**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO: 1875**

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**QUESTION PAPER NO: 18**

**1875 Ms M D Hlengwa (IFP) to ask the Minister of Communications and Digital Technologies:**

Whether illegal acts, which compromise state security and the relations of the Republic with other states are executed without the knowledge of the Government as upon his ascension as Chairperson of the National Conventional Arms Control Committee that no arms to Russia were approved by the Republic and that, if any weapons were loaded onto a vessel to Russia, it was done so illegally; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the relevant details? NW2126E

**RESPONSE BY THE MINISTER M. GUNGUBELE, MP. CHAIRPERSON OF THE NATIONAL CONVENTIONAL ARMS CONTROL COMMITTEE (NCACC).**

**PQ1875 (NW2126E)**

The above question relates to claims that were made by the US Ambassador R. Brigety on the 10th May 2023 that a Russian Vessel Lady R which had come to offload equipment for the South Africa National Defence Force (SANDF) at Simonstown Navy Dockyard, had loaded Arms from South Africa and that these were destined for Russia.

The South African Government responded that this was not the case, it emphasised that no arms to the knowledge of the Control Authority of South Africa was authorised for such a transaction/transfers.

The NCACC which is the Controlling Authority for Conventional Arms Control in South Africa has not authorised any transfers to Russia since 2020 and this would rule out such transfers being authorized

Further, the Presidency issued a statement in this regard, stating that given the seriousness of such claims and the negative implications for South Africa’s International standing the President will appoint a Judge (retired) to investigate this matter. This is where we find ourselves regarding whatever claim has been made about the alleged transfers of arms to Russia.

On the 29 May 2023, a 3 Person Panel was been appointed by the President Ramaphosa, headed by Judge Phineas Mojapelo (retired). The panel is currently hard at work in order to bring this matter to its ultimate conclusion within its mandate. The Panel has been granted a six (6) week period to conclude its investigation.

It is perhaps prudent that the investigation headed by the Judge be granted to run its course in order pronounce a competent outcome, that would settle the matter with an informed ruling.

**Thank You.**