MEDIA STATEMENT

MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS MUST INVESTIGATE THE PROCUREMENT PROCESS FOLLOWED FOR IT CONTRACT

Parliament, Wednesday, 06 March 2019 – The Portfolio Committee on Home Affairs has recommended an urgent investigation into the procurement process followed for the Automated Biometric Identification Systems (ABIS) which is envisioned to replace the obsolete Home Affairs National Identity Register (HANIS).

The decision to recommend an investigation was to ensure that the awarding of the contract is above board and adheres to governance standards set out by the National Treasury. The committee highlighted that there seems to be many disparities that need thorough investigation especially because the contract is worth a lot of money.

The committee has also raised concerns around the capacity within the State Information Technology Agency in delivering quality Information and Technology services to the state that enables quick and responsive services. The ownership of Intellectual Property was also raised as an element of concern because the current model of private companies owning IP and threatening government with withholding of that IP towards the end of the contract is not sustainable.

Furthermore, the committee resolved to give the Minister of Home Affairs space to consider the matter as he informed the committee that he was expecting a full report by tomorrow (6 March 2019). “The investigation must happen before the 5th Parliament rises to enable the committee to consider it.

Meanwhile, the committee welcomes the announcement by the Minister that he is engaging the provisional liquidators of the African Global Group (Formerly Bosasa) to ensure that the department is not inconvenienced in the running of Lindela Repatriation Centre as the company undergoes the liquidation process. The committee will await a full report once the engagement process between the Minister and the liquidators is finalised.

ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON HOME AFFAIRS, MR HLOMANI CHAUKE