**COMMITTEE POSTPONES MEETING WITH DEPARTMENT**

Parliament, Friday, 13 September 2019 – The Portfolio Committee on Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development today postponed its meeting with the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development as the department was not adequately prepared to respond to the various questions sent to the department.

Whilst on oversight in KwaZulu-Natal, the committee visited a number of farms and posed questions to the national and provincial departments to respond on planned interventions and budgetary requirements to assist the farms currently facing difficulties.

There seems to be a challenge to synchronise the activities and communications between the national department and its provincial counterparts, which needs to be resolved in order to find meaningful solutions to challenges on the ground, where their programmes are meant to be having an impact on land reform, poverty and food security.

“The latter three issues have serious implications for the affected communities, as well as our nation as a whole. Land reform is one of the primary interventions to address historic inequality as well as alleviating poverty and the pressing problem of food security. We urge the national department and its provincial counterparts to make the necessary interventions to ensure that communities don't suffer because of bureaucracy and administrative issues.

“The departments have been tasked to look at the issues which came up during the oversight and provide a comprehensive report to the committee before the next meeting scheduled for next week. Parliament, and specifically the Portfolio Committee for Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development, will continue to exercise its duty of oversight to ensure that its policies and programmes are implemented to advance the agenda of land reform, poverty alleviation and food security.”

ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, LAND REFORM AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT, INKOSI ZWELIVELILE MANDELA.