

## SA's Aids funding safe for now

Deputy President Kgalema Motlanthe reiterated on Tuesday that South Africa would continue to receive uninterrupted funding from the United States Government for Aids relief programmes, for the time being.



(Image: GCIS)

The White House is proposing cutting back at least US\$569m on its PEPFAR programme globally. Since 2003, South Africa's support from PEPFAR (President's Emergency Plan for Aids Relief) has been estimated to billions of rands.

In his reply to questions in Parliament, Motlanthe said the intention of the United States Government was to start effecting cuts in the budgets from September 2012, which is the end of the financial year for that country.

"During my visit to Washington DC to attend the 19th International Aids Conference I met with members of Congress and requested that funding levels from PEPFAR be kept stable over the next two years, thus giving South Africa sufficient time to plan the takeover of services," Motlanthe said.

COPE MP Dirk Feldman wanted to know what was the outcome of Motlanthe's diplomatic efforts in the United States of America in an attempt to prevent the stopping of Aids funding to South Africa as a result of the White House decision.

Motlanthe said in recognition of South Africa's success in responding to HIV and Aids and the significant increases in the allocation of domestic funding to the HIV and TB National Strategic Plan, the United States Government had committed itself to continue supporting prevention programmes, strengthening health systems as well as providing support for orphans and vulnerable children.

"During her recent visit to South Africa, US Secretary of State Hilary Clinton once again expressed support to our Government as we strengthen our technical capacity so that in terms of the new partnership agreement more can be done in the long run."

The United States Government also committed itself to provide support for any new evidence-based programmes if South Africa presents a strong case and motivates for new resources from the United States Government.

A technical task team comprising senior officials from relevant departments has been established to monitor and oversee the transition of treatment programmes from PEPFAR supported NGOs to the public health sector, he said.

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