

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

# QUESTION NO. 2681

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## INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER 26 OF 2015

**2681. Mr A M Figlan (DA) to ask the Minister of Home Affairs:**

1. In light of the Western Cape High Court ruling against his department which set aside the closure of the Cape Town Refugee Reception Office on 19 March 2013, what interim measures are in place to address the high number for asylum-seeker applications while the Lebombo Refugee Centre is currently being built;

(2) what is the current progress with the construction of the Lebombo Refugee Centre?

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**REPLY:**

1. The Court set aside the decision as indicated above and instructed the department to take a fresh decision, which was taken in November 2013. The department is not aware of a high number of new asylum seekers. According to the annual statistics shared with the public, the number of newcomers continues to decrease from approximately 233 300 in 2009 to 72 000 new applications in 2014. Departmental officials are coping with these numbers. The only bottlenecks remain with the appeal and review cases dealt with by the Refugee Appeal Board and Standing Committee on Refugee Affairs.
2. The construction of the centre has not yet commenced. The Department of Public Works (DPW) has identified a suitable site in Komatipoort. The site is however zoned for agricultural use. An application was then made by DPW to rezone and subdivide the site. The application was heard by the Tribunal on 31 March 2015. Approval was granted by the Tribunal for the rezoning and subdivision of the site subject to South African National Roads Agency (SANRAL) commenting on the access route to the site. SANRAL comments are awaited.