



PRESS RELEASE

NO EMBARGO

10 March 2022

Al Jama-ah calls on Minister of Correctional Services to release inmates who qualify for parole under the Phaahla Judgement

There is a total of 711 inmates who could have qualified or may still qualify for release on parole under the Van Vuuren-, Van Wyk- and Phaahla judgements Justice and Correctional Services Minister Ronald Lamola stated. He was responding to a parliamentary submission from Al Jama-ah MP Hon Ganief Hendricks on the status of inmates who qualify for parole.

In his question Hendricks asked the Minister whether inmates who have served two thirds of their sentences, would qualify for release on parole. The Minister confirmed that lifers can only be released if they have served 25 years of their sentences, except those who benefit from Van Vuuren-, Van Wyk- and Phaahla Judgements whose consideration periods were advanced from 20 years to 13 years and four months after the allocation of the maximum number of credits.

The Minister further added that with the amnesty of 2005 & 2012 this was brought down to 12 years and 4 months. In the Western Cape there are about 10 inmates who fall under the Phaahla judgement but of who some never submitted their profiles or have overdue profiles which exceeded the date for parole.

The Al Jama-ah's National Parliamentary Constituency office received enquiries from anxious relatives of inmates they say qualify for parole under the Phaahla judgement but have trouble with the department to provide them with their profiles. The Minister denies claims that offenders are deliberately denied the right to have their profiles considered by the Correctional Services Parole Board for release.

“Delays in granting qualifying inmates parole especially lifers who have very elderly mothers and wives who need them to care for them, is nothing but torture, not only for the inmates but also their families at home,” says Hendricks.

Rehabilitation of prisoners is a human and constitutional right and prisons must work with NGOs towards establishing a sustainable society through an economic response. “Once prisoners are released, they must have a guaranteed job in any of the employment schemes of the Presidency,” says Hendricks.

Al Jama-ah further calls on government to appoint a permanent Commissioner urgently. Between April and December 2021, a total of 10 577 of offenders serving determinate sentences and 159 offenders serving life sentences were approved for parole placement.

For further media enquiries contact national spokesperson:

Adv. Shameemah Salie

Cell: 084 423 0476



