|  |
| --- |
| MEMORANDUM FROM THE PARLIAMENTARY OFFICE |

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 1475**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION OF INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 21/05/2021**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO 14 OF 2021**

**Ms N K Sharif (DA) to ask the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation:**

(1) Whether his department has concluded any work exchange and/or employment agreements with any entity of the Republic of Cuba from the 2010-11 financial year up to the 2020-21 financial year; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what (a) total number of Cuban nationals (i) have been employed in each of the specified financial years and/or (ii) are due to be employed in the 2021-23 Medium-Term Expenditure Framework period, (b) are the details of the work that each of the specified Cuban nationals was and/or will be employed to perform, (c) are the details of the specific skills sets that each of the specified Cuban nationals possessed and/or will possess that South African nationals did or will not possess and (d) are the details of the total cost of employing each of the specified Cuban nationals in each case;

(2) whether his department took any steps to ensure that the specific skills set of the specified Cuban nationals were and/or will not be available in the Republic amongst South African citizens; if not, in each case, why not; if so, what are the relevant details of the (a) steps taken and (b) outcomes of the steps taken in this regard? **NW1679E**

**REPLY:**

**HIGHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

The Department has not concluded any work exchange and/or employment agreements with any entity of the Republic of Cuba from the 2010/11 financial year up to the 2020/21 financial year.

**SCIENCE AND INNOVATION**

(1) (a) South Africa and the Republic of Cuba signed a science and technology agreement in 2001 to promote development cooperation in S&T by means of exchanging scientists, research workers, specialists and scholars and exchange of scientific and technological information. However, the department has not employed any Cuban nationals and it is not due to employ any in the 2021-23 Medium Term Expenditure Framework period.

(b) There are no Cuban nations to be employed in the department, therefore there are no details of work to be carried out.

(c) There are no details for specific skills sets possessed by Cuban nationals to be communicated as there are no Cuban nationals employed/to be employed in the department.

(d) Details of the costs of employing Cuban nationals are not available as there are no Cuban nationals employed in the department.

2 (a) Despite having a bilateral agreement with the Republic of Cuba, the department has had no plans to employ Cuban nationals, and as such has not taken any steps to ensure that any specific skill set was not available amongst South African citizens.

(b) As no Cubans with specific skills set were employed by the department, the department has not taken any steps to ensure the specific skills set of the Cuban nationals were available in the Republic amongst South African citizens.

**Some contextual issues**

Following South Africa’s democratic transition, South Africa and Cuba established formal diplomatic relations on 15 May 1994 and opened resident Embassies in Pretoria (1994) and Havana (1995), respectively. Cuba has since become an established strategic partner for South Africa in the Latin American region. This led to the signing of an agreement on Scientific and Technological cooperation between the countries in 2001.