**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**COMMITTEE ON POLICE ENCOURAGES CONSTRUCTIVE COLLABORATION BETWEEN CRIME FIGHTING STRUCTURES TO WIN THE FIGHT AGAINST CRIME**

**Parliament, Thursday, 21 November 2019 –**The Portfolio Committee on Police has called for constructive engagement between the Civilian Secretariat of Police and the Western Cape Department of Community Safety to resolve the challenges that Community Policing Forums (CPFs) in the province raised.

The committee met with the CPFs and neighbourhood structures from the province of the Western Cape to find solutions to the challenges the CPFs are facing on a daily basis when they carry out their work in the communities.

The committee is of the view that a constructive relationship is necessary between the Department of Community Safety, The Ministry of Police, and CPFs if the CPFs for the success of the fight against crime. The attendance of the meeting by over 200 members of the CPF from the Western Cape was appreciated by the committee.

These forums, the committee said, are the strategic platforms of sharing and translating ideas on crime fighting into effective crime fighting strategies, and must be supported by government departments and by all peace and justice loving people.

One of the major issues that the CPFs highlighted is the challenge with the Expanded Partnership Programme (EPP) funding which has been identified as a major stumbling block in the effective functioning of the CPFs.

While the committee acknowledges the challenge of funding and the reasons to fast-track certain priorities, it called for engagement to find workable solutions to this challenge as money cannot be a panacea to all the problems.

Crime is a societal issue and, as such, the committee has also called for assistance from other state departments, such as the Department of Human Settlements, and municipalities to deal with the issue of spatial planning that makes policing difficult.

The South African Police Service (SAPS) management has also been requested to look into the training gaps in the training provided to members of CPFs, and to neighbourhood watch structures to ensure the discharge and application of effective policing in the communities.

Furthermore, the committee has called for a relook in the policy guidelines on CPFs to ensure that there is standard approach and to resolve challenges faced by CPFs.

In relation to the rural safety plan, the committee is concerned that the Rural Safety Plan has not been rolled-out to all the provinces to ensure equitable distribution of the available limited resources to all the crime fighting structures to achieve the common objectives in the end.

The committee has noted with concern the information that, due to high visibility of Police and the members of the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) in the urban areas in the Western Cape, there is a gradual movement to rural areas that are also crime-stricken and equally need the visibility of Police and SANDF.

Furthermore, the committee has called for a post intervention plan outlining strategies to be employed once the SANDF’s deployment ends.

The committee has resolved to convene another meeting which will afford it more time to investigate issues that were raised by the CPFs, and seek answers from the MEC for Community Safety in the Western Cape, The Civilian Secretariat of Police, and the Ministry of Police.

Also, the committee committed itself to holding similar engagements with crime fighting structures in other provinces in order to strengthen the efforts of crime fighting. It committed itself to scrutinising the SAPS Act especially in relation to CPFs to ensure that there is a legislative framework that is fit for purpose in the fight against crime.

The committee welcomed the announcement that was made by CPFs that there is a constructive relationship between CPFs and SAPS cluster commissioners. “It is only through these relationships that we will be able to fight any manifestation of crime in the province. We continue to encourage the building of relationships between municipalities, councillors, SAPS officials and CPFs to ensure that we collectively work towards fighting crime,” Ms Joemat-Pettersson emphasised.

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON POLICE, MS TINA JOEMAT-PETTERSSON.**