**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 2513**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER [No 27 - 2022 SIXTH PARLIAMENT]  
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**2513. Mr M G E Hendricks (Al Jamah-Ah) to ask the Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development:**

1. Whether Botswana and Namibia have closed their borders to imports of certain fruits from the Republic; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so,
2. whether the action by the two countries is a unilateral act against the trade agreement with the Republic; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the relevant details;
3. whether she will intervene on the matter; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the details of the steps she intends to take in this regard?

**NW3011E**

**THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, LAND REFORM AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT:**

1. Yes, the Department received reports from the industry and official media releases that Botswana and Namibia are imposing import restrictions (border closures) as an instrument to protect domestic producers from import competition. These border closures impact largely on the vegetable products exported by South Africa to these countries. The Department is working with the industry and the Departments of Trade, Industry and Competition (DTIC) (lead department) and International Relations & Cooperation to address this challenge.

(2) Yes, border closures are being imposed as a unilateral act. Botswana and Namibia claim the measure is provided for in the South African Cultural Union (SACU) Agreement.

(3) Yes, The Minister received a submission from the industry regarding the challenges of persistent border closures in Botswana and Namibia. She will be engaging with the industry on the matter before addressing it with her counterparts in the two countries. Furthermore, the Department is working with the DTIC, National Treasury, South African Revenue Service (SARS) and International Administration Commission (ITAC) to investigate a permanent long-term solution to all trade challenges in the SACU. The Agricultural Trade Industry is regularly consulted and engaged through the Agricultural Trade Forum (ATF).