**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**TRADE AND INDUSTRY COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY SUPPORTS UK AGREEMENT**

**Parliament, Wednesday, 30 October 2019 –**The Portfolio Committee on Trade and Industry yesterday considered the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) between the Southern African Customs Union and Mozambique (SACUM) and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (UK). The committee unanimously supported the approval of this agreement for ratification.

The purpose of the agreement is to provide stability for the trading relationship between the SACUM countries and the UK once it formally exits the European Union (EU) and can no longer utilise the existing trading agreement between the EU and SACUM countries. It maintains duty-free quota-free access for SACUM countries to the UK, other than for South Africa. South Africa will maintain its tariff rate quotas, as currently provided for under the Southern African Development Community-EU EPA, and has secured favourable quotas for market access into the UK, particularly for sugar and wine.

Committee Chairperson Mr Duma Nkosi said: “The agreement will provide the peace of mind and a regulatory secure environment to operate in for all concerned”.

The Department of Trade and Industry indicated that transitional arrangements have been put in place to enable South African traders to continue with their existing trading relationship with the UK.

South Africa has a positive trade relationship with the UK and the committee welcomes efforts to maintain and grow this relationship. The committee emphasised that South African exporters should exploit these opportunities and seek to diversify the export basket to more value-added products.

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON TRADE AND INDUSTRY, MR DUMA NKOSI**