am not asking you to explain why the burn was instituted and the reasons behind it. I would like to know exact figures on the efficiency of the burn. Thank you, hon Chairperson.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon Chairperson and hon member, indeed the burn was made to ensure that this does not continue unabated to the extent that there are weaknesses we are now looking and reviewing at where the gaps are. For it is important that we particularly, you know, ensure that there is not unabated theft of scrap metals and all these things taken across our borders. So, Cabinet is looking at that at the moment so we will review the efficiency and unfortunately I cannot tell you now, but the efficiency is 100% at the moment, but we will review it. For I think it is necessary and be able to see whether we need to strengthen those initiatives.

However we have to ensure that we put measures that will stop this. For when infrastructure is destroyed and people are taking these various parts they sell them. For them it is an economic activity and they benefit. So, as government we must ensure that we indeed we look at it and maybe we need more than just the burn and strengthen the gaps that are there so, we will do that. Thank you very much, hon Chairperson.

The CHAIRPERSON OF THE NCOP: Hon members, as the Deputy President takes his seat, we have now come to the end of questions to the Deputy President. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the hon Deputy President for availing himself to answer questions and express a similar appreciation

to the Premier of the North West, as well as the Speaker of the North West legislature, the MECs as well as all special and permanent delegates for availing themselves for this particular sitting of the NCOP. That hon members, concludes the business of the day. This House is now adjourned.

The Council rose at 15:53.