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Department:
Trade, Industry and Competition
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION NO. 5666

Mr M Khoza (EFF) to ask the Minister of Trade, Industry and Competition:

(1) Given the closure of the BT Industrial Group, a black-owned manufacturing company that previously employed over 250 workers, following interventions involving the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC), what steps has he taken to investigate allegations of (a) asset stripping, (b) destruction of machinery and (c) the exclusion of the owner of the company from its premises;

(2) whether he will institute an independent investigation into the IDC's handling of the company; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details;

(3) whether the investigation will include accountability for jobs lost; if not, why not; if so, what is the timeline for restoring production? NW6124E

REPLY:

(1) The matter regarding the BT Group has been referred to the Independent Complaints Review Panel as part of the NAFCOC complaint matters; and litigation between the BT Group and the IDC continues.

(a) Asset stripping

The matter regarding asset stripping and destruction of machinery was referred to the SAPS. SAPS advised that only the owner of the assets could open a case. The owner of the property was accordingly informed of the incident and advised of SAPS's requirement that the owner open the case.

(b) Destruction of machinery

The matter regarding asset stripping and destruction of machinery was referred to the SAPS. SAPS advised that only the owner of the assets could open a case. The owner of the property was accordingly informed of the incident and advised of SAPS's requirement that the owner open the case.

(c) Exclusion of the owner of the company from its premises

The IDC did not prevent the owners from accessing the premises.

(2) The allegations relating to asset stripping and the destruction of machinery were referred to the South African Police Service (SAPS), which advised that only the owner of the assets could open a case. The owner of the property was accordingly informed of this requirement. Based on the information currently available, no independent investigation into the IDC's handling of the company has been instituted. The Department will engage with the IDC on what measures may be required to address the concerns raised.

(3) The Department will engage with the IDC to establish what measures, if any, can be taken to address the loss of employment and assess the prospects for resuming manufacturing operations.

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