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| **PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA NATIONAL ASSEMBLY** |

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO: 3765**

**Mr N Singh (IFP) to ask the Minister of Justice and Correctional Services:**

1. In respect of the respect of the recent presidential pardons granted to political prisoners, what are the relevant details of the rehabilitative and reintegrative steps and procedures that are in place to assist those who have received such pardon to successfully reintegrate back into the society?

 NW2085E

**REPLY**

 A Special Dispensation was adopted on 21 November 2007 following an announcement by the President addressing a Joint Sitting of Parliament in order to facilitate the granting of Presidential pardon for individuals who have committed offences they believe were in pursuit of political objectives in terms of section 84 (2) (j) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996. On 19 January 2008 the President announced the appointment of a Reference Group that will consider applications for pardoning and to advise the President of the "special process" for the pardoning. The Reference Group and the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development handled and managed the administration of the process. After consultation with the office of the President, the department has resuscitated this process and it is now at an advanced stage. However, it should be emphasized that only those individuals who applied for the presidential pardon are currently considered by a Ministerial Task Team.

 At this stage it can be confirmed that no presidential pardons were granted to sentenced offenders. However, offenders in the above mentioned category who qualifies in terms of the normal parole placement policy are considered for parole placement and only those who comply with all requirements are released on parole. The Ministerial Task Team ensured that offenders who applied in terms of the Special Dispensation and still incarcerated have done the following programs to prepare them for eventual parole release:

* Life skills with social workers (orientation, defining of self- image, completion of collage presentation, self-knowledge and self- acceptance , development , motivation, future planning).
* Life skills with psychologists
* Pre-release (health education, financial management, relationships, restorative justice, finding employment, parole conditions, substance abuse relapse prevention)
* Cross roads
* Substance abuse
* Anger in anger out
* Heart lines
* Restorative justice / VOD / VOM
* Recreational programs
* Spiritual care
* Hope Foundation: purple ribbon for peace: (conflict analysis, emotional planning, active listening, assertiveness, problem solving, negotiation, mediation)