**THE PRESIDENCY: REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

Private Bag X1000, Pretoria, 0001

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO: 3775**

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**Mr MGP Lekota (Cope) to ask the President of the Republic:**

Whether he has been actively promoting the concept of the African Renaissance with a view to ensuring, as former president, Mr Thabo Mbeki, had observed, that the African upper echelons do not remain as a mere parasite on the rest of society, who continue to enjoy self-endowed mandates to define and use their political power in a manner that keeps Africa at the periphery of the world economy, poor, underdeveloped and incapable of development, if not. Why not; if so, how has he and the Government pushed forward the ideals of the African Renaissance and (b) what outcome has he and the Government achieved in relation thereto since 2009?

**REPLY:**

The Honourable Member will be aware that African stability, development and prosperity have been the bedrock of the ANC-led government since the dawn of our democracy in 1994.

We continue this trajectory by committing to various AU programmes, with the following discernible examples:

1. **Peace, Security and Stability:** On 08 November 2015, I presided over the closing ceremony of the Amani Africa Field Training Exercise held in Lohatla, Northern Cape, whose main objective was to test the ‘Rapid Deployment Capacity’ (RDC) of the African Standby Force. The success of this Exercise points to the Continent’s readiness to expeditiously provide solutions to some of our instability challenges.

What was most gratifying about Amani Africa was the fact that Southern African Development Community (SADC), the East African Standby Force, North Africa Regional Command, Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Volunteering Nations of the African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crises (ACIRC), all participated in this historic exercise. Amani Africa is a practical headway that has been made to ensure stability, which is indispensable to continental development. The Honorable Member will also recall the swiftness with which SADC addressed the recent challenges in Lesotho.

1. **NEPAD:** As the Honourable Member will know, NEPAD has been one of the corner stones of the African Renaissance. The initiative is anchored on our collective determination to extricate ourselves and the Continent from underdevelopment and exclusion in a globalising world. It is a call for a new relationship based on domestic, continental and global partnerships to address under-development, founded on the realisation of common interest, obligations, commitments, benefit and equality.

NEPAD has a number of key programmes, one of which is infrastructure development. The Continent continues to make progress in this regard through the implementation of the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) and the Presidential Infrastructure Championing Initiative (PICI) chaired by South Africa, and spearheaded by seven dedicated Heads of State and Government. PICI is part of PIDA, serving as an initiative to bring political leadership to bear, to fast-track the implementation of important projects from the PIDA Priority Action Plan by identifying and dealing with blockages, missing links and choke-points.

For example, under PICI, progress is being made in closing the missing link of the trans-Saharan highway project covering 4500 kilometres between Algeria and Nigeria and $40 million has been secured towards its continued construction. It is expected to be completed in 2016. The optic fibre component of the same project has seen substantial progress, with the completion of 60% of the project. The ICT Broadband Fibre Optic Network Linking Neighbouring States project, championed by Rwanda, has been completed. Egypt recently held the first Steering Committee meeting of the footprint states of the Navigational route between Lake Victoria and the Mediterranean Sea. Construction on the Grand Inga project is due to begin soon. The Dakar Financing Summit in June 2014 prioritized 16 PIDA projects for exposure to private and institutional investors.

With an infrastructure deficit of about USD 92 billion per year, NEPAD is making every effort to highlight this very important challenge. In light of this, at its annual meeting in May 2014, the African Development Bank launched the Africa50 initiative in order to mobilise USD 100 billion for regional infrastructure projects, focusing on addressing the key part of the project cycle that is project preparation. There are several projects in this regard, so this is by no means an exhaustible list.

1. **APRM:**

The APRM derives from NEPAD and its aim is to foster and promote good political, economic, social and corporate governance in Africa by encouraging Member States to adopt international best practice, which should eventually translate into political stability, economic growth, sustainable development and sub-regional and continental economic integration. South Africa is committed to advancing, nationally and continentally, the objectives of the APRM.

South Africa acceded to the APRM in March 2003 and was reviewed in July 2005. This resulted in the release of the Country Review Reports in 2007 and its’ National Programme of Action .South Africa tabled its First Report on the Implementation of the Programme of Action in January 2009. The second such Report was tabled in January 2011, with the Third Report being tabled in January 2014. South Africa will soon enter the second Peer Review phase.

Membership of the APRM has risen to 35 and 17 countries have been reviewed to date. This is an utterly unique system of self-assessment in the world in terms of its transparency and extent, and the underlying benefits cannot be overstated in terms of the shaping of national development discourse and providing models of best practice on key cross-cutting issues.

1. **CAADP AND OTHER PROGRAMMES:**

Another key priority for African development is agriculture, as reflected in the AU/NEPAD Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP). CAADP is one of NEPAD’s most successful programmes and has been key to driving development on the Continent and responding to poverty, hunger and joblessness. CAADP ensures that the great commodity that we have, arable agricultural land, is used for the benefit of all Africans.

In this regard, 52 states have been engaged in CAADP related interventions, 40 have received direct support under CAADP, 40 have signed CAADP national compacts, 30 National Agriculture and Food Security Investment Plans have been developed and reviewed, at least 8 countries have met the 10% of budget target, and 4 RECs have developed their own regional compacts. Ten countries have registered more than 6% annual growth in agriculture.

1. **PARTNERSHIPS:**

The role of international partners is to help scale up and accelerate our own efforts. Therefore, South Africa continues to play a leading role in engaging Africa’s Strategic Multilateral Partnerships, such as FOCAC, TICAD, Africa-EU, Africa India, Africa-Korea, Africa-Arab, Africa-South America, NAASP, and Africa-Turkey going forward. One of the key NEPAD principles is “New partnerships within Africa and with the international community”. It is for this reason that all of the Partnerships have been constructed on the understanding that engagement with Africa is to be done within the framework of NEPAD, as the socio-economic development programme of the AU, with the aim of assisting in the achievement of AU/NEPAD objectives and programmes.

South Africa continues to play a key role in the review of all of Africa’s partnerships with the North and the South, being conducted by the AU PRC Sub-Committee on Multilateral Cooperation.

South Africa is Co-Chair with China of FOCAC until 2018 and we have hosted a very successful FOCAC Summit in Johannesburg on 4-5 December 2015.

President Xi Jinping of China announced a development partnership with Africa worth $60 billion, accompanied by a 10 point plan focusing on areas that are key priorities for development in the continent. We look forward to taking the win-win cooperation further as the African continent as it holds great promise for the renewal of the African continent economically. This occurred on the backdrop of a very successful India-Africa Summit.