

NOZIZWE MADLALA – ROUTLEDGE**PRESS CONFERENCE**

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: We have about 10 minutes before the press conference starts and we would like to have everyone seated in the next couple of minutes. So please, purely full members of the media, accredited members of the media. The format will be very simple. At about two minutes past 10 o'clock the former Deputy Minister will be coming in.

UNIDENTIFIED LADY SPEAKER 1: Thank you all for coming and let me just give you a sense of from our point of view how we're going to be managing things. She's going to make a statement. After the reading you will have opportunities to ask questions and we'll take them one at a time. I'm sure you just said that, I wasn't listening. However, if any of you would like follow up interviews or anything else along that nature, contact with us. We have two members of staff sitting at two chairs at the back, Jane and Imogen, please give your details to Jane or Imogen. Once the press conference is over she will leave immediately, she will not be doing any interviews thereafter. Okay? Now, this I need to be clear about. She will be speaking about her dismissal and the reasons she was given for them. As you've seen in the statement – Yusuf, have you got the statement here? The statement's coming round. These are around a visit to Frere Hospital and the trip to Madrid. We will only be taking questions as they relate to

these issues, any and all questions about Frere Hospital and Madrid. So, in recent weeks I feel that many questions from – I'm sure some of you're here today - and I know what you're interested in. However, I've said what we're going to talk about, okay? I'm keen that we conduct this interview with dignity and grace. Consequently, Ms Madlala-Routledge will not be discussing her relationship with any cabinet, any member of cabinet or engaging in any speculation about conspiracies and plots. I urge you to scrutinise the former Deputy Minister about the allegations levelled in the media and not pressure her to take anyone else down with her. Okay? Thank you.

MS DAVIS: Thanks very much. The Deputy Minister will be brought in during the news broadcast which starts at 10. I just want to remind everyone that this is going to be a live broadcast and if we can just request – I might be repeating Yusuf, but if we could just request that when do address the former Deputy Minister to ask your questions, if you could be quite clear when you speak. It just helps listeners, it's quite stressful for listeners to have to struggle to hear the name of somebody. So if you could just bear with us on that, that would be much appreciated. We'll take a round of questions and then if there's time we'll take another round of questions. I'm not sure how long for the former Deputy Minister to read her statement.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I'd say about 10 – 15 minutes.

UNIDENTIFIED LADY SPEAKER 2: 10, 15 minutes and then after that we'll open the floor to questions.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: How long do we have?

5 MS DAVIS: We've got until 11, we'll take it no further than 11 o'clock and we need to be quite tight about moving to news then. But, you know, if we get that far, well, good.

BROADCAST - 567 CAPE TALK – EYEWITNESS NEWS

BROADCASTER: Top story in Eyewitness News this hour,
10 former Deputy Health Minister, Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge is about to break her silence of her sudden dismissal.

MS DAVIS: Good morning and welcome to this live media conference coming to you from Primedia Broadcasting Studios in Cape Town. I am Gay Davis, Primedia's Group
15 Parliamentary Correspondent. I'll be chairing today's media conference. It's being broadcast live over Talk Radio 702 and 567 Cape Talk. Sitting on my right is the former Deputy Minister of Health, Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge. A very good welcome to you today.

20 MS MADLALA-ROUTLEDGE: Thank you.

MS DAVIS: On her right is the former Deputy Minister's advisor, Sakkie Naidoo, and I'd also like to extend a very warm welcome to all my colleagues from the Print and Electronic Media who are here today. The format today is as follows.
25 The former Deputy Minister will make an opening statement

and after that we will open the floor to questions.

Mrs Madlala-Routledge is here to tell her side of the story over her dismissal as Deputy Health Minister by President Thabo Mbeki. It's the first time that Mrs Madlala-Routledge will be speaking about the issue and we welcome this opportunity to hear what you have to say. By way of background, let me just say that Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge has a long track record in working for particularly the rights of women. Born in 1952, she joined the ANC's underground structures in 1979. In 1994 she joined the South African Communist Party and today serves on its central committee. After serving in Parliament, she was promoted to Deputy Minister of Defence in 1999. She held that portfolio until April 2004 when she was appointed Deputy Minister of Health. That post, she no longer holds.

Former Deputy Minister, Ms Madlala-Routledge, we know that you met with President Thabo Mbeki on Tuesday afternoon this week. We know that you were asked by the President to resign your post. We also know that you decided against stepping down. As a result, the President relieved you of your duties. That took immediate effect on Wednesday, the day before the country celebrated Women's Day. Judging from the reaction to your dismissal, people have a lot of questions and we're looking very forward, very much forward, to hearing your answers here today. Over to you.

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MS MADLALA-ROUTLEDGE: Thank you very much, Gay. Thank 702 and greetings to all of you out there, to all of you South Africans who have shown me so much support. I want to thank all the media people that are here this morning.

5 Thank you so much for coming to hear my side of the story. I've been humbled by the response of the public outcry over my dismissal on the eve of National Women's Day. I want to state upfront that I respect completely and unequivocally the authority of our Constitution and the institutions it has

10 established in the three branches of our Government, the Executive, Parliament and the Judiciary as well as all the institutions that support and protect our democracy. Flowing from this, I want to state that I respect fully the authority the Constitution gives our State President, Mr Thabo Mbeki, to

15 appoint and dismiss members of his Executive. Although there is no obligation on the part of the State President to disclose reasons for dismissing members of his Executive, as a consequence of the allegations of impropriety on my part, presently circulating, I have chosen to subject myself to

20 scrutiny by the media for the State so that the facts, as I see them, can receive an airing.

I've been fired for paying an unannounced visit to Frere Hospital on the 13 July 2007 and for my response to the shocking situation I found in the maternity ward. This visit to

25 Frere Hospital was prompted by the much-publicised story

broken by the Daily Despatch after a two month uncover investigation into why babies die at Frere Hospital.

The other reason for my dismissal is the much-publicised trip I undertook to Madrid to address a conference hosted by ERV, that is, the International Aids Vaccine Initiative. What is at issue here is that I went to Madrid without permission from the State President. I can disclose now that I know the reason the President did not approve this trip because he told me on Tuesday. He believed that the meeting was not for politicians. He believed that politicians have nothing to say in a conference of technocrats and researchers. This I was not aware of prior to my departure for Madrid. I do not believe that the President had all the facts relating to the two incidents and the actions I took. This press conference gives me the opportunity to explain to the public and to subject myself to media scrutiny.

With regard to the unannounced visit to Frere Hospital, I believe I acted within the requirements and boundaries set by our Constitution with regards to the duties of members of the Executive. Using the authority that went with my delegated functions in the Ministry of Health, I considered it my duty to respond quickly to a report about babies dying at the reported rate in one of our facilities. I had no intention to create hype as alleged by the Chairperson of the Health Portfolio Committee, Comrade James Ncgulu(?). Before the

unannounced visit I had informed the Provincial MEC, Nomsa Djadula(?), about the serious concerns regarding conditions at Frere Hospital as reported to me by my former colleagues in the Executive and I can name them if you want to know who they are, that informed me, that the conditions at Frere Hospital need our attention. I informed Ms Djadula that I intended to visit hospitals in the Eastern Cape with her and her department. On the day I went to Frere Hospital she could not join me, although I did ask her, because of the short notice, but she despatched the Acting CEO to meet me at the hospital and to accompany me for the duration of my visit. I was shocked by the situation in the maternity ward at Frere Hospital. More significantly, I was made aware that these problems had been reported to the Provincial Government many times before and that the situation was a factor in why some babies had died. My comments that the situation constituted a national emergency were informed by the shocking realisation that some of the deaths were avoidable and that the situation I observed was not unique to Frere Hospital. I observed a situation of acute shortages of clinical and support staff and equipment. I observed the exposure of staff to a highly stressful working environment where clinical staff spends hours doing clerical work and pushing trolleys. I observed a situation where there's a high turnover of staff. I commend the role played by the Daily Despatch in bringing

into the open an issue of national concern, that of the unacceptable numbers of babies that die from avoidable causes. As a pillar of our democracy, the media have in this instance and many others played their role with courage and distinction. Our democracy is premised on a free media and freedom of expression.

With regards to the Madrid trip, I believe the issue is not about who I took with me although I can answer any question relating to this. The issue of who Ministers and Deputy Ministers are allowed to take on official trips is governed by the strict guidelines in the Ministerial Handbook. This is something the City Press could have established quite easily as, seemingly, they have such easy access to Government documents before suggesting that there was a possible abuse of public funds. The issue is about why I went to Madrid without getting approval from our President as all Ministers and Deputy Ministers are required to do. I did not defy our President as alleged in the City Press, article of 4 August 2007. I acted in good faith in the belief that our President had approved the trip. As a matter of interest, I would invite the media or suggest that the media interview ministers and deputy-Ministers to establish if some of them have not gone overseas trips prior to establishing if they had permission from the President. Often, ministers and deputy-Ministers travel at short notice and this does not allow enough time to get the

necessary stamp of approval. These are the facts regarding the processes I followed. On the same day I wrote to seek the Acting Minister's concurrence on the trip. I also wrote to the President requesting his approval. The staff in my office
5 was in regular contact with officials in the Presidency to establish if permission had been granted.

Another matter I wish to clarify, which has been a matter of public interest, is why I made a last minute decision to leave a day before the date on the letter to the President. I realised
10 quite late that if I left on the 12th, as stated in the letter, I would not arrive in Madrid on time for the meeting which was due to start in the morning of the 13th. On the day I left for Madrid I asked if we had permission and was assured that we did. However, in hindsight, I realise the cost of not asking to
15 see the letter and that is why I am addressing you today as a former Deputy Minister relieved of my duties two years before the end of our government's term of office. When I realised the trip had not been approved by the President, I had a huge dilemma because despite the huge cost to the department, I
20 could not be seen to defy the President by attending the meeting, so I did not attend the meeting on hearing that the trip was not approved. I took the first available flight back home. I do not know if there was an investigation, as alleged in the media, about the unauthorised trip to Madrid. I believe
25 the Constitution protects my right to know which institution

conducted the investigation on behalf of the President and what its findings were. By asking these questions, I am not challenging the authority of those who investigated me, if they did. I expect that I would have been asked to explain my side
5 of the story. All of us who hold public office must be held accountable and must conduct ourselves with the highest level of moral standards in relation to how we handle public funds. I would like to know who leaked the internal government documents about the alleged investigation to City Press, and
10 why, as well as the document that was leaked earlier proposing a rapid review of our public health system to the former Acting Minister of Health. As a member of parliament, I will be asking the Minister of Intelligence to investigate who in the Department of Health is leaking internal government
15 information and, in particular, who is the senior government official in the ministry that is responsible for leaking the two sets of documents I've referred to.

In closing, I want to thank the President for the opportunity for affording me to serve my country, both as a
20 former Deputy Minister of Defence and of Health. My appointment, and that of many women into positions of leadership, illustrates the achievements that we have made in our country. As we continue to strive for the deepening of democracy and the realisation of total emancipation for all, I
25 want to say that our democracy will deepen only if we hold

each other accountable. We must be open to public scrutiny and admit our limitations. We must be frank about the problems in the delivery of healthcare for all. As citizens and leaders, we must not be afraid to speak truth to power. I want
5 also to thank my staff in the ministry who have supported me during my worst and best moments in the Department of Health. I am sorry that some of them have been subjected to harassment by faceless people who have sent them anonymous text messages and threatening phone calls – and
10 this was before I was fired. Some people in my department were already being threatened that they are going to have to leave because the Deputy Minister is leaving this time.

I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate my commitment to the African National Congress. The ANC has
15 faced many difficult moments. I remain firmly aligned to the values, principles and commitments espoused by our guiding document, The Freedom Charter. These I will live and die by. Thank you.

MS DAVIS: We've been listening to the former Deputy Health
20 Minister, Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge. You're listening to a live media conference. It's coming to you from Primedia Broadcasting Studios in Cape Town. I am Gay Davis, Primedia's Group Parliamentary Correspondent. Thank you very much indeed, Ms Madlala-Routledge.

25 MS MADLALA-ROUTLEDGE: Thank you.

MS DAVIS: We're going to open the floor to questions and Africa Melane is there, he will have a roving microphone and I'm just going to kick off - excuse me for seizing the opportunity here.

5 MS MADLALA-ROUTLEDGE: By the way, I joined the SACP in 1984.

MS DAVIS: Oh, okay, that was a mistake on the...(intervention)

MS MADLALA-ROUTLEDGE: Ministerial website.

10 MS DAVIS: But I notice that you are no longer on the ministerial website.

MS MADLALA-ROUTLEDGE: Oh, that's quick.

MS DAVIS: That's very quick and very efficient.

MS MADLALA-ROUTLEDGE: But did you also see that I came
15 in through domestic arrivals because I'm no longer allowed to use VIP and I love coming through domestic arrivals with the people.

MS DAVIS: Well, yes, I think that that is definitely something that has been commented on about your character and that
20 you are very much a person for the people.

MS MADLALA-ROUTLEDGE: Thank you.

MS DAVIS: Just to the question though, you talk about the importance of conducting yourselves – and I'm referring here to (indistinct), with the highest morale standards. Do you feel
25 that you're a victim of double-standards here because, as we

know, most recently Deputy Home Affairs Minister Mulisi Kikaba(?) has gone so far as to admit that he has made use of Home Affairs expense account for purposes which it's not intended and yet we see no sign of any action against that particular Deputy Minister.

MS MADLALA-ROUTLEDGE: I think it's important that we should not say, do as I say and not as I do, that you must live according to the standards that we've set. It is our responsibility, the positions that we hold, we hold because people have trusted us. I think indeed I would agree with you that if Deputy Minister of Home Affairs has admitted that there was abuse of public funds then, indeed, something must be done.

MS DAVIS: Thank you very much. That's Ms Madlala-Routledge, former Deputy Minister of Health. Questions from the floor, Africa? Angela Quintell(?), Independent Newspapers.

ANGELA QUINTELL: Thank you. Now, you've told us the official reason for your dismissal. You've also hinted at what I assume is what you believe is a campaign within the Ministry of Health itself, certainly from officials, and I just wondered that if you believe that there are any reasons that may have led to this particularly in line – because of your outspokenness on issues of HIV/Aids in the back that you've had to question official government quality and the mixed messages sent by

various individuals. Do you believe that that contributed to your axing? And secondly, if I may ask, given that you're clearly out of sync with the official cabinet's view on HIV/Aids, why did you not feel the need to resign in protest? Thank you.

5 MS MADLALA-ROUTLEDGE: I think it is a known fact that there have been tensions in the Ministry of Health and more recently I'm aware that the media had reported that our President was concerned and that he was going to look into the matter and I would have been very interested in our
10 meeting if I'd heard how he's going to address that issue. But, of course, I think this has provided to the opportunity to remove of the factors in that situation. Indeed there are differences of opinion between my former boss on a number of things, but I want to say that the policies of our government
15 are solid and I stand fully behind them whether it's in relation to increasing access of healthcare to all our people, lowering the cost of healthcare, ensuring that pregnant mothers get access to free healthcare. All of those I agree with. Even the policy on HIV/Aids I fully support and I want to thank all of
20 you, the media, I want to thank civil society for helping us to reach the position that we have now as government and as a country on HIV/Aids. Indeed, if I may say, there was a time two years ago when I was almost dismissed and this was for speaking out on the issue particularly around the role of
25 nutrition versus the role of treatment and I want to say two

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years later, when our country is united in a clear definition and a single message of how to manage HIV/Aids, I feel it was worthwhile staying even, as I've mentioned, life was not easy.

MS DAVIS: Thank you, Ms Madlala-Routledge. Next
5 question?

LUKANYO: Hi, I'm Lukanyo (indistinct) from e.TV. Ma'am, in your press statement you said that you'd been fired for paying an announced visit to Frere Hospital. It sounds to me like obviously you were just doing your job. Do you feel that, you
10 know, you were fired for actually doing your job?

MS MADLALA-ROUTLEDGE: I agree with you, Lukanyo, I was just doing my job and the Constitution states this very clearly what the authority and responsibility of members of the Executive is and I did follow protocols because one of the
15 things that was said was that I like to act outside of the structures and I don't know what this means because we have our Constitution's – I had delegated functions. Although it was difficult at first before Acting Minister Radebe was in the Ministry for a short while because it was he who realised that
20 these delegations were meaningless without authority and he signed, giving me authority. Just before I was dismissed, that authority was withdrawn by the Minister of Health. So the answer to your question is that indeed I had the responsibility and the obligation to go and find out why babies are dying and
25 today, of course, if you read the newspapers, a doctor at

Cecilia Makuane(?) Hospital is saying that babies are dying both at Frere and at Cecilia Makuane and I think all of us should care about that, all of us should care about the future of our country.

5 MS DAVIS: (indistinct)?

MR JOUBERT: Thank you, Jan van der Byl (?) for the Burger. Ms Madlala-Routledge, you said that you saw this is a national disaster, what you saw at Frere Hospital in East London. The President has replied that after Dr Green-Thompson looked at
10 the issue he couldn't find a discrepancy between the national figures and those at Frere. Would you say that there is a difference between what you are saying and what the President is saying, that there is a difference between a national disaster and the national average?

15 MS MADLALA-ROUTLEDGE: I don't know the technical differences. I said what I saw was a national emergency, that it was a crisis, and I think if the figures at Frere are the same as figures at Witbank, at Grootte Schuur, at Tygerberg, at King Edward, the fact is that if they are high and babies are dying
20 from avoidable illnesses and conditions, then I think that is an emergency especially for a country like ours which is a middle-income country. When you compare our country with other countries in the same economic status, we aren't doing well at all and I think this means we have to all look at what can we
25 do and one of the things, which I've mentioned here, is the

acute shortage of nursing staff. You find the few nurses in a hospital like Frere Hospital that have stayed having to work under terrible conditions and I truly admire their courage and resilience.

5 MS DAVIS: You're listening to a live media conference coming to you from Primedia Broadcasting Studios in Cape Town. I am Gay Davis, Primedia Group's Parliamentary Correspondent. This is being broadcast live on Talk Radio 702 and 567 Cape Talk. You're listening to the former Deputy
10 Health Minister Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge. Another question, Susan Seger, Natal Witness.

MS SEGER: Ms Madlala-Routledge, just as to the famous conference in Spain, could you give us some idea of the importance of the conference, what you had hoped to achieve
15 there and whether this is kind of a lost opportunity in the fight against HIV/Aids and could you also give us an idea of what your next move is career-wise?

MS MADLALA-ROUTLEDGE: I think it was a lost opportunity for our country especially as I had travelled that far and I want
20 to say that the Minister of Health of Spain spoke that that meeting was ours, due to speak on the importance and urgency of finding a vaccine particularly focusing on South Africa, in my own country, and I think until we see progress in the development of a vaccine and I think those of us who are
25 in political office have something to say about that, that we

see a future for our people, that is not a promising one because for as long as the numbers of people who are getting newly infected every day from HIV, apart from those who are already AIDS sick and apart from those who are dying already every day, then I think all of us would realise that it was a lost opportunity that we are not able to share with the scientists, to share with other politicians like the Minister of Health of Spain to see how they have dealt with issue and how they can support us. One thing that I actually want to mention here, I think we do need partnerships with countries north of us on issues, for example, of how we can reduce the price of drugs because indeed, as the Minister of Health mentioned, the high cost of drugs in our country, I think we're going to be faced with a huge problem because in the way that we have managed ARV treatment, we are going to be developing a very huge problem of resistance which then requires that we should put people on the second line regime of ARV's which are more expensive.

MS DAVIS: Thank you. Another question?

20 MR DU TOIT: Ms Madlala-Routledge, I'm Pierre du Toit from Beeld Newspaper. If you can just tell us, who were your colleagues in the Executive who informed you or reported to you about the conditions at Frere and also, why did you refuse to resign?

25 MS MADLALA-ROUTLEDGE: You know, I was speaking to two

deputy ministers who approached me. One of them was the chairperson of the Amatola District as well as Deputy Minister of Defence, Mulalele George(?). I also spoke to Deputy Minister Ntombasana Botha(?) and she was in despair because
5 she had been raising these issues with other officials. You asked why I refused to resign?

MR DU TOIT: Yes.

MS MADLALA-ROUTLEDGE: Would you offer to resign in my situation? I would like to be guided by you. Of course I think,
10 as I said, I would like to know what processes were undertaken to establish that I had broken the rules in how I organised my trip to Madrid. But, as I've said already, I did not think doing what I was paid to do was wrong.

MS DAVIS: Thank you. Another question, (indistinct) Kahn(?)
15 Business Day?

MS KHAN: Ms Madlala-Routledge, given that the culture of the ruling party as one in which dissent is not an expected terrain within the party and not aired in public, could tell us why you've taken the relatively risky step over the last couple
20 of years to speak your mind so freely? And secondly, I know you mentioned that you're planning to ask the Minister of Intelligence to investigate who is behind the leaks. Perhaps you could tell us who you think is behind them?

MS MADLALA-ROUTLEDGE: Interestingly, as you see in the
25 Mail and Guardian, the facts I sent to the Presidency saying

I'm not resigning, I sent from Luthuli House and Chief Albert Luthuli, Oliver Tambo, Govan Mbeki, Archie Gumede – must mention some women - Lillian Goyi(?), Dora Tamana, all those stalwarts, put into the Freedom Charter values that I uphold
5 and the ANC taught me to stick to the values to speak out. I will remain, as far as I'm able to, true to those values.

MS DAVIS: Thank you. I think there was just a question which was left unanswered and that was put by the Natal Witness and that was, have you thought about your future?
10 Perhaps you'd care to address that for us?

MS MADLALA-ROUTLEDGE: I'm now an ordinary member of Parliament and if the ANC still wants me to be in this role I will stay. I have a constituency in Kwa-Zulu Natal. I think this is going to give me time, more time, to engage with my
15 constituency and, of course, as we go towards December – I'm not inviting a question – I'm going to be campaigning hard to get a leader or leaders that I think will be brave to stand up for the truth, to stand up for the values that my organisation, the ANC, stands for.

20 MS DAVIS: Thank you. Another question please?

MR RAUTENBACH: Mike Rautenbach from (indistinct) Health (indistinct) Trust. Ms Madlala-Routledge, have you considered any possible legal challenge to your dismissal?

MS MADLALA-ROUTLEDGE: I forgot to answer a question, do
25 I know who in the ministry or Department of Health is leaking

documents. You know, some of the documents that were leaked – and this is for me very, very interesting - because if a story comes out in City Press and it says that an anonymous whistleblower has asked the President to investigate an unauthorised trip undertaken by former Deputy Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge and among the documents that are produced is a letter, the very letter, that has caused my problems signed by the President to me, saying “Trip not approved” and that letter has been faxed directly to my office.

10 I want to know where did the leak take place? Is it in my own office? Is it somebody in the ministry? And, of course, the City Press has indicated to some people that they do have somebody in the ministry, a high official in the ministry of health that’s their source. I want this investigated. Not

15 because I think it’s wrong for the media to know what is going on in government because you do, the Constitution gives you that right, but the issue here that I’m raising is, it doesn’t look to me here as if there was an intention to solve a problem as it was indicated, it looks to me like there was an intention to

20 cause trouble, to remove a person that maybe they had decided they did not need in the ministry.

MS DAVIS: Thank you, I just want to remind you that you’re listing to the former Deputy Health Minister, Ms Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge. This is live media conference, it’s coming

25 to you from Primedia Broadcasting Studios In Cape Town. I

am Gay Davis, Primedia Group Parliamentary Correspondent. This broadcast is of course live on Talk Radio 702 and 567 Cape Talk. We'll take more questions.

MS MADLALA-ROUTLEDGE: There was a question about
5 what next career-wise.

MS DAVIS: That's right, still unanswered.

MS MADLALA-ROUTLEDGE: I've got two sons, Mandela
Lamumba Martin. He is not the NGO activist. In fact, I don't
have a son who is an NGO activist. My other son is Simon
10 Luayans Busiso. I think I would like to have time with them, to
see them grow up and I think I will remain in parliament, as I
said, if I'm still allowed to, that will give me more time to be
with my family. But I'm also a philosophy student, so I was
very interested in the story of mini-skirts and figures and truth.
15 So I'm hoping to grow in understanding how to analyse, to
think, to question. That, for now, satisfies me, just to sit with
my friends and eat good food – and I don't mean expensive
food, I mean good food.

MS DAVIS: Alright, we have a question. Glynnis Crook, Cape
20 Talk and 702.

MS CROOK: I have a question on behalf of Chris Gibbons of
the (indistinct) Report. He wants to ask if you think you were
deliberately stitched on by the Minister Health?

MS MADLALA-ROUTLEDGE: Stitched on? That's an English
25 term, I'm not familiar with what it means?

MS DAVIS: Maybe translate. It is – I think you have answered it, but you haven't said it directly, and that is, do you think you were set up, that this is all a set-up?

MS MADLALA-ROUTLEDGE: I don't know. I can't say. But I
5 will say this, that when I spoke in the NCOP two years ago - and this is the time when I was almost sacked - the Minister of Health had said to me and had not looked at me, but she had said to me, "I will fix you" and maybe she has fixed me.

MS DAVIS: Could you – just following on on that, Ms Madlala-
10 Routledge, I mean could you give us a sense of relations? I had a very interesting look at the organogram of the ministry before it disappeared so rapidly from the website and it was intriguing to me to see that as deputy minister that you were in a sense marginalised by that very organogram. Now I know
15 that you've said that you don't want to answer questions about it, but I do put it to you, that it has been said that you have not behaved as a team player, this is the criticism that's been levelled against you, that you've not acted as a team player and that nobody could really act without the (indistinct) of this.
20 But do you feel that conditions that prevailed made it difficult for you in terms of acting as a team?

MS MADLALA-ROUTLEDGE: It's interesting the efficiency with which my name has been removed. I've been struggling for a long time to see my speeches on the Department of
25 Health website, so... But I think partly there is a problem in

general of where Deputy Ministers should be located in relation to the organogram. When I first came to the Ministry of Health, which was very interesting because the Deputy Minister was directly below the Minister, but then that also
5 changed very quickly and she became – I became her handbag, anyway I'll put it that way because they could decide to pick me up if they wanted to or not. But to tell you really, in practice, I've had difficulty accessing information from the Department of Health because I had to ask the Director
10 General, the Director General instructed the senior management staff in my department that they should not liaise directly with me. If they need to tell me anything, if there was a problem with oral health, with technology, they must send a submission that must go right through to the Minister and then
15 the decision will be taken there whether I get to see it or not. That decision was changed. Again, I mention a window of light by the former Acting Minister in relation to my delegations. So, I'm saying, there has been a problem and it's quite difficult to operate in the dark.

20 MS DAVIS: Thank you. Another question?

MS HELLERS: Di Hellers(?), Cape Argus. You mentioned earlier saying that the country is now united and (indistinct) single method on how to manage HIV/Aids and I think that's part of what a large part of civil society has already expressed
25 concern about, that your departure will mean that the

disappearance of that, everybody being on one side fighting things together and I wonder if you can make some comment about that but also say whether you think there is anybody else that could step into your shoes in respect of what you
5 have been doing to unite civil society with government for the past few months?

MS MADLALA-ROUTLEDGE: I was going to say I do hope that the new Deputy Minister of Health will be somebody stronger than I, somebody better able to influence and support
10 the staff because I think the staff in the department does need support. I hope Dr Qundu stays, I hope I don't cause trouble mentioning her name, but indeed I don't have a particular person, I've actually not been able to guess who might be appointed in my place but I will work closely with that person
15 maybe initially just to hand over what I need to hand over. But, as a member of parliament, I hope I will be able to support in the way I can the new appointee.

MS DAVIS: Thank you, next question. Ferland Van Wee(?) (indistinct).

20 MS VAN WEE: Given that you have your views, do you have a lot of support in cabinet and following your sacking, your announcement of your sacking, have you have had any calls of sympathy from other members of the executive and if you could just comment perhaps on the sort of political fallout, if
25 any, on the President's decision?

MS MADLALA-ROUTLEDGE: I've had a number of calls. I won't be able to mention people's names because I might forget some people. I've had text messages, I'm still struggling to scroll down all the messages that I've received.

5 Some members have come and spoken to me directly. I didn't hear the rest of your question?

MS DAVIS: Shall I repeat it for you? It's just whether you could comment on the reaction to your dismissal.

MS VAN WEE: And maybe Minister Radebe in particular.

10 MS DAVIS: And Minister Radebe in particular.

MS MADLALA-ROUTLEDGE: Minister Radebe and I go a long way. I used to report to him when I was in the underground cell of the SACP. He has spoken to me and I appreciate that very much. I say "bongaan"(?).

15 MS DAVIS: Another question, (indistinct) Roelf, Reuters.

MR ROELF: Ms Madlala-Routledge, South Africa has been battling a PR disaster with regards to its Aids policy. What do you think the international follow up will be and perceptions internationally and locally will be on your dismissal? How will it affect the policy turnaround and the hold up and finally, will it affect who you're going to be voting for possibly in the December congress?

20 MS MADLALA-ROUTLEDGE: I said I wasn't going to entertain that question because I'm going to be working very hard in my branch and in my district and in my province and all over, but
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by that I mean to, as I said before, to make sure that we succeed to unite the ANC. That is very important, to unite the ANC, and to choose a leader who the country will support because interestingly, in terms of our system, it's the ANC that
5 - or the winning party that has the opportunity to choose our President. I can't remember the rest of the question?

MS DAVIS: The international...

MS MADLALA-ROUTLEDGE: Oh yes. The Deputy President is chair of SANAC, South African National Aids Council, and
10 Mark Hayward, I hope will be confirmed by the plenary of the next sitting of the plenary of SANAC and there's still a lot of excitement and enthusiasm among various sectors of South African Society. Of course, people are waiting to really feel confident that the spirit of unity that we have achieved by the
15 end of last year beginning of this year will remain intact because we really do need a united front. In terms of a fallout, I'm not able to answer that question. I think because we have a strong alliance that has been built now in our country, we have this close partnership that has been developed, but also
20 in terms of – you were talking about PR – in terms of communication, that was one of the things that we agreed as the executive last year that we needed to really communicate a single message and I hope that will remain on the campaign against HIV/Aids.

25 MR LE GRANGE: Yusuf Le Grange from Primedia

Broadcasting. I've got two questions that follow up, Ma'am. The Deputy President (indistinct) you yesterday morning that she intends to have a chat with you. Have you spoken to her and, if so, can you share the discussion with us? She also
5 said she was your friend and that you're still friends with her. The second question is, have you been in touch with Minister Manto Tshabalala-Msimang and, if so, can you please share with the audience what did the Minister of Health have to say to her and what did you say to her?

10 MS DAVIS: Can we get back to those questions later please? We'll take those questions later. Another question?

MR MKWALI: I'm Thabo Mkwali(?) from the SABC. Ms Madlala-Routledge, have you – are you aware of any steps to make you repay the money that you (indistinct) from this trip to
15 Madrid? If not, have you considered doing so?

MS MADLALA-ROUTLEDGE: I'm not aware of any steps to make me repay the money. I've said that there are processes and I would like to be given an opportunity to explain or to – as I'm doing now, what actually happened to an institution that
20 has the authority to do so and indeed, if I have to repay the money I'll have to find it. I respect the public and it's their money. I would definitely have to refund it if I'm found to have breached.

MS DAVIS: Would you be happy then to subject yourself to
25 scrutiny by Parliament's standing committee on public

accounts which is the watchdog of the public purse?

MS MADLALA-ROUTLEDGE: Well I heard that Scopa had made an announcement. I don't know what announcement they have made. But I'm actually very keen also to understand
5 at what point the whistleblower got hold of this information and what was the cause for concern. From the point of view that we have very strict protocols stipulated by the PFMA of how public money is used. So before the Department of Health could pay the travel agent – and I don't know at what point this
10 happens, because a large portion of that 160 000 was for Air Iberia. I'm not sure why they chose that particular airline, I don't know if SAA would have been cheaper, I'm not sure. We don't get involved in those decisions about which airline is chosen, but I hope it was chosen because it made sense. So
15 the CFO, the Chief Financial Officer receives the account and he scrutinises all the supporting documents to see was this authorised spending, are all the documents here that should be here and then, of course, if he picks up that there's a problem, he will report to the accounting officer, the DG, and
20 the DG, I would imagine, would say, "Deputy Minister, you put in a submission to say you want to go to Madrid and you want to take one and two. Of course we know that you are not the one who signs these things, you ask, but we find here when we look at these documents that there's a discrepancy." So I'm
25 saying I would have expected that process to have happened

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before suddenly there's a whistleblower, because as far as I was concerned, nobody had ever mentioned to me that there was something wrong that had happened.

MS DAVIS: Okay. I just want to remind you that you're
5 listening to the former Deputy Health Minister, Ms Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge, you're listening to a live media conference coming to you from Primedia Broadcasting Studios in Cape Town. I'm Gay Davis, Primedia Group's Parliamentary Correspondent. This is being broadcast live and it's on 567
10 Cape Town and Talk Radio 702. I think we're going to start wrapping up now. Are there further questions? Yes, I see a lot of hands. Possibly one or two more questions then.

MS THERON: I'm Ansie Theron from Health (indistinct) News. Ma'am, I just want to confirm with you, you're one of the more
15 high-profile departures, but there's been many before you. There's been DEG's, there's been Deputy DEG's, where their positions have been made untenable. Can you agree that there is a problem within the Health Department that people who are coming to do their job and maybe don't agree with
20 what some people want to come out of that department, they leave because their positions are so untenable. And can you also confirm that the current Director General is one of the people that made your life difficult there?

MS MADLALA-ROUTLEDGE: Just the issue of about when we
25 – we did for a long time struggle in the department because we

didn't have a DG, I think after Dr Nzaluwa(?) left and we did advertise at one point interviewed some candidates and we found a suitable candidate who was offered the job and then turned us down - I don't know the reasons. But I think
5 because, you know, it is stressful in situations where staff pick up tensions higher up, you know, and loyalties are questioned or divided. So, you know, we have lost some very good people in the Department of Health. I hope we can still bring them back.

10 MS DAVIS: Another question...(intervention)

MS MADLALA-ROUTLEDGE: To answer about perceptions, because, you know, people from a perception, I really can't answer. What I do know is that within the ANC, I used to attend meetings of the NEC, I felt free to speak there.
15 Members of the NEC spoke their minds. I'm not personally aware of a problem in addressing our leaders on any issue. You want a name? I really want to talk about somebody with certain qualities, I don't want at this stage to mention a name because there's a process and I want to be part of that
20 process in my branch when we sit together and work out what are the qualities that we agree on and who has those qualities. That process is starting soon so I wouldn't want to influence your mind right now.

MS DAVIS: One last question. Angela Quintell?

25 MS QUINTELL: I know you don't want to give us a name, but

let me ask you, are you ...(intervention)

MS MADLALA-ROUTLEDGE: Please give me an opportunity to go back to my branch and talk to my branch. Well, of course, we are a democracy and we have certain ideals and indeed I think Africa is moving on, it's good to see a woman in Liberia as President. I think we do need more women in those top positions. I don't know when though South Africa will want to do this, I think we all have to work very hard for that.

10 MS DAVIS: Ms Madlala-Routledge, can we ask you if you've got any closing comments you want to take - perhaps also just referring to whether you're considering the election and what form that that might take. You did speak about your constitutional rights which you felt have been abrogated.

15 MS MADLALA-ROUTLEDGE: Just my closing comments really is to thank the people of South Africa, that I can stand tall and say "aluta continua" (?) and I hope we say this together because we still do have a lot of challenges and I want to be part of the – to remain part of the solution. I'm standing ready to join in all the campaigns that we need to take. I do not intend taking legal action around my dismissal. I've said that the Constitution is very clear on this, so that's my conclusion. When I thanked all the people that are here, I also want to thank the organisations that have sent me a day after Women's Day these wonderful flowers. My house, which won't be mine

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for long, because it's a government house, is going to be looking very good while I decide and look for another house.

MS DAVIS: There you have it. Former Deputy Health Minister, Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge speaking to us here live
5 at this media conference coming to you from Primedia Broadcasting Studios in Cape Town. Ms Madlala-Routledge, thank you all for coming, we appreciate

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