**MINISTRY**

**INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND COOPERATION**

 **REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**A Question for a written Reply**

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**128. Mr D Bergman (DA) to ask the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation:**

How does the Government approach the Eswatini situation to determine who is the (i) aggressor and (ii) victim and (b) what assistance does the Government intend to offer to show solidarity with the victim? **NW133E**

**REPLY:**

The Republic of South Africa is working within the established protocols of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) to address stability and the political situation in Eswatini. The SADC is already engaged to support the Kingdom to resolve the challenges. This work is done within the overall objective of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Co-operation which is to promote peace and security in the Region as stipulated under article 2.2. of the Protocol on Politics, Defence and Security Co-operation.

President Ramaphosa, in his capacity as Chairperson of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Co-operation appointed Special Envoys to engage with His Majesty King Mswati III of the Kingdom of Eswatini on the escalating security and political developments in the Kingdom. This was a follow up to a SADC Organ Fact Finding Mission which visited Eswatini in July 2021.

Consultation with stakeholders, including with the King, the Government, civil society and diplomatic corps on the ground, highlighted the need for an inclusive national dialogue in an appropriate forum.

Following a meeting between President Ramaphosa and King Mswati III held on 2 November 2021, it was agreed that the SADC Troika would assist in the development of terms of reference for the national dialogue. The National Dialogue will work to facilitate a peaceful, orderly and inclusive national multi-stakeholder political engagement in order to identify and implement sustainable solutions to Eswatini’s political and security challenges. In this regard, a draft framework has been developed by the SADC Troika and will be presented to the Eswatini Government in due course.

South Africa is part of the SADC collective and cannot alone decide on who should be held responsible for the conflict. South Africa supports peaceful settlement of disputes through dialogue and does not impose its will on the territorial integrity of other countries.

In this regard, the SADC Troika is pursuing an inclusive process and therefore the proposed dialogue is not premised on who could be an aggressor and/or victim as it is the dialogue that will be undertaken by parties representing all sectors of society for their common good.