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**Memorandum from the Parliamentary Office**

**Minister**

**National Assembly question for written reply: Question 2301**

DDG: MR

**Date:**

**Recommended / Not Recommended**

**Adv. T. Mokoena**

**Director General: Department of Mineral Resources**

………………/………………/2017

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NUMBER: 2301 ADVANCE NOTICE NO: NW2540E**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 11 August 2017**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NUMBER: 26**

**2301. Mr P G Moteka (EFF) to ask the Minister of Mineral Resources:**

(1) Why has he not finally declared a restriction or prohibition on the granting of any rights or permits in terms of section 49(1) of the Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act (MPRDA), Act 28 of 2002, in relation to the (a) the buffer zone around the Mapungubwe National Park, which was initiated by the former Minister of Mineral Resources, Advocate Ngoako Ramatlhodi, by the publication of his intention to declare a restriction and prohibition in the *Government Gazette* 38004 of 12 September 2014 and (b) the Chrissiesmeer Biodiversity Site, which was initiated by the former Minister of Mineral Resources, Ms S Shabangu, by the publication of her intention to declare a restriction and prohibition in *Government Gazette* 34051 of 11 March 2011;

(2) given the environmental significance of the wetlands and grasslands in the Wakkerstroom area and the extreme sensitivity of those wetlands and grasslands to prospecting and mining, why has he not exercised his discretion in terms of section 49(1) of the MPRDA to declare a restriction or prohibition against the granting of new prospecting and mining rights in that area? NW2540E

**Reply**

1. The Minister will exercise his discretion in terms of Section 49 (1) of the MPRDA for mining in the area subsequent to the submission of a technical report currently been compiled by the Joint Planning Task Team comprising officials from the Department of Mineral Resources, Department of Environmental Affairs and Department of Water and Sanitation.
2. On the strength of the information received, the Minister is considering to restrict the granting of any right over the properties within a buffer zone of the Mapungubwe work Heritage site. The environmental sensitivity of the wetlands and grasslands as well as the overall occurrence of certain species were duly considered when the area was declared to be a buffer zone. If the area falls outside the buffer zone as declared, the necessary studies shall be conducted and the result thereof shall be presented for further consideration by the Minister. The restriction would not constitute prohibition and each case will be considered on its merits.

Approved/Not Approved

**Mr MJ Zwane, MP**

**Minister of Mineral Resources**

**Date Submitted:-**……………/………………/2017