**MINISTRY**

**INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND COOPERATION**

 REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY

Date of Publication: 3 March 2023

Due Date at Ministry: 10 March 2023

Due Date of Reply: 17 March 2023

628. Mr D Bergman (DA) to ask the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation:

Whether the Government will continue with its BRICS see no – evil diplomacy stance and support the admission of Iran and Saudi Arabia into the group, taking into consideration the poor human rights records of the two specified countries; if not, will the Government oppose the specified admission; if so, what are the reasons that the Government will support the admission? **NW699E**

**REPLY:**

The 14th BRICS Summit, held on 23 June 2022, adopted the BRICS Beijing Declaration. In paragraph 73, BRICS Leaders supported promoting discussions among BRICS members on a BRICS expansion process. BRICS Leaders stressed the need to clarify the guiding principles, standards, criteria and procedures for this expansion process on the basis of full consultation and consensus.

The Islamic Republic of Iran and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia together with other countries have expressed an interest to join the BRICS formation.

At this stage, there is no common BRICS understanding on what process potential candidates should follow to officially apply for admission to BRICS and no common understanding on what standards and criteria should be taken into account when considering potential candidates.

Discussions among BRICS members to clarify the guiding principles, standards, criteria and procedures for a BRICS membership expansion process will continue in 2023. The outcomes of these discussions will provide clarity on the procedures to apply for admission to join BRICS. The outcomes will further provide clarity on the guiding principles, standards and criteria to be applied by BRICS members in the consideration of potential candidates to join BRICS.