**DEPUTY PRESIDENT: REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

Private Bag X 1000, Pretoria, 0001

# NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ORAL REPLIES THURSDAY, 20 AUGUST 2020

**(Submitted as written) DEPUTY PRESIDENT**

## 8. Mrs N W A Mazzone (DA) to ask the Deputy President:

With reference to the Moral Regeneration Movement’s fervent support for the Government’s Covid-19 pandemic lockdown (details furnished), what are the relevant details of its vision that (a) the nation’s moral fiber, which is an essential component of the social cohesion, needs to be authentically and wholesomely reconstructed and

1. the respect for the law in the Republic needs to be restored in a post-Covid-19 South Africa? **NO2221E**

## REPLY:

The Moral Regeneration Movement came into existence as a result of former President Nelson Mandela’s resolve, that while the new dispensation needed to meet tangible material needs of previously dehumanised black majority, it was also necessary that there be a commensurate programme that would focus on rekindling the very basic moral fibre of the South African society that had almost been destroyed by years of colonialism and apartheid oppression.

Colonialism, racialism and apartheid were at their very core immoral and extremely violent, and the negative impact they have made on communities is abysmal. Therefore, from the very beginning, it was envisaged that there would be a national programme on moral regeneration led by civil society and supported by government and other key sectors of society, including business and the religious fraternity.

In appreciating this historical context and the lived social reality of being an integral part of the continent, the moral regeneration vision draws sustenance from the African moral ethic of Ubuntu, which appeals to humanity’s interdependence and interconnectedness.

As this question relates to the statement issued by the Moral Regeneration Movement in April this year following the introduction of the Nationwide Lockdown, it is important to reiterate that the Moral Regeneration Movement is an independent civil society formation that takes its own position on a variety of issues, some of which we may agree with, while others we may not necessarily agree with.

It is to be noted that the very same statement makes reference to minimising corruption. Our position is contrary. As government of the African National Congress, we seek to eliminate corruption in all its forms and manifestations. That is why we have said on numerous occasions that where any acts of corruption are proven, we are determined to act without any fear or favour against those involved.

To this end, as Government, we have developed an overarching National Anti- Corruption Strategy which is aimed at:

* + Rejuvenating a national dialogue and direct energy towards practical mechanisms to reduce corruption and improve ethical practice across sectors and amongst citizens in South Africa.
  + Providing a robust conceptual framework and strategic pillars to guide anti- corruption approaches across relevant sectors in the country, and
  + Support coordination between government, business and civil society efforts to reduce corruption and improve accountability and ethical practice, while providing tools for monitoring progress towards a less corrupt society.

For us as a nation, in order to achieve these goals, we should all work together and appreciate that moral regeneration is a fundamental pillar of building a cohesive and caring society that is grounded on ethical values.

As a Patron of the Moral Regeneration Movement, we therefore support those programmes of the Moral Regeneration Movement that seek to build the nation and enhance social cohesion in line with the vision of a new society, as articulated in our National Development Plan – a society that is non-racial, non-sexist and democratic.

We wish to emphasise that the various programmes of the Moral Regeneration Movement must go deeper into interrogating the root causes of social ills that continue to plague our society. These programmes must also seek to address the deep inequalities that exist in our society. Such inequalities further manifest in acts of sexism, patriarchal tendencies and economic exclusion of women. Until these inequalities are addressed, we will not achieve our dream of a cohesive and united society.

The Moral Regeneration Movement seeks to address some of these challenges that are inherent to issues of inequality in our society. In its work and articulation of the vision for a better South Africa, the Moral Regeneration Movement advocates for the Charter of Positive Values as an expression and interpretation of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights from a perspective of ordinary people. This is the key tool it has adopted and advocates for, in order to rebuild South Africa’s moral fibre. At the heart of this programme are values of responsibility and accountability, honesty and integrity, equity and equality among others.

There have been some disturbing reports during the nationwide lockdown period that related to increased levels of gender based violence, human rights abuses, and the destruction of schools in certain areas. Government and many civil society formations strongly condemned these incidents which clearly sought to undermine the rule of law. Such incidents are manifestations of deep societal problems that need condemnation by all of us, and for stronger partnerships across society as a response as well as immediate action.

That is why the Movement is currently implementing an action plan that contains tangible strategic interventions in rekindling basic morality and ethics. It has for its part, continued sponsoring community dialogues on gender based violence and femicide as a way to engender positive behavioural change. These public engagements are currently being rolled out mainly through virtual platforms.

The Movement is also collaborating with the South African Local Government Association on the programme to promote ethical leadership. Through this initiative, Councillors are taken through orientation on the fundamentals of ethical leadership thus ensuring that we reduce the propensity or inclination for corrupt activities. This programme needs to be supported so that it reaches all other levels of leadership in society.

The violent service delivery protests and anarchy that we observe in some communities from time to time, and which undermine the rule of law, are in many instances as a result of lack of ethical leadership and corruption associated with service delivery.

Nation building is not an event, but a social engineering process that needs to fester across society over time. We are all called upon to act in ways that counter social attitudes and practices that are at odds with the society we seek to build, as envisioned in our Constitution.

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