**Media Statement: Defence Committee to Consult Minister Regarding Support for Castle Control Board (CCB)**

**Parliament, Wednesday, 06 May, 2020 –**The Portfolio Committee on Defence and Military today said that the negative impact of Covid-19 on the Castle of Good Hope comes as no surprise, since the castle operates within the tourism industry.

According to the CCB's Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Mr Calvyn Gilfellan, a request for a R1.6 million relief support package was submitted to National Treasury (NT) in March 2020, but NT has yet to respond. This request was however submitted prior to the news that the Castle of Good Hope will only be fully operational under lockdown level two. As such, the initial amount of R1.6 million could escalate to R3.2 million should the current levels be extended.

The Chairperson of the committee, Mr Cyril Xaba, said: "It is clearly still too early to determine the full impact because we do not know when the country will be back to normality again."

The committee heard that staff had received their full salaries up until March, but the CCB could only pay 70% of the April salaries to operational staff, the rest will be claimed from the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF). The committee also heard that the CCB has been unable to pay management salaries since the start of the lockdown, and the payment thereof is based on the outcomes of the relief support package.

Mr Xaba said that the R1.6 million relief sought is an estimate based on the castle resuming full operations at the end of September, which looks too presumptuous at the moment.

The committee thus resolved to consult both the Minister of Defence, Ms Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, and Department of Defence with regards to providing financial support to the CCB. The committee is of the opinion that the castle is in financial distress and it needs to be rescued before it reaches a disastrous state.

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS, MR CYRIL XABA**