



**PARLIAMENT**  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND PROTOCOL DIVISION

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Report of the Meeting between the visiting delegation from the Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defense of the Parliament of Norway and the Members of the PC on International Relations and Cooperation and the PC on Defense and Military Veterans held on Tuesday, 20 February 2024, in Parliament.

## 1. Purpose of the Report

To report on the meeting between the visiting delegation from the Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence of the Parliament of Norway and the Members of PC on International Relations and Cooperation and the PC on Defence and Military Veterans held on Tuesday, 20 February 2024, in Parliament.

## 2. Background

The Norwegian Embassy in the RSA initiated the meeting.

## 3. Purpose of the meeting

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss among others, the matters of mutual interest on Foreign Affairs and Defence. Share views on recent developments in the world.

### **Members of the Portfolio Committee on International relations and**

**Cooperation in attendance:** Mr Supra Mahumapelo, MP and Mr Mmuntle – Co Chaired the meeting. Mr DL Moela, MP; Mr M Chetty, MP; Ms EL Powell, MP and Mr Montwedi, MP

**Members of the Portfolio Committee on Defence and Military Veterans in attendance:** Ms PA Phetlhe, MP; Mr SJF Marais, MP, Mr M Bond, MP and Mr W Faber, MP.

Ms N Sonjica – the Section Manager: Bilaterals and Multilaterals, IRPD; Ms L Mosala – the Content Advisor; Mr D Madlala – Researcher and Mr Z Cawe supported the meeting.

**Norwegian delegation:** Ms Ine Eriksen Søreide – Chairperson of the Committee and Leader of the delegation; HE Mr Gjermund Sæther – Norwegian Ambassador in the RSA; Mr Stian N. Christensen, MP; Ms Sondre Eriksen, MP; Karine Erikstein,, MP; Ms Åsmund Aukrust, MP; Mr Guri Melby, MP; Ms Hårek Elvenes, MP; Mr Bengt Fasteraune, MP; Ms Nils-Ole Foshaug, MP; Ms Sylvi Listhaug, MP; Ms Ingjerd Schie Schou, MP; Ms Ola Borten Moe, MP; Mr Christian Tybring-Gjedde, MP; Dag-Inge Ulstein, MP; Ms Agnes Nærland Viljugrein, MP; Sunniva Tofte (Committee Secretary)

#### **4. Meeting discussion**

In his opening remarks, the Chairperson of the PC on International Relations and Cooperation Mr Supra Mahumapelo, MP expressed words of welcome to the delegation and confidence on existing bilateral relations between the Norway and the RSA. He raised concerns regarding the ongoing conflicts in Sudan, Palestine and DRC and stressed the responsibility of the world to solve these conflicts.

In her response, the leader of the delegation Ms Ine Eriksen Søreide mentioned the purpose of their visit to the RSA. She stressed the impact of both countries on world politics and that both work side by side on many matters including striving to uphold world peace. Norway has been pushing for Africa to have a permanent seat in the United Nations Security Council. On conflicts around the world, Ms Ine Eriksen Søreide – the leader of the delegation started with the Israel – Palestine, the war in Gaza. She condemned the Hamas for its 7 October 2023 attack on civilians and emphasize the Israelis right to self-defence but cautioned that Israelis had to

respect the international law. On Russia – Ukraine war, she pointed out the shared values and importance of respecting sovereignty, territorial integrity and that what Russia is doing in Ukraine was unforgivable. She also touched on the situation in Sudan that has displaced almost 10 million people which needs the attention of the world.

On Norway membership of NATO, she pointed out that Norway was invaded by Germany during the WW2 hence they decided to join NATO forces because they realised that they can't stand alone and will continue with its NATO membership. She also reiterated Norway's view of Russia as a major threat in Europe as a result Norway was planning to increase its defence budget and its support to NATO.

In conclusion, Ms Ine Eriksen Søreide reiterated Norway's support of multilateral framework and humanitarian matters in places where there are conflicts and called for 2 State solution on Israel – Palestine conflict. She thanked the RSA for its unwavering support to the Palestinian cause. She extended informally an invitation to the two Committees to visit Norway at a mutually convenient date.

Ms Ine Eriksen Søreide and delegation raised questions, among others, RSA position on Russia – Ukraine war including the situation in the DRC, etc which members of the Portfolio Committee on IR and Cooperation and those from the Portfolio Committee on Defence and Military Veterans responded according to party political lines. In summary:

- Russia/Ukraine war: SA position is for dialogue.
- Israel/Palestine conflict: 2 state solution and support dialogue between the warring groups

## **5. General outcome of the meeting**

The meeting further deliberated and highlighted the following:

- 1) Intensification of trade and investments between the two countries.
- 2) Norway should indicate the trade barriers in order for the RSA to consider.
- 3) Both countries believe in dialogue in resolving conflicts situation.
- 4) The SA side thanked Norway for its support for Africa to be accorded a permanent seat in the United Nations Security Council and its humanitarian support or aid in areas of conflict like in Sudan / DRC and Gaza
- 5) An informal invitation was extended to both Committees to visit Norway at a mutually convenient date.
- 6) Ms Ine Eriksen Søreide – Chairperson of the Committee and Leader of the delegation signed the distinguished guest book.
- 7) The meeting was a success.

## **6. Recommendations and/or Action by Parliament**

None