**MINISTRY**

**INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND COOPERATION**

 REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY

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**2921. Mr M Hlengwa (IFP) to ask the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation:**

Whether, in light of the unrelenting invasion of Ukraine by Russia, she has found that the continuation of the cooperation and working relations with Russia are a transgression and/ or are contrary to the guiding principles of human rights in the foreign policy of the Republic; if not, why not; if so, how does her department intend to redress this? **NW3547E**

**REPLY:**

South Africa is not indifferent to what is going on in Ukraine. We are deeply concerned about the continuing conflict, the loss of lives and the deteriorating humanitarian situation. As a matter of urgency, there must be a cessation of hostilities, which would be the first step in a comprehensive response to the humanitarian crisis. We continue to stress that dialogue, mediation, and diplomacy are the only means to end the current conflict. As South Africa stated in the General Assembly, wars end when dialogue begins, and wars endure when there is no dialogue.

 The international community must focus on finding a sustainable solution. It will not be found in isolating one party or bringing it to its knees. We do not want to go down the route following the Treaty of Versailles.

Constructive solutions focussed on addressing the humanitarian situation and promoting peaceful dialogue remains imperative. President Cyril Ramaphosa conveyed to all key stakeholders that South Africa stood ready to support the peaceful resolution of the conflict in Ukraine, with a view to bringing the violence to an end as speedily as possible. We are fully cognisant of the deliberate opposition to our call for peace and negotiations and continue to hold the view that in the end, negotiations will end the conflict.

South Africa encourages all parties to return to the negotiating table and to approach dialogue with the spirit of compromise in order to move the process forward without accusing any party, something that will not be helpful in the efforts to resolve the conflict. South Africa would like to see intensified efforts at increased diplomacy utilising the United Nations, particularly the Secretary-General and other leaders who may be of weight in terms of persuading the interlocutors to negotiate a settlement to the conflict between Russia and Ukraine.