QUOTE

### NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

# QUESTION NO: 3206(NW3806E)

**PUBLISHED IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO: 34-2015 OF 28AUGUST 2015**

**MS SV KALYAN (DA) TO ASK THE MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND COOPERATION:**

**Ms S V Kalyan (DA) to ask the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation:**

(1)        (a) Who are the members of the Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) on BRICS and (b) what is their mandate;

(2)        (a) how many times has the IMC met since its establishment and (b) what were the relevant details of the issues discussed at the specified meetings?      NW3806E

**REPLY:**

1(a) The Minister of International Relations and Cooperation tabled Cabinet Memorandum No 14 of 2012 to Cabinet to submit proposals for the Implementation Plan to prepare for the Fifth BRICS Summit, which South Africa would host on 27 March 2014. Cabinet approved this Implementation Plan that included the establishment of i) a BRICS Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) to provide strategic direction to the preparations for the hosting of the Fifth BRICS Summit ii) an Inter-departmental Technical Senior Officials’ Team (IDTSOT) to spearhead preparations for hosting the Fifth BRICS Summit and iii) an Inter-Departmental Logistics Committee (IDLC) to facilitate preparations for hosting the Fifth BRICS Summit. President JG Zuma decided to appoint 15 members of Cabinet as well as the Premier of Kwazulu-Natal as members of the BRICS Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC). The members of the IMC that were appointed included: Ministers of International Relations and Cooperation (Chairperson), Transport, Energy, Police, Communications, Finance, Mineral Resources, Trade and Industry, Public Enterprises, Economic Development, Science and Technology, Home Affairs, Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, State Security, Defence and Military Veterans, Minister in the Presidency: Performance Monitoring, Evaluation and Administration and Premier of KwaZulu-Natal. The Minister of International Relations and Cooperation was appointed as Chairperson of the IMC. The IMC also considered and adopted Terms of Reference for its functioning.

A recommendation to review its mandate was considered at the 9th BRICS IMC on 4 July 2014. The IMC concluded that the BRICS Forum had become a strategic global engagement, which is central to initiatives to spearhead global governance reforms as well as the transition to a new global order, and it would therefore require continued strategic guidance from the side of the Executive. The Chairperson of the IMC obtained approval from the President for the IMC to continue to convene at a reduced scale, at least bi-annually, of which one meeting will precede the annual Summit to provide strategic guidance to preparations. The members of the reconstituted IMC that were appointed included: Ministers of International Relations and Cooperation (Chairperson), Energy, Finance, Trade and Industry, Economic Development, Science and Technology, State Security, and Higher Education and Training.

1(b) The mandate of the IMC initially was i) to provide strategic direction to South Africa’s tenure as BRICS Chairship for 2013 ii) to host all BRICS agreed sectoral mechanisms and to provide leadership during its Chairship iii) to ensure the implementation of the EThekwini Declaration and Action Plan and iv) to effectively communicate to the South African public, SADC and the African Continent the value of BRICS in advancing the African Agenda.

The mandate of the reconstituted IMC was aligned to the BRICS endorsed Terms of Reference of the BRICS Chairship, which BRICS adopted in 2013.

The additional mandate of the IMC during Chairship and as incoming Chair was highlighted, notably ensuring strategic leadership during SA’s tenure as BRICS Chair in close consultation with other members and to ensure implementation of Summit Declarations and Action Plan. The mandate of the incoming Chairship entails coordination in respect of the next annual Summit in consultation with all South African stakeholders, e.g. to select the Summit theme, propose the Summit programme/agenda and prepare draft Summit Declaration and Action Plan.

2(a) The BRICS IMC has convened on 12 occasions since its establishment in September 2012.

2(b) The most salient issues discussed during these meetings, include, *inter alia*, a briefing by the Department of International Relations and Cooperation on the most recent substance related developments in BRICS and South Africa’s position on these issues and briefings by partner Departments on the various tracks in which they participate, including amongst others, National Treasury, Trade and Industry, Higher Education and Training, Science and Technology and State Security. Depending on the issues that require attention and guidance, the agenda may vary. It focuses on the implementation of annual Summit Declarations and Action Plans notably input for high level meetings. The minutes of the meetings are classified.

Additional items discussed during meetings of the reconstituted IMC, included a concept document of the African Regional Centre (ARC), the draft Terms of Reference of the New Development Bank African Regional Centre (NDB ARC) Local Steering Committee and the Strategy for BRICS Economic Partnership (which was adopted by the Leaders of the Seventh BRICS Summit).

UNQUOTE