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**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NUMBER: 2977**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 04 DECEMBER 2020**

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**2977. Mr M G E Hendricks (Al Jamah-ah) to ask the Minister of Social Development:**

Whether she can provide reasons as to why the SA Social Security Agency is reducing the food parcelsduring the COVID-19 pandemic, taking into consideration the high unemployment rate and the looming holiday hunger with the upcoming festive season; if not, why not; if so, what are the reasons? NW3805E

**REPLY:**

SASSA provided food parcels during the initial hard lockdown implemented as a measure to limit the spread of the virus. In excess of 147 000 food parcels were distributed by SASSA during this period.

The decision taken during the period when food parcels were provided to reduce the size of the food parcel was taken to try and standardise the support provided within the Social Development sector, and to provide support to more people.

With the introduction of the R350 relief grant, SASSA stopped the distribution of food parcels, as the qualifying citizens were effectively being supported by the special relief grant and could not benefit from both forms of relief.

SASSA is no longer distributing food parcels but is continuing to provide support in terms of the social relief of distress programme through vouchers and direct humanitarian support to citizens affected by disasters other than the pandemic, in accordance with the provisions of the Social Assistance Act.