



PARLIAMENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
OFFICE OF THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION

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25 February 2022

Ms N N Mapisa-Nqakula, MP
Speaker of the National Assembly
Parliament of the Republic of South Africa
CAPE TOWN
8001

Dear Madam Speaker,

REQUEST FOR DEBATE ON URGENT MATTER OF NATIONAL PUBLIC IMPORTANCE IN TERMS OF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY RULE 130 ON THE UNFOLDING CRISIS SURROUNDING THE INVASION OF UKRAINE BY THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

I write to you in terms of National Assembly Rule 130 to request that you schedule a debate of urgent national public importance on the unfolding crisis surrounding the invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation.

This act of aggression by the Russian Federation is a violation of international law. The trampling of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of a democratic country should be strongly condemned by all freedom-loving people across the globe, and has rightly received widespread condemnation across the world.

The dream of the President of the Russian Federation, Mr V V Putin, of establishing an 'empire' not only poses a threat to Ukraine but to the whole of Eastern Europe, the rest of Europe and ultimately the rest of the world. Failure to stop Mr Putin now will not only be detrimental to world peace, but the conflict's ripple effect will be felt as far afield as here in South Africa. If the situation is not resolved quickly, we will soon start to feel the consequences in our beleaguered economy and in our pockets when oil prices spike further, when grain and bread prices rise and when the SA Reserve Bank is forced to hike interest rates to curb inflation.

South Africa is a signatory to the United Nations Charter which enjoins all countries "*[to] maintain international peace and security....[though] the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace*". The Russian Federation has clearly violated this provision.

It is my considered view that the Government's insufficient action against the Russian Federation's aggressions - one solitary statement by the Department of International Relations and Cooperation on 24 February 2022 - must be addressed by the National Assembly as a matter of urgency.

In line with section 92(2) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, the National Assembly should hold the President of the Republic, Mr M C Ramaphosa, and the rest of the members of his Cabinet accountable for their failure to use our membership of BRICS to strongly condemn the invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation and call for the immediate withdrawal of Russian troops from Ukraine's sovereign territory.

As required by National Assembly Rule 130(8)(d), this is a matter for which the Government can – and should - be held responsible. It further relates to a specific matter of recent occurrence in terms of NA Rule 130 (8)(e), which needs to be addressed urgently.

I hereby request that you schedule at your earliest convenience a debate of urgent national public importance on the unfolding crisis surrounding the invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John Steenhuisen". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent 'S'.

John Steenhuisen
Leader of the Official Opposition