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| MEMORANDUM FROM THE PARLIAMENTARY OFFICE |

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 115**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION OF INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 09/02/2023**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO 1 OF 2023**

**Mr S S Zondo (IFP) to ask the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation:**

Whether his department has continued efforts to promote the integration of languages other than English to be considered as viable for usage as alternative languages of academia in institutions of higher learning; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details?

**NW119E**

**REPLY:**

The Department’s language policy for higher education has over the years consistently promoted multilingualism at universities. This is applicable from the 2002 Language Policy for Higher Education and the revised Language Policy Framework for Public Higher Education Institutions published in 2020.

While these policies acknowledge the de facto dominance of English as the language of teaching and learning and research across universities and education, in general in South Africa, the policies require universities to adopt multilingual policies showing how official South African languages other than English are developed and promoted for wider usage within academia. The universities have language policies in place listing several indigenous languages they aim to develop for scholarship purposes. The selection of these languages is informed by their regional distribution – in other words, the prevalence of the language within a geographic area within which a university is operating. While government policies are clear on the imperative of multilingualism, the translation of these ideals into practice remains work in progress. The Department is working with the universities to see how best to speed up the scholarly development of indigenous languages to deliver the Constitutional mandate of ensuring parity of esteem between official South African languages.