

**2655. Mr S Mokgalapa (DA) to ask the President of the Republic:**

Whether, with reference to his visit to the Democratic Republic of the Congo in August 2018, he discussed with President Joseph Kabila the (a) alleged maltreatment of Mr Moise Katumbi, (b) deployment of the armed forces to Kasumbalesa and Kinshasa, where violence was used to oppress peaceful supporters of the specified person, (c) use of controversial electronic voting machines despite domestic and international opposition, (d) credibility of voters’ rolls with particular reference to allegations of significant numbers of duplicates and (e) continued detention of political prisoners; if not, in each case, why not; if so, what are the relevant details of the discussions in each case? NW2944E

**REPLY:**

1. During the discussions, I was briefed by my host about the matter of Mr Katumbi during which the government of the DRC explained their national legal requirements that prevented Mr Katumbi from registering in the national elections.

1. No. The deployment of the army or troops in any country is the sovereign right of the government of the day.

1. - (d) During the discussions, I was briefed about the DRC’s preparedness to hold the upcoming elections.

I wish to refer the Honourable Member to the attached Joint Statement that was issued by the Presidency on 10 August 2018 on my Working Visit to the DRC. As part of statement, it was stated that:

*“The two Heads of State noted that the political and security situation is calm throughout the national territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and took note of the significant progress made in the ongoing electoral process in the country, with regard to the commitments made in accordance with the electoral calendar published on 5 November 2017 by the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI) and providing for the organization of presidential, legislative and provincial elections at the end this year.*

*“The two Heads of State noted, among other things, the continued financing of the electoral process by the Congolese Government, which has just completed the stage of submitting candidatures for the presidential, legislative and provincial elections, in compliance with the constitutional rules and national laws of the Democratic Republic of Congo”.*

(e) The matter of the detention of any individual was not discussed during the meeting.