**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**WORKERS AND ORGANISED LABOUR URGED TO BE VIGILANT ABOUT COMPLIANCE WITH NATIONAL MINIMUM WAGE ACT**

**Parliament, Wednesday, 16 January 2019 –** The Portfolio Committee on Labour has encouraged all workers and organised labour to be vigilant in ensuring that employers comply with the National Minimum Wage Act, as promulgated in November 2018.

The Act became operational from 1 January 2019, setting the hourly wage at R20 for those workers who are not covered by the country’s dual wage-setting system. The minimum wages for sectors that are organised into bargaining councils are determined through collective bargaining systems.

The Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Labour, Mr Lemias Mashile, said that the national minimum wage represents a marked increase in income for the more than six million workers of South Africa’s labour force, who were previously earning less than R20 an hour.

“Farm workers, domestic workers and workers employed in an Expanded Public Works Programme are entitled to an hourly rate of R18, R15 and R11 respectively. The National Minimum Wage Commission will come up with a proposal for these categories to increase these salaries within two years,” said Mr Mashile.

The committee understands that the South African labour market is characterised by high levels of inequality, unemployment and poverty. Statistics South Africa has also reported that at the end of the third quarter of 2018, out of a labour force of 22.6 million, 16.4 million or 72.5% were employed.

The committee has encouraged the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration and the courts to be ready to intervene when non-compliance with the National Minimum Wage Act is reported.

The committee will continue to conduct oversight on effective implementation of the Act.

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON LABOUR, MR LEMIAS MASHILE**