**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION NO. 1798-2020**

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO 29 -2020: Date of publication – 31 July 2020**

**“Mrs V van Dyk (DA): TO ASK THE MINISTER OF SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE”**

(1)    How has he found will the decision to sanitise colonial history by the National Museum in Bloemfontein impact on future research projects in this field;

(2) whether students undertaking research projects in Colonial and Apartheid history will be equally supported by the museum in their academic endeavours; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details;

(3) what (a) are the names of the scientists who will sit on the panel for vetting the history at the museum, (b) process was followed to appoint them and (c) qualifications do they have;

(4) whether any of the scientists in the museum serve on the panel; if not, why are they excluded;

(5) what is his department’s position on the statement of the chief executive officer that colonial history is a false reflection that should be sanitised and censored and/or vetted? NW2189E

**REPLY:**

1. The Museum is in the process of formalising an Ethical research policy which is a target in the organisation’s Annual Performance Plan for 20/21. It has been an area of concern that the current historical record of South Africa was to a large extent sanitised by colonial and apartheid historians as detailed by the CEO, who has called on the historians of the Museum not to perpetuate this sanitisation of our history but to be proactive and conduct their research in an ethical manner.

The History Department of the Museum has a number of sterling research projects in place and are producing excellent research which is contributing to the decolonisation of South Africa’s history. It is believed that this process of decolonisation will have a positive impact on future research projects undertaken by the History Department of the National Museum.

2. The Museum does not fund students undertaking research projects. We do however, have partnerships with the universities, National Research Foundation (NRF) and other funders and our scientists, and oversee students conducting post graduate research.

3. (a) No panel has been selected as yet.

(b) The panel is the brain child of the CEO and she envisages it being an *ad hoc* one to be constituted by the CEO when she needs assistance on ethical approaches.

(c) No panel has been selected. However the Museum is well resourced with experts with doctorates in the fields of History, Archaeology and other scientific fields.

4. This *ad hoc* panel to assist the CEO has not yet been selected.

5. The department assumes that the words above are Honourable Van Dyk’s summary as we have not seen these word appear in that sequence anywhere. If this word sequence exist, I would appreciate receiving a copy thereof.

The Department has been advised by the Museum that they will not participate in any sanitising of history as had been done in our recent past during colonial and apartheid times. Further the research produced by the Museum is done in an ethical manner. Ethical research requires that researchers be aware of these imperatives.