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Department:
Trade, Industry and Competition
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION NO. 519

Mr R W T Chance (DA) to ask the Minister of Trade, Industry and Competition:

In view of the immense harm to the economy of the Republic resulting from the fact that 93% of import duties on imported goods have not been reviewed for 20 years, and noting that the International Trade Administration Commission of South Africa (ITAC) had stated it does not have the resources to review the duties in the foreseeable future, what (a) measures will he take to provide the specified resources to ITAC so that the important task can be accomplished and (b) target date will he set for the completion of the task?
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REPLY:

- (a) The current approach to supporting the ongoing work of the Commission, rests on diversify the resourcing of ITAC. This is done through a combination of parliamentary appropriation and the levying of prescribed fees. The next step is to issue guidelines that detail the fees for specified 'processes'. Once those have been issued (in the first quarter of 2025/26), the regulations and the guidelines will be submitted to the Minister for approval.

A further part of the approach relates to internal investments being undertaken by the Commission to strengthen the capacity for 'real time' review. These include the modernisation of ITAC's permitting systems (covering rebates on duties, and other import/export licensing processes), for which procurement is underway.

However, in the medium to long term it is our considered view that the Commission and SARS for the review not only of the 'coverage' but also effective protection of a tariff, need better tools. This will allow the Commission to gauge the extent to which protective measures curbing unfair price behaviour (such as anti-dumping, countervailing or safeguard measures) function effectively in line with their intended purpose. This work will require investments in some 'machine-learning' enabled tools that can undertake specific tasks (e.g. pick up price and volume anomalies across different tariff headings) that further strengthen the enforcement of key measures and the overall coherence and desirability of our tariff schedule.

- (b) The process to get approval for, and implement the guidelines and regulations to levy fees, is underway. This is anticipated to be concluded by March 2026.

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