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**Memorandum from the Parliamentary Office**

**Minister**

**National Assembly question for written reply: Question 1362**

DDG: MR

**Date:**

**Recommended / Not Recommended**

**Acting Director General**

**Department of Mineral Resources**

………………/………………/2016

**NA QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NUMBER: 1362**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 13 May 2016**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NUMBER: 14**

**1362. Mr J L Mahlangu (ANC) to ask the Minister of Mineral Resources:**

(1) Whether he is aware (a) of the existence of a provincial heritage site, Canteen Kopje, in the Northern Cape, which is of archeological and heritage significance and is facing imminent destruction, (b) that research at the specified site began in the mid-20th century and has been on-going since 1997 (c) that various excavations in a number of locations at the site have revealed tools dating back 2,3 million years to the three phases of the Acheulean hand axe, Middle and Later Stone Age occupations, a Tswana/!Kora occupation relating closely to local communities and the remains of historic activities, (d) that a mining permit was issued in 2014 and the SA Heritage Resources Agency successfully acquired a Cease Works Order which was lifted in March 2016 after which work by a diamond mining company commenced on 16 March 2016, (e) that the current mining programme will, conservatively estimated, destroy up to 40% of the heritage site, (f) that the fenced-off area includes the excavation areas of the University of the Witwatersrand and of Toronto and the area developed for tourism, (g) that no heritage impact assessment or archaeological impact assessment was conducted and the mining company does not have a heritage permit, which is in contravention of the National Heritage Resources Act, Act 25 of 1999, (h) that there is a conservation management plan for the site and (i) that our country has a constitutional, legal and moral obligation and responsibility to preserve and protect the heritage resources and resources with archaeological significance; if so, what steps does he intend to take to ensure the protection and preservation of the specified heritage resources;

(2) whether he will make a statement on the matter? NW1370E

**REPLY**

1. The legality, lawfulness or otherwise of the activity in question is currently the subject of legal proceedings before the High Court.
2. The Department’s further conduct in this matter will be guided by the outcome of these legal proceedings.

Approved/not approved

**Mr MJ Zwane, MP**

**Minister of Mineral Resources**

**Date Submitted:-**………………/………………/2016