



NATIONAL ASSEMBLY PROGRAMME COMMITTEE

Chairperson:
Speaker

Committee Secretary:
Andrew Mbanga x 3218

DRAFT MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Thursday, 23 May 2013, E249

Present:
Speaker

Hajaig, F	Mfundisi, I S
Jeffery, J H	Motshekga, Dr M S
Kalyan, S V	Mulder, Dr C P
Kilian, J D	Schneemann, G D
Kubayi, M T	Van der Merwe, J H
Deputy Speaker: Ms N C Mfeketo	Watson, A

Staff in attendance:

M Xaso (NA Table), N Bell, W Matidze (Constitutional and Legal Services Office) and N Giba (Committees).

1. **Opening**

The Speaker opened the meeting at 08:30.

2. **Apologies**

Apologies were tendered on behalf of the Messrs C T Frolick, S Z Ntapane and M B Skosana, and Ms C Dudley.

3. **Consideration of the agenda**

The agenda was adopted as proposed.

4. **Consideration of minutes of meeting of 16 May 2013**

The minutes of 16 May were adopted.

5. **Matters arising**

Mrs Kilian expressed a concern that members had been disadvantaged by not receiving the report on the use of the Air Force Base Waterkloof before the snap debate the previous day. As a result they had not had the opportunity to read the report and it was not clear what the rules provide to ensure that the documents were made available or tabled before the debate. In future Parliament should make sure that what happened the previous day would not happen again.

Mr Jeffery clarified that the snap debate was scheduled in terms of Assembly Rule 103 as requested by the DA. It was not a response to a ministerial statement in which case the relevant documents would have been released to all parties in advance or the Minister would have made the statement first and the debate would have followed after the documents had been released as provided for in the rules. In this instance the debate was not dependent on the tabling of the report. If members had wanted the report to be released first, the snap debate would have been scheduled for the following week. The Speaker added that a snap debate by its nature should happen as soon as possible as it dealt with a matter of national importance. He added that if the Executive formally submitted the report to Parliament for tabling, it will indeed be tabled.

Ms Kubayi indicated that it could not be the intention of members that when a matter of public importance was being investigated then Parliament should wait for a report before debating it. Parliament should express itself on the matter in line with its constitutional responsibilities as soon as possible. Mr Jeffery said that it was not clear whether the Minister wanted to table the report as it was already in the public domain. If tabled then Parliament would be expected to do something. There should be no assumption that the Minister will formally ask for the tabling of the report.

Mr Watson asked whether the use of podiums in Extended Public Committee meetings especially in the Old Assembly Chamber would still be compulsory as members experienced problems. The podium in that venue was small, located in the middle of the Chamber and had little space for members' documents. He suggested that members should have an option of speaking from their desks as it happened in the past. The Speaker requested the NA Table to advise the Presiding Officers on the matter.

6. **Report by the Committee Section**

Mrs Giba presented a document containing information on the following issues: bills before NA committees, bills initiated by committees and other matters before committees.

Mrs Giba highlighted changes to committees business that had taken place since the last meeting of the NAPC on 16 May. She said that the *Deeds Registries Amendment Bill* and the *Sectional Titles Amendment Bill* had recently been introduced and had not yet been tagged. The Portfolio Committee on Rural Development and Land Reform had not yet developed a programme to process the two bills.

The Portfolio Committee on Trade and Industry intended to finalise the *Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Amendment Bill* and the *National Credit Amendment Bill* on Thursday 23 May. The Minister of Science and Technology had written to Parliament asking it to consider a shortlist of candidates for the appointment to the board of the National Research Foundation.

Ms Kubayi urged that details under the ‘‘aim to finish’’ column’ should still be fully provided as it was the case in the past as that information assisted the programming whips in planning the scheduling and processing of bills by the Assembly.

7. **Report by Constitutional and Legal Services Office (CLSO)**

Mr Matidze reported that there were six bills that were ready for Second Reading debate, namely:

Intellectual Property Laws Amendment Bill, Independent System and Market Operator Bill, Basic Conditions of Employment Amendment Bill, Feeds and Fertilisers Bill, Commission on Gender Equality Amendment Bill and National Environmental Management Laws Second Amendment Bill.

Mrs Kalyan said that the Ministers of Labour, Communications and Public Service and Administration had indicated in their Budget Vote speeches that they would ask Parliament to finalise certain Bills by the end of the year. However, those bills were not yet on the programme of Parliament and asked how they will be processed to meet the expectations of the Executive.

Mr Jeffery replied that the usual process was that the Leader of Government Business would indicate to Presiding Officers if there was a bill to be prioritised or fast-tracked.

Ms Kubayi indicated that Parliament would not be able to do much if the Bills mentioned by the Ministers had not yet been submitted.

Mr Jeffery said that the *Feeds and Fertilisers Bill* should not be listed under Bills that are ready for Second Reading debates. The report of the Portfolio Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry recommended that the bill should be redrafted. However, in terms of the National Assembly Rules, the House should pass, reject or amend the bill. If the report was accepted in that format the bill would remain on the Order Paper for quite some time. He indicated that the Minister should be advised to withdraw the Bill.

Ms Kalyan indicated that usually information on the deadline for introduction of bills to be passed by the end of the year would be reflected on the Constitutional and Legal Services Office report and/or in the programme, and asked where she would find it. Mr Xaso replied that the information would be attached to the programme and Mr Bell added that the footnote on the Bills that have missed the deadline would be inserted immediately after the deadline of 7 June 2013 had passed.

8. Consideration of draft Parliamentary programme

Mr Schneemann presented the Parliamentary Programme for the Second Term and highlighted the following:

The Quarterly Consultative Forum's meeting initially scheduled for Friday, 23 May had been postponed and parties were advised accordingly. He added that the headings of debates scheduled to take place in the NA Chamber had been changed from Plenary to Extended Public Committees (EPCs).

On Wednesday 29 May, a slot had been created for the debate in terms of Rule 103 on the tragic deaths of initiates in Mpumalanga. The debate had been requested by the Chief Whip of the Majority Party. The EPCs scheduled to start at 14:00 that day would now commence at 15:30. Consultations in this regard with the Ministers concerned had been done and all parties had been informed.

The Youth Day debate previously scheduled for 6 June had been brought forward to 4 June and a DA motion will be scheduled on 6 June. Legislation and committee reports would also be scheduled for consideration by the House in that week.

Time allocations for Budget Vote debates on Parliament and the Presidency have been approved as 217 and 251 minutes respectively, and the breakdown of party times have also been agreed to. The time allocated for the snap debate on the Waterkloof incident will be applicable to the snap debate on the deaths of initiates.

Mrs Kalyan indicated that during the debate on the Waterkloof incident, the ANC had transferred its time to the Executive contrary to the agreement that that would no longer be done. She requested that the matter be discussed at the next meeting of the Chief Whips' Forum.

Ms Kubayi said that she had learnt that Mr M G Oriani-Ambrosini had released a statement on his health conditions. She indicated that she would talk to the IFP in terms of how Parliament could respond to the matter and wished Mr Oriani-Ambrosini well. The Speaker added that something should be done so that the Assembly could convey its best wishes to Mr Oriani-Ambrosini.

9. **Announcements**

There were no announcements.

10. **Closure**

The meeting adjourned at 09:03.

M V Sisulu MP

Speaker of the National Assembly