**African Christian Democratic Party**

 **19 May 2022

ACDP Parliament
Budget Vote 22: Correctional Services
Speech by ACDP Parliamentary Whip, Steve Swart MP**

 **ACDP questions why Correctional Services Department should be allocated more funds after its budget was under-spent by R569 million**

“Deputy Speaker/House Chairperson/ Honourable Minister,

The ACDP is fully aware of the severe overcrowding at many of the correctional centres. This negatively impacts on attempts at rehabilitation. One of the ways of addressing this is to reduce the number of awaiting trail detainees, many of whom may be not guilty of the crimes they are charged with.
The Zondo Commission highlighted how the department was captured by Bosasa. What makes these findings particularly galling is that it follows the Jali Commission of Inquiry into bribery and corruption at the department some years ago. Very little seems to have been done to implement the Jali Commission recommendations to prevent the re-occurrence we have witnessed. It will be important to ensure that additional beds are made available in correctional centres to ensure that all those comrades implicated in state capture and corruption can be issued with orange overalls – after the funds they stole have been recovered.

As far as the Committee’s Report is concerned, the ACDP shares concerns that the Department under-spent its budget by R569 million. We question why the Department should be allocated more funds when they were not able to spend their full allocation. Closer monitoring of departmental spending is most definitely required.

The ACDP is pleased that rehabilitation will now also be offered to remand detainees. But the skewed allocation of the budget of the Department in favour of Incarceration and Administration to the disadvantage Rehabilitation and Social Reintegration is regrettable. Rehabilitation should be at the centre of all departmental activities. We raised the issue of restorative justice programmes in centres and are pleased that they are being reintroduced after the Covid 19 lockdown.

The ACDP shares the concerns about the slow pace of infrastructure projects in the Department. A number of projects have been delayed for several years including the Tzaneen Correctional Centre which was only officially opened in 2020 after more than 10 years since the project commenced. This is totally unacceptable. We are equally concerned about security systems that are not operational in a number of facilities including at Tzaneen and Grootvlei Centres. The budget must respond to security needs in facilities to ensure the safe and secure incarceration of inmates.

I thank you.”