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**MINISTRY OF TOURISM**

**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY:**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY:**

**Question Number: 1895**

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**Date of reply:**

**Mr H S Gumbi (DA) to ask the Minister of Tourism:**

(1) Whether, noting the toxic chemical spill into the sea and air in the uMhlanga area in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal, an anchor tourism area for Durban, she has been informed of the current closure of beaches in the uMhlanga area; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, how has she found will the current beach closure and chemical spill affect the local hospitality industry in uMhlanga;

(2) whether she and/or her department has taken steps to find out when the beaches will be reopened; if not, why not; if so, on what date will the beaches be reopened;

(3) whether she has found out that the beaches will be reopened on the specified date; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the relevant details;

(4) whether she met with the local community tourism authority since the closure of beaches; if not, why not; if so, on what date did the meeting take place;

(5) what subsequent measures has she and/or her department taken to reinforce Durban and the whole of KwaZulu-Natal as attractive tourism destinations following the spill, the looting and vandalism that took place in KwaZulu-Natal in July 2021?

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**REPLY:**

(1)-(3) As was widely publicised in the media, the relevant authorities responsible for chemical waste management paid due attention to the matter of the chemical spillage in the interest of both human health and environmental safety.

(4) Ministerial engagements with local tourism communities are mainly conducted through or in collaboration with provincial and local government. However, virtual engagements were held with business affected by the riots.

 (5) In response to the protest and looting that swept across parts of South Africa in July, SA Tourism released a TV advertisement which called for nation building and unity amid the unrest. The advert was aired on SABC, ENCA, and ETV channels. The footage was further shared on social media platforms.

In reigniting the domestic tourism and stimulating demand, Travel Week Trade campaign was launched. The campaign is aimed at driving the trade to load their discounted deals on the Sho’t Left platform ([www.shotleft.co.za](http://www.shotleft.co.za)). This was followed by the launch of a consumer campaign. In the main, the focus of the department is to implement the Tourism Sector Recovery Plan to ensure sustainable recovery of the sector.