



the dtic

Department:  
Trade, Industry and Competition  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

## NATIONAL ASSEMBLY QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY

### QUESTION NO. 1291

**Mr C G Niehaus (EFF) to ask the Minister of Trade, Industry and Competition:**

- (1) Whether, in light of the unprovoked criminal war that the United States of America (USA) and the State of Israel have unleashed on the Islamic Republic of Iran in contravention of the United Nations (UN) Charter, and furthermore, in light of the genocide that apartheid Israel, with the assistance of the USA, is continuing to carry out against the Palestinian residents in Gaza, a genocide that was confirmed by South Africa's case against apartheid Israel in the International Court of Justice (ICJ), he intends to ensure that the next logical step, in addition to cutting all diplomatic ties with apartheid Israel, is also to cut all trade, financial and economic ties with apartheid Israel; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details;
- (2) whether the ongoing large coal exports from South Africa to apartheid Israel which surged 87% year-on-year to 474,000 metric tonnes in the three months to November 2025 (details furnished), while monthly export values have included figures around \$28 million as seen in January 2025, are untenable and represent a fundamental contradiction with regard to our ICJ case against the State of Israel; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so,
- (3) whether he has found that the massive coal exports – primarily through Richards Bay harbour, help to sustain the Israeli economy and the Israeli electricity grid, which relies on coal for a significant portion of its electricity generation, with Israel's total annual coal imports around 2 million tonnes – are essential for the State of Israel to be able to continue to commit genocide in Gaza and the illegal war against the Islamic Republic of Iran; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so,



the dtic

Department:  
Trade, Industry and Competition  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

- (4) whether he intends to engage his Cabinet colleagues in order to introduce a formal ban on all coal exports to the State of Israel with immediate effect; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details? NW1445E

**REPLY:**

- (1) The Republic of South Africa is deeply concerned about the situation in the Middle East and remains committed to initiatives to achieve a peaceful coexistence in the region. The South African government is saddened by the unfortunate loss of lives, injuries and trauma suffered by people in the region and has called for an urgent cease of hostilities.

South Africa and the State of Israel do not have formal relations. The SA-Israel government-to-government fora that existed was co-chaired by DIRCO Director-General and last met in 2005.

As a member of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the United Nations (UN), the South African government is guided by multilateral decisions in respect of trade relations with countries like Israel. South Africa will also adhere to resolutions of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), should these be passed.

- (2) Both South Africa and Israel are members of the WTO. Sanctions applied by one member against another in the absence of multilateral sanctions by the UN, would violate the WTO principle of non-discrimination and would open the country to legal challenge.

- (3) The South African government has not conducted a study on whether the coal exports sustain or to what extent the exports sustain the Israeli economic and electricity grid.

In 2025, South Africa exported 1.8 million tons of coal to Israel, equating to 2.6% of South Africa's global coal exports of 71.5 million tons. (Data source: International Trade Centre TradeMap database)

- (4) There are continuous discussions on these matters to ensure alignment in Government. However, currently, there is no position to review SA exports to Israel.

**-END-**