

**MINISTER IN THE PRESIDENCY: REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NUMBER: 64**

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**Mr P G Atkinson (DA) to ask the Minister in The Presidency:**

(1) Did (a) he and/or (b) the President, Mr Jacob G Zuma, hold any formal meetings outside of the plenaries with other delegates to the 2016 World Economic Forum conference in Davos, Switzerland; if not, why not; if so, (i) how many meetings did (aa) he and/or (bb) the President attend and (ii) with whom were the meetings;

(2) in light of the President’s non-attendance at a meeting he was due to address as part of a panel of African leaders at the specified conference, what value has accrued to the South African economy and South Africa in general by his and the President’s attendance at the specified conference? NW64E

DRAFT REPLY:

1. The President led a high-powered Team South Africa delegation to the 2016 World Economic Forum in Davos towards the end of January 2016. Team South Africa comprised of Cabinet Ministers, the Governor of the Reserve Bank, CEOs of major companies and other captains of industry. The key message that Team South Africa took to Davos was that South Africa is open to business. The message was positively received by global investors who were at Davos.

In pursuit of Team South Africa’s mission in Davos, the President held several meetings with investors, CEOs, and other participants. Together with a delegation of Cabinet Ministers they met the global investors in a session called the Business Interaction Group on South Africa. This is a forum in which global investors to the South African economy meet with the President and Ministers to discuss the economic and investment climate in South Africa. Progress we are making in implementing the National Development Plan as well as our commitment to sound economic and fiscal policies were welcomed by the investors. They also assured the delegation of thier continued confidence in South Africa and their belief that our country continues to be an attractive destination for investment.

The President also met with the delegation of South African business persons and captains of industry to discuss steps that we all need to take to ensure that our economy grows and creates jobs. This was in addition to meetings held with other important global business players such as the Group Chief Executive Officer of Siemens, which is a global company with huge investments in our country that create jobs for thousands of our citizens.

The President also met with the Prime Minister of Sweden, a country with which we enjoy strong bilateral relations. As it has become a tradition during our visits to Davos, the President met with the founder and chairman of the World Economic Forum, Professor Klaus Schwab, to discuss the state of the global economy and the steps South Africa is taking to respond to global economic headwinds.

1. The Presidency informed the organisers of the session in question a week before the departure to Davos that the President would not be able to attend the session and the advance team that arrived early in Davos also confirmed the message to organisers a few days before arrival. Our goal in Davos as Team South Africa was to communicate a message that South Africa is open to business, and that we are taking important steps to turn stimulate the growth of our economy and create jobs for the millions of citizens who seek employment. This message was positively received by many investors whom we met and interacted with. They expressed their confidence in the measures we are taking and assured us that that to them South Africa continues to be an attractive country to invest in.

Indeed the belief and confidence in our country is demonstrated by several global companies that have recently made signifcant investments to our economy. These companies include Mercedes, BMW, Nestle, Hisense, Beijing Automobile International Corporation, Marriot Hotels, and many others.

Although our economy faces major challenges, the steps we are taking today, including the efforts of Team South Africa in Davos, will ensure that we reap the benefits when the global economy recovers.