

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION NO.: 3704**

**DATE OF QUESTION: 16 OCTOBER 2015**

**DATE OF REPLY: 30 OCTOBER 2015**

**3704. Mr J Selfe (DA) to ask the Minister of Justice and Correctional Services:**

What (a) are the reasons for the delay in the submission of periodic reports as required by the United Nations Convention against Torture and Other Cruel Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (UNCAT) and (b) corrective measures have been taken to avoid future delays in submitting reports as required by UNCAT? NW4368E

**REPLY:**

1. Government is dealing with a delay in submitting country reports due to a huge backlog of outstanding reports, lack of capacity and coordination mechanism over the years.
2. As a response, Government in early 2012 committed itself to make a positive turn- around in this regard. An Inter-departmental Committee on Treaty Obligations (IDC) has been established to work, amongst others, on the backlog of country reports. The IDC reports to the Directors- General of the Justice, Crime Prevention and Security (JCPS), International Cooperation, Trade and Security (ICTS) and Social Protection Community and Human Development (SPCHD) Clusters. The Ministers of Justice and Correctional Services, International Relations and Co-operation and Minister in the Presidency responsible for Performance, Monitoring and Evaluation have oversight on compliance with treaty obligations. Officials are undergoing training on report writing; and a Government Manual on Treaty Obligations has been prepared by the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development, which co-chairs the IDC with the Department of International Relations and Co-operation. The report under the Convention Against Torture, although there was a delay, has been submitted to the United Nations Human Rights Council (HRC). This report is being summarized currently as requested by the HRC.