QUOTE

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO: 2502(NW2892E)**

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**MRS C DUDLEY (ACDP) TO ASK THE MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND COOPERATION:**

1. Why did the representative of South Africa to the United Nations vote in favour of the resolution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation on 12 October 2016;
2. What informed the Government’s decision to vote in favour of the resolution, considering the implications regarding other religious connections to Jerusalem as a holy site? NW2892E

**REPLY:**

1. South Africa voted in favour of the resolution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation on Occupied Palestine on 13 October 2016, in view of South Africa’s support for the longstanding right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and the achievement of their legitimate national aspirations that include freedom, independence, justice, peace and dignity in an independent Palestinian State. South Africa is also committed to the two State solution that is an essential part of achieving peace in the entire Middle East through the establishment of a free and sovereign Palestinian State co-existing side-by-side in peace and security with the State of Israel, based on the 4 June 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital.
2. This resolution has no implications regarding other religious connections to Jerusalem as a holy site in that it affirms the importance of the old city of Jerusalem and its Walls for the three monotheistic religions. It seeks to safeguard the cultural heritage of Palestine and the distinctive character of East Jerusalem, in view of the persistent, systematic destruction of this heritage through numerous activities. It calls for an immediate end to these activities and for Israel to honour its obligations under UNESCO conventions, resolutions and decisions.

 UNQUOTE