**MINISTRY**

**INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND COOPERATION**

 **REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

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**Question for Written Reply**

**National Assembly**

 **434. Mr M Hlengwa (IFP) to ask the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation:**

With reference to a media statement by her department on 20 February ( details furnished), the Memorandum of understanding that was signed between the Republic of South Africa and the Republic of Ireland and two South Africa – Ireland Joint Commission for Co-operation that were held in 2019 and 2022 respectively, what are the full, relevant details of the (a) specified economic  cooperation that has been promoted during the bilateral meetings and (b) rand value to the South African economy?**NW499E**

**REPLY:**

1. Bilateral political and economic relations between South Africa and Ireland are strong, the direct investment volume of Irish companies in South Africa is estimated at R23.66 billion with an average project size of around R815.51 million per project. In total, there are twenty (20) Irish companies in South Africa who employ an estimated 8 000 people. These include investments in sectors such as renewable energy, agriculture and ICT. The export basket from South Africa Ireland in 2020 was composed of both primary agricultural products such as citrus fruits, apples and grapes, and value-added products such as tools; motor vehicles; chemical wood pulp, and mineral products such as coal; while the import basket from Ireland into SA consisted of mainly value-added products such as medicaments, powered aircraft, automatic data processing machinery, orthopaedic appliances, among others. South African products such as vegetables and fruit showed significant improvement in exports to Ireland.
2. During 2021 South African exports amounted to R 2, 661,777,372 compared to R 1,715,160,914 in 2020. The balance of trade is still very much in Ireland's favour as Irish exports to South Africa amounted to R 6, 570 billion compared to R 6, 501 billion in 2020.