**MINISTRY**

**INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND COOPERATION**

 **REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO.: 3024**

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**Ms J Steenkamp (DA) to ask the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation:**

(1) Which (a) embassies and (b) high commissions are (i) currently allowing and (ii) not allowing South Africans living abroad to register to vote;

(2) when will she issue a directive to all (a) embassies and (b) high commissions making them aware that South Africans living abroad can register to vote at any time according to the amendment to the Electoral Act, Act 73 of 1998;

(3) whether she will ensure that South Africans living abroad who apply or collect documentation at (a) embassies and (b) high commissions are made aware and encouraged to register while they are at the specified places; if not, why not; if so, when will this be done and (b) how will it be advertised?  **NW3338E**

**REPLY:**

(1) Honourable Member, none of our Missions abroad are not allowing South Africans to register to vote. This could never be because it would be unlawful to do so. Arrangements are being made to facilitate the registration process. In this regard, an agreement is being concluded with the IEC which would outline how my Department and the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) will cooperate with each other to facilitate the registration and voting process for South Africans abroad.

(2) The IEC and my Department issued a communique on 7th December 2018 indicating that Voter registration for South African citizens living abroad will take place at all South African foreign missions from 1 to 4 February 2019.

(3) The IEC is the appointed institution to administer and oversee the 2019 General Elections, both in South Africa and abroad, and as such, is the responsible institution to encourage South Africans to register and vote, both in South Africa and abroad. The Missions and Embassies will be available to assist to the extent required by the IEC.

 Every party registered for the election has its own vested interest to encourage South Africans living abroad to exercise their right and vote. I hope your party is also playing its part in rallying South Africans to register and vote.