



**PARLIAMENT**  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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Hon T Modise MP  
Speaker of the National  
Assembly  
Parliament of the Republic of South Africa  
P.O. Box 15  
Cape Town  
8000

13 May 2020

Dear Madam Speaker,

**PARLIAMENT FAILING IN ITS OVERSIGHT DUTY**

With reference to the above-mentioned matter.

I am writing to you to express my concern with the manner in which Parliament has been conducting its business in the past few weeks, which in my view amounts to a failure to do its duty in the way of conducting close and critical oversight over the executive.

The way in which Parliament has been conducting online portfolio committee meetings have been, to say the least, disgraceful. Amongst other things:

- Chairpersons fail to uphold decorum in meetings, and several of these meetings, consequently, descended into what can only be described as chaos;
- Limitations on the amount of time for which committee members are allowed to speak as well as on the duration of meetings has placed an unnecessary restriction on the capacity of these members to thoroughly interrogate Ministers and government officials;
- Chairpersons have been allowing Ministers and government officials to get away with not answering questions posed by committee members;
- Parliamentary rules, specifically as it relates to portfolio committees, has been generously misinterpreted or applied incorrectly by numerous Chairpersons;

- Chairpersons and Members are not sufficiently trained in the use of online technology, which has hampered the ability of committees to function in an orderly fashion

Kindly note that if Parliament should continue to fail at holding the executive to account, it will be in breach of its constitutional duties, and we will be forced to consider our legal options.

Yours faithfully,

**N.W.A Mazzone MP**  
Chief Whip of the Official Opposition