**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

# QUESTION NO: 1801

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## INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 29 OF 2020

**Ms N V Mente (EFF) to ask the Minister in The Presidency for Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities:**

Following the release of the report by the Commission of Gender Equity with regard to the treacherous and inhumane sterilisation of HIV-positive women, some dating back to 1997, what steps has she taken to ensure that (a) no woman is ever forced to undergo this dehumanising practice and (b) those responsible for this are made to account?  NW2192E

**REPLY**

The report by the Commission on Gender Equality (CGE) was released in February 2020 and I immediately responded with a media statement. I expressed my deep concern at these human rights violations and reproductive injustices committed against women living with HIV through these acts of forced sterilisation. The South African Constitution guarantees the rights of all women the right to dignity, life and bodily integrity. The Sterilisations Act of 1998 provides for the protection of rights of women to make informed choices about sterilisation and the responsibility of health professionals in this regard. Therefore, I called for urgent redress to be afforded to these women whose rights were violated.

At the same time, I also applauded the recommendations of the CGE report that the National Department of Health must facilitate dialogue between themselves and the complainants in order to for them to find ways of providing redress to the complainants.

The Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities calls upon medical professionals to work with the Department to protect and uphold the rights of all women including women living with HIV in South Africa.