**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**SCOPA REFUSES TO BE FRUSTRATED BY LACK OF ANSWERS FROM WATER AND SANITATION DEPARTMENT ON FINANCIALS**

**Parliament, Wednesday, 5 December 2018 –** The Standing Committee on Public Accounts (Scopa) refuses to be frustration by the lack of responses from the Department of Water and Sanitation on irregular, fruitless and wasteful expenditure as well as on deviations and expansions for the 2017/18 financial year.

The committee struggled to get answers on most of the questions it asked on these matters to the department. The committee has vowed to be relentless when it deals with this department as it is a strategic department that is responsible for an important resource that affects everyone particularly those in the rural and remote areas. A lot of poor people do not have water because they are told there is no money whereas when you look at the annual report of the department there is a lot of money that is being wasted and mismanaged.

Scopa has noticed that there is a systematic collapse of accountability from this department. It is also very clear that there is no team work in the management of the department which has led to the Acting Director-General of the department not being able to respond to any of the questions that stem from the information that the committee received from the department itself.

The committee was also discouraged by the lack of answers on deviations particularly on a deviation that was denied by the Department of National Treasury on a contract to a company called Black Dot. The committee is in fact outraged at the fact that the department had to be forced to provide water to communities through a remedial action of the Public Protector that was given in 2009 and only implemented in 2017, eight years later. This speaks to how the department has focused on looting the state instead of providing water to the many communities that are without water. Scopa has also requested the department to provide plans for bucket eradication by Friday, 07 December 2018. There is a lot of money that has been moved from other projects and there needs to be value for all that money.

The committee is scheduled to continue the hearing with the department on Wednesday, 05 December 2018 at 10:00 am looking at accruals and implementing agents for the 2017/18 financial year.

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF SCOPA, MR THEMBA GOD**