

**UNREVISED HANSARD**

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**Tuesday, 14 September 2010**

**Take: 161A**

Dr C P MULDER

**OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS**

(Member's Statement)

Ms A C MASHISHI (ANC): Speaker, the ANC welcomes the announcement made by Oxford University Press, last week, that they have published a new Zulu-English dictionary; four decades, after the last such reference book was released for one of South Africa's most widely spoken languages.

In a country with a linguistic diversity spanning 11 official languages, it is essential that our learners are able to access languages other than their mother tongue. With more than 2,8 million pupils taking Zulu as a language subject at school, the dictionary will help pupils and teachers to keep up with the changes in the language.

South Africa is a multilingual country. And, besides the 11 officially recognised languages, scores of others - African, European, Asian, and more - are spoken here, as the country lies at the crossroads of southern Africa. The ANC has and will continue to raise and lobby around issues of multilingualism, linguistic diversity, linguistic integration, linguistic equity, and language rights. Together, we can protect and promote our linguistic diversity. I thank you. [Applause.]

#### **MINISTER'S RESPONSES**

The MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING: Thank you, Chairperson. I just wish to quickly respond to two members' statements. The first one is on the achievements by inmates who recently graduated. This shows that the policy of government, which is rehabilitation towards offenders, is bearing fruit rather than being a punitive programme. I do agree with the hon member that education is a very important tool for rehabilitation. My department is in discussions with the Minister of Correctional Services to also expand skills development programmes in our correctional facilities in South Africa.

Secondly, we do welcome the launch of the new Oxford IsiZulu English Dictionary. Government feels that we need to go beyond translation between Zulu or Setswana and languages from outside South Africa but to focus on developing purpose-made dictionaries like, for instance, a dictionary translating IsiZulu from IsiZulu. We already have one at the moment, which is a first of its kind and as government we are committed to continuing with that.

Government is also committed to expand the use of African languages especially in institutions of higher education and to this end the Department of Higher Education and Training will next month be calling a group of about 60 to 80 experts in African languages to see how we can actually strengthen and promote the use, teaching and research of African languages in our higher education institutions.

*IsiZulu:*

Siyabonga, Sihlalo. [Ihlombe]