**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION NO. 4708-2022**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 51–2022, DATED 02 DECEMBER 2022:**

“**Inkosi B N Luthuli (IFP) to ask the Minister of Sport, Arts and Culture:**

Following reports that his department estimated the cost of repatriation of the remains of war veterans to be at R40 000.00 per coffin, what (a) total number of war veterans have been identified and (b) steps has his department taken towards repatriation efforts? **NW5831E**

**REPLY**

The Department of Sport, Arts and Culture (DSAC) has not estimated the cost of repatriation of remains of war veterans at R40 000.00 per coffin. However, through past experience the DSAC understands the expensive nature of undertaking repatriation of human remains hence the DSAC hosted a workshop on 04 – 05 August 2022 to develop the most cost effective yet impactful model and implementation plan for the repatriation of human remains.

(a). The identification of and the total number of war veterans is a continuous process involving engagements with various stakeholders to provide comprehensive information, records, and where possible maps of the graves of the deceased war veterans in each country. However, current records to date estimate that the number of humans remains of war veterans outside the country is about 1 400.

(b). The DSAC has taken the following steps towards repatriation:

* Development of the National Policy on Repatriation and Restitution of Human Remains and Heritage Objects. Cabinet approved the Policy in March 2021.
* Amongst others the policy calls for the Miniter of Sport, Arts and Culture to appoint an Advisory Committee, which the Minister has implemented.
* Another very important recommendation of the Policy is the establishment of the Repatriation and Restitution Office (RRO) within the South African Resources Agency. The RRO is in the process of being established accordingly, as a manager has already been appointed.
* The hosting of a workshop on 04 – 05 August 2022 to develop the best model and implementation plan for the repatriation of human remains.
* Presentation of the proposed model and implementation plan to the Presidential Technical Task Team on Military Veterans on 04 November 2022.
* Implementation of the Presidential Technical Task Team on Military Veterans’ directive to host a Consultative National Workshop for Military Veterans to present the proposed model and implementation plan to garner support and solicit buy-in from Military Veterans on 02 December 2022.