**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION NO.730-2019**

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

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**Mrs V van Dyk (DA) to ask the Minister of Sports, Arts and Culture:**

(1) Whether his department still regards the SA Doping Control Laboratory (SADoCoL) as a strategic national asset in anti-doping, as previously expressed by his department; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the relevant details;

(2) whether the new Director-general of his department will continue with the negotiations with SADoCoL in order to render support to the laboratory; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, by what date will this happen;

 (3) whether his department has given the World Anti-Doping Agency any assurance of its intended financial support to SADoCoL;

 (4) whether, once the non-profit organisation is established, his department still intends to proceed with the registration of SADoCoL as a sporting body;

 (5) Whether, in view of the fact that since the start of negotiations between his department and SADoCoL in 2015, there were three changes in Ministers of the department, he and his department will now fully support SADoCoL?

**REPLY**

The Department still regards the South African Doping Control Laboratory (SADoCol) as a strategic national asset in anti-doping. SADoCol is the only Doping Control Laboratory accredited by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) in the African Continent. The proper and effective operations of the SADoCol is therefore critically important for the country, the region and the entire continent.

The Acting Director General is planning to meet SADoCol at least by 15 October 2019 to continue with the co-operative work undertaken to date.

The Department has previously provided WADA with the letter of intended support to SADoCol.

It is the intention of the Department to register SADoCol as a sporting body to enable the Department and Government in general to work with and support the Laboratory on Anti-doping matters.

It should be noted that the final status of incorporation for SADoCol will have to be in line with the WADA prescripts which seeks to safe guard the independence of the Doping Control Laboratory from external influence.

Recognizing the strategic significance of the SADoCol as outlined in (1) above, the Department remains committed to support the Laboratory.