



the dtic

Department:
Trade, Industry and Competition
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION NO. 2229

Ms S P Jama (ANC) to ask the Minister of Trade, Industry and Competition:

How does his department ensure that state-supported manufacture of menstrual hygiene products advances (a) domestic industrialisation, (b) supports local suppliers and (c) strengthens regulatory oversight to safeguard public health? NW2248E

REPLY:

(a)&(b)

Incentives of **the dtic** such as the Black Industrialist (BI) Programme and the Manufacturing Support Programme (MSP) are used to support domestic industrialisation. Furthermore, **the dtic**, through the Clothing, Textiles, Footwear and Leather (CTFL) Sector Desk, which provides support through the CTFLGP financial support administered by the IDC CTFLGP Desk, sanitary towels will be designated for local content and for public procurement purposes. The HS 9619.00 for sanitary towels holds between 15%-20% import duty (i.e. for general tariff and in Mercosur) with 6%-8% in the AfCFTA trading regions.

(c)

NCC Regulatory Oversight to Safeguard Public Health

The National Consumer Commission (NCC) was established in terms of the Consumer Protection Act No. 68 of 2008 (CPA), as a regulator that safeguards the rights of consumers in South Africa. Section 55 of the CPA provides for consumers' rights to safe, good quality goods. The CPA states that consumers have the right to receive goods that are reasonably suitable for their intended purposes.



Consumers also have the right to goods that are of good quality and in good working order. The goods must be free of defects and usable and durable for a reasonable time. Section 55 of the CPA, therefore, applies to all goods sold in the South African market, including menstrual products.

Recently, and following a public outcry on possible safety concerns of certain menstrual products arising from a study by the University of the Free State, the NCC initiated an investigation against the following suppliers whose products were apparently tested in the study:

- Kimberly-Clark of SA (PTY) Ltd (Kotex);
- Procter and Gamble (PTY) Ltd (Always);
- Anna Organics;
- The Lion Match Company (PTY) Ltd trading as Comfitex;
- Here We Flow trading as We Flo;
- Johnson & Johnson (PTY) Ltd trading as Stay Free;
- Premier Group of Companies trading as Lil-lets;
- Essity Hygiene and Health AB trading as Libresse South Africa; and
- My Time.

The investigation aims to review and assess suppliers' compliance with provisions of the CPA, particularly Section 55, and is ongoing. Preliminary investigations revealed that My Time and Here We Flo may no longer be supplying the products in South Africa. Furthermore, the Department of Health as well as other regulatory authorities issued a statement dispelling the notion of the causal link between exposure to endocrine disrupting chemical and adverse health outcome on the human body.

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