**FOREIGN SERVICE BILL HEADED TO THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**
Parliament, Wednesday, 6 November 2019 – The Portfolio Committee on International Relations and Cooperation unanimously adopted a report on the Foreign Service Bill and it will now be tabled in the National Assembly.

The Chairperson, Ms Tandi Mahambehlala, highlighted that the adoption of the Bill is a milestone achievement for the committee, and a remarkable moment in the legislative history of the Republic of South Africa. For the first time, the mandate of the Department of International Relations and Cooperation and its Foreign Service in 125 missions abroad, will be regulated in order to provide a professional foreign service to our country.

According to Ms Mahambehlala, international relations are executed in a rapidly changing global environment. This demands a Foreign Service that will be able to respond promptly and adequately to challenges. This reality requires effective management and administration to support and strengthen the Foreign Service in the delivery of its mandate.

Through the adoption of the Foreign Service Bill, Ms Mahambehlala emphasised that South Africa will join those foreign services across the globe that have legislative frameworks, through which their foreign services and departments of foreign affairs or international relations are regulated.

She pointed out that international practice shows that for the effective execution of international relations, a Foreign Service needs to be supported by an appropriate legislative framework that enables the execution of its mandate in a global environment.

Ms Mahambehlala concluded that through this legislation, South Africa will be able to achieve its foreign policy objectives of creating a better world for all.

ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND COOPERATION, MS TANDI MAHAMBEHLALA.