**MINISTRY**

**INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND COOPERATION**

 REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**2486. Mrs T P Msane (EFF) to ask the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation:**

What innovations has the African Union Research Unit established to have more reliable and effective early warning systems in place when it comes to climate change as it displaced and affected a lot of Africans in the recent years? NW2827E

**REPLY:**

The 4th Ordinary Session of the African Union Specialised Technical Committee (STC) on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment (ARDWE), held virtually from 13-17 in December 2021, inaugurated the Africa Multi-Hazard Early Warning System and Early Action Situation Room for Disaster Risk Reduction. It was recognised that the establishment of the Situation Room could play a key role in contributing towards reducing disaster mortalities and economic losses at micro level and improved disaster risk management at macro level through improved availability and access to early warning information, as well as harmonised early warning systems, which would include weather-related disasters exacerbated by Climate Change. It was further recognised that the operationalisation of the Situation Room and the Multi-Hazard Early Warning Programme and its sustainability is dependent on the inputs from the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and Member States that directly interface with the hazards, as well as continued financial and technical support from the cooperating partners.

Furthermore, this STC adopted the Revised 2021-2030 Integrated African Strategy on Meteorology (Weather and Climate Services) which aims to provide strategic direction on the development and application of meteorology (weather and climate services) to support Africa’s social and economic development including in sectors such as agriculture and food security, health, water management, aviation, infrastructure, marine and blue economy, disaster risk reduction, energy, *inter alia*. The 2021-2030 Integrated African Strategy on Meteorology (Weather and Climate Services) comprises five key pillars, namely:

* Increasing political support and recognition of national meteorological services (NHMs) and Regional Climate Centres (RCCs)
* Improved observation networks, data access and processing
* Improved weather, water, climate and climate change services
* Research and Innovation, development and training
* Strengthened partnerships with relevant institutions, the private sector and civil society.

In addition, this STC meeting adopted a report on the creation of African disaster operations capacity and capability and endorsed the creation of a continental civilian capacity for disaster preparedness and response, which will draw from individual African Member States’ capacities to provide timely assistance to disaster-stricken countries. This STC meeting also adopted the Disaster Recovery Framework (DRF) and indicated that the main objective of the framework is to guide resilient socio-economic recovery efforts of the continental, regional and national levels. This included a contextual analysis of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on various sectors. The framework proposes transformational policy and programmatic actions that would be undertaken in a short, medium and long term to respond to the pandemic and other disasters within the COVID-19 contexts; recover from the pandemic and the other disasters and build back better from future crises and disasters.