**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**FRIDAY, 20 AUGUST 2021**

DUE DATE: 3 SEPTEMBER 2021

1914. **The Leader of the Opposition (DA) to ask the President of the Republic**

With reference to his address to the nation on 16 July 2021, wherein he characterised the unrest in KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng from 9 to 18 July as a popular insurrection, (a) on what ground(s) did he rely to classify the unrest as a popular insurrection and (b)(i) what are the details of the evidence that informed his decision to classify the unrest as a popular insurrection and (ii) which persons and/or entities supplied the specified evidence?

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**REPLY**

In my address to the nation on 16 July 2021, I described the violence and destruction of the preceding days as an attempted insurrection that failed to gain popular support.

In that address I outlined some of the key features of this attempted insurrection, including:

* deliberate, coordinated and well-planned actions intended to cripple the economy, cause social instability and severely weaken – or even dislodge – the democratic state;
* the exploitation of the social and economic conditions under which many South Africans live to provoke ordinary citizens and criminal networks to engage in opportunistic acts of looting;
* economic sabotage through targeted attacks on trucks, factories, warehouses and other infrastructure necessary for the functioning of our economy and the provision of services to our people;
* attempts to inflame racial tensions and violence through social media, fake news and misinformation.

The characterisation of the unrest in these terms was based on reports and analysis received by the National Security Council, meetings with stakeholders, site visits to areas in KwaZulu-Natal affected by the violence and media reports of the events.