

**MINISTRY**

**INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND COOPERATION**

REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY

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**1903. Mr S Tambo (EFF) to ask the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation:**

Considering the recent infringement by the United States (US) Ambassador who in essence accused the Republic of supplying arms in the war between Russia and Ukraine, what measures has her department taken beyond alleged apologies to ensure his immediate removal as the US ambassador to the Republic? **NW2157E**

**REPLY:**

On 12 May 2023, the Department dèmarched US Ambassador Reuben E. Brigety for a meeting with Minister Naledi Pandor, where the Minister expressed South Africa’s deep disappointment and outrage about the manner in which Ambassador Brigety had convened a press conference on 11 May 2023, and levelled allegations regarding the sale of ammunition by South Africa to Russia, via the US sanctioned Russian naval vessel, Lady R. The Minister strongly condemned the actions of the Ambassador, which were particularly distasteful, especially so soon after the visit to Washington by the Special Envoys appointed by President Ramaphosa. The envoys were well received by all US interlocutors and discussions were productive.

In this context, the press conference held by the US Ambassador was counter to the spirit of the engagement with senior officials and politicians in Washington DC.The Minister informed the US Ambassador that South Africa respects all conventions on arms sales through the provisions outlined in the National Conventional Arms Control Convention (NCACC), and if there was any violation of our laws, criminal charges would be laid if evidence is provided. Following the Minister’s address to Ambassador Brigety, he informed the senior officials that he would issue an unreserved public apology.

The President’s office reiterated that no concrete evidence has been provided to support the claims made by Ambassador Brigety, and that the investigation had been initiated before the Ambassador publicly announced his accusation. It was further indicated that the retired judge appointed to head the investigation, would use any evidence US intelligence officials could provide over the alleged sale of ammunition.

Following the meeting between Minister Pandor and US Ambassador Brigety and the telecon with Secretary of State Blinken, as well as the subsequent meeting between the ANC and Ambassador Brigety, wherein the latter reiterated his apology, it is not contemplated that any further steps will be taken with regard to his removal.