



NATIONAL ASSEMBLY PROGRAMME COMMITTEE

Chairperson:
Speaker

Committee Secretary:
A Mbangwa x 3218

DRAFT MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Thursday, 24 August 2017, E249

Present:

B Mbete (Speaker)

Bhengu, F	Mazzone, NWA
Boroto, MG (House Chairperson)	Mente, NV
Frolick, CT (House Chairperson)	Mthembu, JM (Chief Whip of the Majority Party)
Hlophe, HO	Singh, N
Koornhof, Dr GW (Parliamentary Counsellor to the Deputy President)	Steenhuisen, JH (Chief Whip of the Opposition)
Kwankwa, NLS	Tsenoli, SL (Deputy Speaker)

Staff in attendance:

Mr M Xaso (NA Table), Mr S Tshabalala (Committees) and Mr N Bell (Constitutional and Legal Services Office).

1. Opening remarks

The Speaker opened the meeting at 08:35 and welcomed all present. She announced that the motion on the dissolution of Parliament, as submitted by the Chief Whip of the Opposition, was published and placed under 'Further Business' on the National Assembly's Order Paper. The programming whip has been asked to consult and advise on the scheduling of the motion.

The Speaker added that correspondence had been received from the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation regarding the diplomatic immunity granted to the First Lady of Zimbabwe. The letter would be referred to the Portfolio Committee on International Relations

and Cooperation for consideration. Ms Hlophe indicated that the Committee had resolved that the Minister would appear before it in the following week. The Speaker referred members to the copy of the Minister's letter, which was circulated in the meeting. The Chief Whip of the Majority Party added that the Minister was available to address the committee.

The Speaker informed the committee that a request had been received from the Minister of Finance to reschedule the Medium Term Budget Policy Statement (MTBPS) for 25 October 2017. It was originally scheduled for 18 October. The matter had earlier been referred to the Programming Whip for processing and that the final decision should now be communicated to the Minister. The Chief Whip of the Opposition expressed concern about the processing of the legislation accompanying the MTBPS, if it was tabled that late in the year. The Speaker requested that the Office of Leader of Government Business convey the concerns expressed.

2. Apologies

Apologies were tendered on behalf of House Chairperson Ms AT Didiza, Ms DE Dlakude (Deputy Chief Whip of the Majority Party), Messrs M Waters and NF Shivambu.

3. Consideration of draft agenda

The draft agenda was adopted, as proposed.

4. Consideration of draft Minutes of 17 August 2017

On the proposal of the Chief Whip of the Majority Party, seconded by Ms Mazzone, the draft minutes of 17 August were adopted.

5. Matters arising

House Chairperson Mr Frolick informed the committee that the concerns raised about the Portfolio Committee on Public Enterprises's consideration of 'state capture' had been attended to and that he met with the delegation from that committee, contrary to the reports that the delegation had met with the Speaker. He indicated that he would brief the Speaker after the meeting, together with the Secretary to the National Assembly, to discuss the way forward.

The House Chairperson reported that the Department of Health was required to fulfill specific roles on the *Medical Innovation Bill* and that a meeting would be arranged in that regard by the portfolio committee. The meeting would discuss timelines and progress in terms of regulations and other processes. The Programme Committee would be updated on the matter in due course.

6. Report by the Committee Section

Mr Tshabalala made a presentation on Bills and other matters before committees. He highlighted the following:

The Portfolio Committee on Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries intended to finalise their consideration of the *Liquor Products Amendment Bill* on 5 September. The same committee intended to conduct provincial public hearings from 2 – 9 October on the *National Forests Amendment Bill*. The Portfolio Committee on Health intended to have a briefing by the Medicines Control Council on 13 September on the *Medical Innovation Bill*.

The Portfolio Committee on Communications was in the process of shortlisting and conducting interviews on candidates to be recommended for appointment to the Media Development and Diversity Agency and the Board of the South African Broadcasting Corporation. It intended to finalise their processes on 4 and 5 September.

7. Report by Bills Office

Mr Bell reported that the *Financial Sector Regulation Bill* had been assented to by the President and that, in total, nine Bills had since been passed by Parliament in 2017.

The Chief Whip of the Opposition said that it would be important for Parliament to be realistic about the number of bills that could still be passed in 2017, and manage the expectations of the Executive in this regard. There were 31 Bills before committees and that the Fourth Term would be dominated by processing legislation accompanying the MTBPS and consideration of the Budgetary Review and Recommendation Reports. He suggested that a list of prioritised legislation from the Executive should be made available so as to avoid a rush at the end of the year. House Chairperson Mr Frolick indicated that his office was continually assessing bills before committees in order to re-work schedules and finish deliberations on bills. The Chief Whip of the Opposition suggested that the Programme Committee should consider opening Fridays as full working days for committees during the Fourth Term, and added that the Portfolio Committee on Justice and Correctional Services had failed to meet on two occasions.

The Deputy Speaker advised that, in anticipation of the report from the High Level Panel hearings on assessment of legislation post-1994 which was due in the second week of September, there could be issues in the recommendations of the report that Parliament may need to consider.

Dr Koornhof indicated the Leader of Government Business had followed up with departments and Cabinet members on the list of legislation for 2017. The Cabinet's Legislative Programme had been submitted to Parliament during March, which included dates for introduction of legislation. He undertook to provide an update on the matter.

The Chief Whip of the Opposition stated that the reason that the Minister of Finance wanted to table the MTBPS on a later date could be related to the fact that he intended to introduce a Special Appropriations Bill on the South African Airways prior to the MTBPS being published.

8. Consideration of draft Parliamentary programme

Mr Bhengu presented the Parliamentary Programme for the Third Term and highlighted the following:

On 29 – 30 August, the International Women's Conference was scheduled and questions to the President were scheduled for Thursday, 31 August.

The Second and First Reading debates on the *Administrative Adjudication of Road Traffic Offences Amendment Bill* and *Restitution of Land Rights Amendment Bill* were provisionally scheduled for 5 September, respectively.

Mr Bhengu informed the meeting that the week of 11 – 15 September would be reserved for Committees/Oversight. The Chief Whip of the Majority Party added that the period would assist committees to process legislation and alleviate challenges that they normally experienced at the end of the year.

Mr Bhengu indicated that the draft Parliamentary Programme for the Fourth Term would be considered in the following and would take into consideration concerns raised earlier. He added that he would also consult with the National Council of Provinces regarding the tabling of the MTBPS, as it could result in Parliament adjourning during the first week of December.

The Chief Whip of the Majority Party encouraged all members, specifically female members, to attend the International Women's Conference. He said that a small number of committees had planned to meet during that period and had invited stakeholders to meetings. He requested that those committees be given permission to meet accordingly. House Chairperson Mr Frolick indicated that requests from Portfolio Committees on Environmental Affairs, Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, and the Standing Committees on Finance and Appropriations were approved to meet, as they were considering bills. Furthermore, the request by the Portfolio Committee on International Relations and Cooperation would also be approved. He said that he

would distribute the updated list of committees that would meet to all the chief whips and party representatives during Friday for information.

The Chief Whip of the Opposition said that it was not clear whether parties should send a representative to attend the women's conference or all female members were invited. He said that the organisation of the conference was appalling and that party whips had been left in the dark. The Speaker explained that it was important for all female members to attend. Ms Mente pointed out that the programme for the conference excluded members from opposition parties as if Parliament belonged to one party. The Chief Whip of the Majority Party indicated that the mayor of Cape Town was included on the programme. The Speaker said that she would speak to the Acting-Secretary to Parliament on the matters raised and request her to arrange for the task team organising the conference to brief party caucuses on the arrangements that morning.

Regarding the progress with remedial actions emanating from the Public Protector's report on 'state capture', the Chief Whip of the Majority Party responded to the Chief Whip of the Opposition that he first wanted to discuss the matter with the Speaker and would report back accordingly.

9. Announcements

There were no announcements.

10. Closure

The meeting adjourned at 09:15.