

Minister for Safety & Security's statement re collectors of firearms - Wed, 02 Nov 2005

CAPE TOWN

Firearms Control Act to be reviewed
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The Firearms Control Act may be reviewed to close loopholes being exploited by collectors, Safety and Security Minister, Charles Nqakula, said on Wednesday.

Briefing reporters at Parliament in his capacity as chairperson of the Justice, Crime Prevention and Security cluster of Ministries, Nqakula said the Act had "many loopholes" that were being taken advantage of by collectors.

The Act did not limit collectors to a specific type of weapon, thus leaving the system open for abuse, he explained.

"There is one case of a person who has been collecting AK-47s. We found at his place AK47s, we found grenades, we found a number of assorted things — this is no normal collector," he said.

He said the law was not clear enough in this regard.

He also cited certain museums for taking advantage of the same loopholes.

"There is something quite funny there. The pieces that they have are functional pieces," he said querying museums' right to collect weapons still in use by the South African National Defence Force such as the R5 assault rifle.

The police are currently investigating the South African Military Museum in Johannesburg where functional weapons have been found, he said.

"People have been abusing the loopholes in the Firearms Control Act — these are things we want to deal with," he said.

"The Minister of Safety and Security has approached the Leader of Government Business in the National Assembly, with a view to place in next year's Parliamentary programme the amendment of the Firearms Control Act to deal with some ambiguities and loopholes that militate against the proper implementation of that Act," he said