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Department:
Trade, Industry and Competition
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION NO. 1355

Mr S Thambo (EFF) to ask the Minister of Trade, Industry and Competition

Whether, considering the need for the promotion of access to information and digital technologies in the Republic, and the continued decline of the steel industry marked particularly by retrenchments at ArcelorMittal South Africa, his department has explored negotiation strategies regarding the (a) challenge of import duties for digital devices in the telecommunications sector and (b) introduction of higher tariffs on steel imports to protect the steel industry?

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REPLY:

- (a) Tariff amendments normally result from applications to the International Trade Administration Commission. So too might the Commission in line with section 16(1)(d)(ii) of the ITA Act consider a matter on its own initiative. Such applications are investigated by ITAC under the ITA Act and recommendations subsequently made to the Minister of Trade, Industry and Competition. While we have not yet received any application on digital devices, the Commission and Department have had some discussions with the necessary line department on better understanding the scale and scope of device manufacturing capability (including their component import needs) and where it is deemed desirable to extend tariff support to incubate and grow these capabilities, we remain favourably disposed to doing so.
- (b) A number of tariff and trade remedy investigations have been undertaken by ITAC in the last decade that culminated in an increase in tariff duties on certain steel products. Furthermore, ITAC is currently reviewing the tariff structure on steel and investigating the possible introduction of an import surveillance system for steel products. It was published for comment in the Government Gazette on 19 March 2025.

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