



PARLIAMENT OF
THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH
AFRICA

Natasha Mazzone MP

Parliament of the Republic of South Africa PO
Box 15
Marks Building Plein St
Cape Town, 8000



Tel: 021 403 2911
Cell: 083 282 0668
Email: natasham@da.org.za

18 November 2021

Hon. N.M Nqakula
Speaker of the National Assembly

Hon. N.A. Masondo
Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces

Re: Inviting the President to come and address a Joint Sitting of Parliament on the electricity crisis

The Democratic Alliance (DA) is writing to request that the Speaker of the National Assembly, Nosiviwe Mapisa Nqakula, and the Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces, Amos Masondo, consider calling for a joint sitting of the Houses of Parliament in terms of Rule 7(1)(2) of the Joint Rules of Parliament. The purpose of the Joint Sitting will be to invite President Cyril Ramaphosa to come and address both houses of Parliament on the unfolding electricity crisis.

Eskom's inability to maintain a regular supply of electricity, effectively subjecting the country to rolling blackouts much more frequently than any time in the past 14 years, has become the single biggest threat to livelihoods and our economy. With millions of South Africans having lost their jobs as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, it cannot be business as usual when loadshedding is said to be costing the economy R500 million per stage, per day.

Rule 7(1)(2) of the Joint Rules of Parliament states that 'The Speaker and the Chairperson of the [National Council of Provinces], acting jointly, may call a joint sitting of the Houses when necessary'. Not only has it become necessary for Parliament to show leadership in articulating a coherent response to the electricity crisis, the legislature's obligation to hold the Executive to account on this issue has never been more urgent.

It is therefore important that, in calling for the Joint Sitting, the presiding officers should invite President Ramaphosa to come and spell out the short, medium and long term interventions that his administration will implement to address the electricity crisis. The invitation is in line with Section 42(5) of the Constitution which allows the President to address Parliament in 'an extraordinary sitting at any time to conduct special business'. Loadshedding and its attendant effects on the country's economic security, is an extraordinary circumstance that requires a special intervention to prevent a total collapse of the grid.

It's unfortunate that the President, together with the Minister of Public Enterprises, Pravin Gordhan, have largely opted to take a passive approach to this crisis. Their indifference has dampened investor confidence, casting a pall on the ability of our economy to recover from the low growth trap that it is currently ensnared in.

The contradicting policy positions on renewable energy between the Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources, Gwede Mantashe, and the President, is creating investment uncertainty and prolonging South Africa's energy insecurity. To prevent further confusion on renewable energy sources, which were shown to be significantly cheaper per kWh than what Eskom produces in the latest Bid Window 5, the President should use the opportunity afforded by the Joint Sitting to unequivocally state the government's real position on green investment.



Parliament of the Republic of South Africa PO
Box 15
Marks Building Plein St
Cape Town, 8000

PARLIAMENT OF
THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH
AFRICA

Natasha Mazzone MP



Tel: 021 403 2911
Cell: 083 282 0668
Email: natasham@da.org.za

Unless urgent action is taken to address the electricity crisis, South Africa's precipitous economic decline will continue unabated. Parliament has to move to assert its legislative authority over this unfolding national disaster by holding a Joint Sitting to obtain answers from the President and his administration.

Kind Regards

Natasha Mazzone MP

Chief Whip of the Democratic Alliance