**MINISTRY**

**INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND COOPERATION**

 REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY

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**3769. Ms T P Msane (EFF) to ask the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation:**

In light of the fact that the State of Palestine and the Kingdom of Eswatini are facing the biggest forms of oppression and persons are being brutally killed without any form of intervention from the United Nations’ bodies, what is the position of the Republic regarding the specified countries? **NW4657E**

**REPLY:**

With regard to the State of Palestine, South Africa’s position has always been clear and consistent. South Africa has called on the UN to decisively act on all conflicts and not ignore long-standing ones such as Palestine that has been on the United Nations agenda throughout the seven decades of the existence of the UN.

Furthermore, South Africa’s stance is that Israel should be classified as an “Apartheid State” and a Committee be established under the auspices of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) to verify that it meets the criteria. South Africa is of the view that there should be effective ways to make use of the General Assembly to call for international action on Israel.

South Africa remains deeply concerned as to how Israel’s policies impact on the human rights and the unequal treatment of Palestinians, the application of different standards in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT) and Israel’s failure to ensure the protection and welfare of Palestinians living under its occupation.

In this regard, South Africa has expressed its support for Palestine’s request to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) to urgently render an advisory opinion and has stressed the need for revitalized international action amid mounting violence in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, especially in East Jerusalem.

With regard to the situation in the Kingdom of Eswatini, South Africa is working with other Member States within the framework of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) to assist Eswatini to address the worrying political and security situation in that country. During South Africa’s tenure as the Chair of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security, South Africa facilitated a high-level and technical fact-finding mission to Eswatini. The outcome of this mission was a Draft Framework for the Conduct of National Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue in Eswatini, which was shared with the Government of Eswatini. South Africa is still awaiting feedback from the Government of Eswatini

Meanwhile, the Government of Eswatini briefed the 42nd SADC Summit on the security situation in that country. The Summit mandated the Organ Troika on Politics, Defence and Security, which is now chaired by Namibia, assisted by the Panel of Elders (PoE) and Secretariat, to conduct a follow-up fact-finding mission to Eswatini. The Chairperson of the Organ, President Hage Geingob of Namibia, paid a courtesy call on His Majesty King Mswati III on 18 November 2022. An Extra-Ordinary Organ Troika Summit, which also include Eswatini is slated to take place in January 2023. South Africa believes that such persistent regional efforts, and not unilateral efforts, will yield positive results in resolving the situation in Eswatini as was the case with other countries in the region that went through challenging political transitions.