**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION NO.1800 - 2023**

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NUMBER 18 OF 2023 DATED 19 MAY 2023**

Ms. NN Chirwa (EFF) to ask the Minister of Sport, Arts and Culture

What (a) steps has he taken to ensure that equal pay becomes a reality for men and women national teams as women’s compensation in the sports industry continues to be one that undermines the tenets of our constitutional democracy and (b) measures has his department taken to actively build support and offer resources to build and accommodate women in the various sports codes? **NW2006E**

**REPLY**

(a). The pay gap between male and female professional athletes is a challenge that requires all role players within the Sport and Recreation fraternity to actively address. The Department is leading discussions in this critical space through the development of the Women in Sport Policy. This policy is designed to ensure equality within the Sport and Recreation sector across the various spheres of the industry, e.g., administration, coaching, salaries of professional athletes, etc. The South African Cabinet has approved that the above-mentioned policy be gazetted for public comments.

(b). It must however be noted that professionalization of Women’s Sport is key in addressing pay parity between females and males. To this end the Department with limited financial resources has been primarily providing support to Cricket SA, South African Football Association, Netball SA, and South African Rugby for the implementation of Women’s programmes with the aim of establishing professional leagues.

The success of these kind of initiatives is dependent on the corporate investment in Women Sport. The Private Sector (Corporate) is mainly driven by commercial interest hence it is imperative that commercially attractive and bankable products are developed. The best cases in point are that Women’s National Teams players and technical personnel in Cricket, Rugby and Netball are now contracted on a full-time basis and paid salaries. This is the first step towards the professionalization of Women’s Sport which lays a foundation for the realization of pay parity in our sport.