

SPEAKER PROVIDES WRITTEN REPLIES TO REQUESTS FROM DA AND EFF LEADERS REGARDING FORTHCOMING STATE OF THE NATION ADDRESS

Parliament, Friday 2 February 2018 – Speaker of the National Assembly Ms Baleka Mbete has written to the leader of the Democratic Alliance (DA) and the leader of the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) about their requests related to the forthcoming State of the Nation Address.

In her letter replying to the DA leader Mr Mmusi Maimane’s request that the State of the Nation Address be postponed, Ms Mbete explained that the President, as head of State and Government, had exercised powers vested in him in terms of the Constitution (section 84(2)(d), read together with Joint Rule 7(1), when he called on Parliament to convene the State of the Nation Address.

The Joint Programme Committee had also further ratified the convening of the Address, at its meeting on 16 November 2017. The Speaker, therefore, had no power to accede to the DA’s request to postpone the State of the Nation Address, scheduled for delivery to a joint sitting of the National Assembly and the National Council of Provinces on 8 February. Joint sittings were also matters of concern to both Houses of Parliament.

In her letter to the EFF, Ms Mbete informed EFF leader Mr Julius Malema that she had decided to schedule their requested motion of no confidence in the President for 22 February. The determination had taken into account the Programme of the National Assembly, including the State of the Nation Address, debate on the Address, the President’s reply to the debate and the tabling of the national budget on 21 February. Ms Mbete had also consulted relevant stakeholders.

ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA