**MINISTRY**

**INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND COOPERATION**

 **REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY: NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (NA)**

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**1954. Ms T P Msane (EFF) to ask the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation**:

1. What steps has the Government taken in attempts to reverse the observer status granted to Israel by the Chairperson of the African Union Commission;
2. Whether the Government intends to permanently close down the Embassy of Israel in the Republic; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the relevant details? **NW 2186E**

**REPLY:**

1. The Government of the Republic of South Africa has formally, lodged an objection to the unilateral decision by the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC) to grant the State of Israel observer status to the African Union (AU).
	1. Consequently, the matter has been placed on the agenda of the AU Executive Council that will convene on 13 and 14 October 2021.
	2. South Africa and other like-minded countries that have lodged objections will, at the Executive Council meeting, vigorously pursue the conviction that the AU must, as a matter of urgency, rescind the decision on Israel's observer status unless and until it complies with all United Nations (UN) resolutions concerning its withdrawal from all occupied territories and give effect to the self-determination of the Palestinian People.

(2) South Africa maintains diplomatic relations with Israel and as per the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, Israel has an Embassy in South Africa and South Africa maintains  an Embassy in Israel. There are no plans to request the closure of the Israeli Embassy in South Africa.