**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**POLICE COMMITTEE CALLS SENIOR SAPS OFFICIALS TO ACCOUNT FOR STATEMENT OF SUPPORT**

**Parliament, Wednesday, 5 August 2015** – The Portfolio Committee on Police issued a statement last month on 25 July 2015 in which it welcomed the release by President Jacob Zuma of the Farlam Commission Report on the Marikana tragedy that occurred in Marikana in August 2012.

The Portfolio Committee has indicated it will study the report and make follow-ups on the technical and operational recommendations to ensure that improvements are made in the terms of required controls and command protocols. The Committee will receive a briefing by Parliamentary researchers on 19 August 2015.

The Minister of Police will brief the Committee on 26 August 2015 on the implementation of the Farlam Commission recommendations. On the matter involving concerns over the leadership of the police and its decision-making, the Committee said that the importance of having credible and effective police leadership could not be overemphasised.

The Committee has indicated it will await the outcomes of the processes announced by the President. “We therefore want to record our displeasure with a statement that was issued by Lt Gen Solomon Makgale on 1/08/2015 with the heading ‘The SAPS Board of Commissioners fully supports General Ria Phiyega’. Our observation is that the issuing of the statement is unfortunate and not appropriate in the current set of circumstances,” said Francois Beukman, Chairperson of the Committee.

He added: “While the Office of the President is to consider the representations made by the relevant party with regard to the recommendations made by the Farlam Commission, it is not up to certain members of SAPS management to become involved in an overtly public discourse or to indirectly engage in lobbying on behalf of a party or parties who are the subject of an official process. The process initiated by the President should be respected.”

The Committee would like to remind all Saps members of the Code of Conduct that states:

“I commit myself to creating a safe and secure environment for all people in South Africa by-

- Participating in all endeavours aimed at addressing the root causes of crime;
- Preventing all acts that may threaten the safety or security of any community;
- Investigating criminal conduct that endangers the safety or security of the community;
- Bringing the perpetrators to justice;

In carrying out this commitment, I shall at all times-

- Uphold the Constitution and the law;
- Take into account the needs of the community;
- Recognise the needs of the South African Police Service as my employer, and
- Cooperate with all interested parties in the community and the government at every level.”

Therefore, the Committee is of the firm view that the statement of the said officers blurs the line between the role of civil servants/police officers and the executive consisting of elected representatives.

The role of the Police is defined in Section 205 (2) (3) of the Constitution. The objects of the police service are to prevent, combat and investigate crime, to maintain public order to protect and secure the inhabitants of the Republic and their property and to uphold and enforce the law. The political responsibility for the police according to Section 206 (1) of the Constitution is with a Cabinet member responsible for policing, and Section 207 with the President as head of the national executive in terms of appointment of the National Commissioner.

The Constitution and NDP envisages a professional police service that is subject to civilian control and oversight. The Committee will not support a situation where this principle is compromised or watered down. Hence, the Committee will call on the said officers mentioned in the press release to appear before the Commitee on Wednesday (12 August 2015) at 09:00.

**ISSUED BY PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON POLICE, MR FRANCOIS BEUKMAN**

For media enquiries or interviews with the Chairperson, please contact:

**Name: Mr Temba Gubula**

**Parliamentary Communication Services**

**Tel: 021 403 8307**

**Cell: 078 735 8809**

**Email:** **tgubula@parliament.gov.za**

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