**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**FRIDAY, 19 MAY 2023**

**DUE DATE: 2 JUNE 2023**

**1864. The Leader of the Opposition (DA) to ask the President of the Republic:**

With reference to his statement released on 11 May 2023 in response to the allegations by the United States that the Republic has provided materials of war to the Russian Federation, stating that he has appointed an independent investigation into the matter that will be led by a retired judge, (a) on what date did he institute the investigation, (b) what is the name of the retired judge he has appointed and (c) what are the terms of reference of the investigation?

NW2115E

**REPLY**

A three-member independent panel was appointed on 25 May 2023 to enquire into the circumstances of the docking of the Russian vessel known as Lady R in Simonstown, Western Cape, in December 2022.

The panel consists of Judge PMD Mojapelo as Chairperson, Adv Leah Gcabashe SC and Mr Enver Surty.

The panel has been tasked to:

* establish the circumstances that led to the docking of the ship and the alleged loading of cargo, and the departure of the Lady R cargo ship from Simonstown, during the period from 6 to 9 December 2022;
* establish persons who were aware of the cargo ship’s arrival, and, if any, the contents to be off-loaded or loaded, the departure and destination of the cargo;
* evaluate whether constitutional, legal or other obligations were complied with in relation to the cargo ship’s arrival, its stay, the loading or off-loading of its contents, and its departure.

The panel’s report will include recommendations on any steps that may need to be taken in light of their findings or as a result of any breaches that may have occurred.