

MEMBERS STATEMENT

30 JULY 2015

BLOODLIONS

Honourable Speaker,

The atrocity that is the practice of canned-lion hunting recently took centre stage at the Durban film festival when the documentary “BloodLions” premiered on the 22 July.

It is safe to say that this barbaric practice and throwback from the days of colonialism is nothing but an abhorrent relic from an evil past.

It’s high time that South Africa stands up and says that its wildlife is no longer for sale to the highest international bidder, its high time that we stand up for our wildlife.

This practice continues unabated at home in South Africa and in most of our fellow neighbouring states as well. International news recently reported on the killing of an icon of Zimbabwean wildlife, Cecil the lion, who was baited, wounded by a hunters bow, tracked and then shot dead 40hrs later by an American tourist, Walter Palmer, who allegedly paid 35000 pounds for the opportunity and privilege of killing Cecil, and then attempting to have his head mounted on a wall at home in the United States.

Canned-lion hunting is a disgrace. Why should the very few hunting operators be enriched at the expense of the many who will now never be able to see a ‘Cecil the lion’ proudly wandering our vast African expanses? We must protect and conserve our wildlife – This is a duty and sacred trust. Our Lions are apex predators, the pride of African wildlife, they deserve nothing less than our most stringent protection.

We salute the Minister of Tourism who appeared in the documentary and hope that he will be engaging his counterparts in Environment and Agriculture on this issue as it will require a multi-pronged Ministerial and Departmental approach.

The practice of canned-lion hunting is unacceptable and must be driven from our country and continent!

I thank you.

