**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**FRIDAY, 20 AUGUST 2021**

**DUE DATE: 3 SEPTEMBER 2021**

**1782. Mr B H Holomisa (UDM) to ask the President of the Republic:**

(1) Whether he was satisfied that when he instructed that a certain person (name and details furnished) should be placed under precautionary suspension, based on adverse findings of the Auditor-General of South Africa (AGSA) in an audit of the 2018-19 and 2019-20 financial years of the National Skills Fund that any other officials, including the specified person, as the Accounting Authority, had not been coerced, forced and/or given any political directives which led to the irregularities and/or qualified opinion(s); if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the relevant details;

(2) whether any other government (a) departments and (b) organisations such as the National Student Financial Aid Scheme, sector education and training authorities, and/or state-owned enterprises have received qualified audits from the AGSA in the past five financial years, where the Accounting Authority of any such department and/or organisation was placed under precautionary suspension by (i) him and/or (ii) a Minister; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, which government (aa) departments and/or (bb) organisations;

(3) whether any investigations were conducted into government (a) departments and/or (b) organisations that (i) he and/or (ii) any of his Ministers placed under precautionary suspension; if not, why not; if so, what were the broad outcomes of such investigations? NW1992E

**REPLY**

The President of the Republic of South Africa has in terms of section 42A(3) of the Public Service Act,1994 (Proclamation 103 of 1994) delegated powers to the Minister of Home Affairs to deal with the possible precautionary suspension of the Director-General of the Department of Higher Education and Training, Mr Qwebinkundla Qonde. This arises from adverse audit findings made by the Auditor-General of South Africa (AGSA) in an audit of the financial years 2018/19 and 2019/2020 of the National Skills Fund, where the DG is an Accounting Authority.

The DG, as required by the law, was afforded an opportunity to make representations before the decision could be taken on the matter. After considering the entire case, he was put on precautionary suspension to pave the way for the forensic investigations to be conducted without any form of disturbance or interference. It is important to note that each case needs to be considered on its own facts.

In terms of the Public Service Act and the PFMA the relevant and responsible Ministers are in a position to respond to the Ministry-specific questions. Furthermore, questions related to the Auditor-General can be posed directly to the Auditor-General as the Auditor-General is accountable to Parliament.