**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO. 208**

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**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER 1 – 2022**

**208. Ms L L van Der Merwe (IFP) to ask the Minister of Home Affairs:**

1) In light of the recent media reports that his department has cancelled a waiver programme that allowed foreign national graduates who studied in South Africa to stay in the Republic without first securing a permanent job position and/or providing any evidence of work experience, what are the (a) reasons that he was not aware of the waiver programme and (b) specific details of the programme;

(2) whether the waiver programme has been cancelled, as reported in the media; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, from what date will the cancellation be effective;

(3) whether there has been any investigation conducted by his office into the total number of foreign graduates who are still in the Republic despite not having secured any permanent employment yet; if not, why not; if so, what are the further relevant details? NW212E

**REPLY:**

(1)(a) The waiver was issued in 2016 long before I came to the Department and was never mentioned in any report. I was alerted to this waiver by the Director-General who himself was alerted by a phone interview on Thobela FM an SABC radio station, where a Zimbabwean citizen mentioned it.

(1)(b) In 2016 the Department only issued a waiver that allowed students who are studying towards a critical skill in terms of the old critical skills list of 2014, to be able to apply directly for permanent residence if they so opted. I am advised that this waiver was not in terms of the immigration laws and hence unlawful more so, it said the waiver is indefinite.

(2) Yes, the waiver has been withdrawn because we can’t perpetuate an illegality.

(3) No investigation has been conducted as graduates must ensure that they have the necessary valid visa if they stay in the RSA thereafter.

**END**

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