



environmental affairs

Department:
Environmental Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Ref:02/1/5/2

MINISTER

QUESTION NO. 1720 FOR WRITTEN REPLY: NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

A draft reply to **Ms D Carter (Cope)** to the above-mentioned question is enclosed for your consideration.

**MR ALF WILLS
DIRECTOR-GENERAL (ACTING)**

DATE:

DRAFT REPLY APPROVED/AMENDED

**MRS B E E MOLEWA, MP
MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS**

DATE:

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

(For written reply)

QUESTION NO. 1720

INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 14 of 2015 {NW1938E}

DATE OF PUBLICATION: 15 May 2015

Ms D Carter (Cope) to ask the Minister of Environmental Affairs:

- (1) Whether her department will use current scientific and economic research to persuade the Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (Cites) to grant the Government a two-year period to flood the Eastern market with government-collected rhino horns to (a) dampen the demand, (b) understand the nature of the trade and (c) expand media interest there so that the Government will have time to devise a comprehensive system for the protection of rhinos, especially in the Kruger National Park, to be put in place to prevent the unabated increase in the slaughter of rhinos that are taking place there; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details;
- (2) whether the Government will approach the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union to support the objective of saving our rhinos in the strongest way possible and with the strongest possible censure possible? NW1938E

1720. THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS REPLIES:

- (1) (a) – (c) The Government has not made a decision relating to the possibility of international trade in rhino horn (or potential models/mechanisms) for such a trade. The Committee of Inquiry I appointed is tasked to consider the feasibility of a proposal for the legalisation of a trade in rhino horn at the 17th Conference of Parties (CoP17) of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).
- (2) Various United Nations structures have already adopted Resolutions relating to the illegal wildlife trade and activities associated with the illegal wildlife trade and these assist South Africa in terms of its efforts to conserve and protect rhino as well as other wildlife resources. Listed below are key resolutions/declarations that are relevant:
- (a) The United Nations Environmental Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme adopted a Resolution on Illegal trade in wildlife (Resolution 1/3) at its first session on 27 June 2014. In terms of this Resolution, the United Nations Environmental Assembly calls upon the United Nations General Assembly to consider the issue of illegal wildlife trade at its 69th session;
- (b) in April 2015, the 13th United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice discussed the Doha Declaration on integrating crime prevention and criminal justice into the wider United Nations agenda to address social and economic challenges and to promote the rule of law at the national and international levels, and public participation. Section 9(e) of the declaration reads as follows:
- “9. *We endeavor to ensure that the benefits of economic, social and technological advancements become a positive force to enhance our efforts in preventing and countering new and emerging forms of crime. We recognize our responsibility to adequately respond to emerging and evolving threats posed by such crimes. Therefore we strive:*
- (e) *To adopt effective measures to prevent and counter the serious problem of crimes that have an impact on the environment, such as trafficking in wildlife, including flora and fauna as protected by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, timber and timber products and hazardous waste, as well as poaching, by strengthening legislation, international cooperation, capacity building, criminal justice responses and law enforcement efforts aimed at, inter alia, dealing with transnational organized crime, corruption and money-laundering linked to such*

crimes”;

- (c) the United Nations General Assembly has adopted Resolution 68/193, emphasizing that coordinated action is critical to eliminate corruption and disrupt the illicit networks that drive and enable trafficking in wildlife, timber and timber products, harvested in contravention of national laws; and
- (d) the representatives of Governments and Regional Economic Integration Organisations that attended the Kasane Conference on the Illegal Wildlife Trade in Botswana, in March 2015, recognised the detrimental economic, security, social, and environmental implications of the illegal trade in wildlife, made political commitments and called upon the international community to act together to bring this to an end; and furthermore called upon the United Nations General Assembly to address effectively the issue of the illegal wildlife trade at its 69th session.

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