

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

FOR WRITTEN REPLY FOR QUESTION NO. 110 (NW115E) AS APPEARED IN
INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: NATIONAL ASSEMBLY NO.1-2014 OF
13 FEBRUARY 2014

MR LS NGONYAMA (COPE) TO ASK THE MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND COOPERATION:

- (1) Whether she is aware that Morocco has issued exploration licences to two companies (i) France's Total and (ii) US explorer Kosmos to hunt oil in Atlantic waters off Western Sahara, if not, why not; if so,
- (2) Whether this represents a serious attempt by Morocco to resolve the conflict; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details?

REPLY:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) South Africa continues to urge Morocco to desist from exploiting the resources in the occupied territories of the Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic, if it is not to benefit the people of Western Sahara. The ongoing economic exploitation of the resources of the territory continues to hamper the resolution of the conflict and extends the protracted impasse between the Kingdom of Morocco and the Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic.

In a legal opinion published in 2002, Hans Correll: UN Under Secretary General for Legal Affairs determined that in non-self-governing territories, like Western Sahara, the administering powers should take into account the interests and benefits of the people of the territories when exploiting the natural resources of this particular region.