**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**TRANSPORT COMMITTEE CONCERNED ABOUT SLOW TRANSFORMATION IN AVIATION SECTOR**

**Parliament, Tuesday, 19 May 2020** – The Portfolio Committee on Transport yesterday met, via video conferencing, with the Airports Company of South Africa (Acsa) and the South African Civil Aviation Authority (SACAA), for the two entities to present their strategic and annual performance plans.

The two entities of the Department of Transport were represented by their board members, management team and the Deputy Minister of Transport, Ms Dikeledi Magadzi.

The Deputy Minister told the committee that the entities’ plans were outdated, as they were prepared before the Covid-19 outbreak, which brought the aviation industry to a standstill.

She said the department and its entities were in the process of reviewing the plans to respond to Covid-19 and map a “way forward which should get back the industry to its glorious days and ensure that it contributes to rebuilding the South African economy”.

The portfolio committee welcomed the presentations with a few concerns, especially in the area of supply-chain management, and urged the entities to tighten their systems to avoid unauthorised and irregular expenditure.

Members of the committees were particularly concerned about what they termed “lack of transformation” in the aviation industry, where the majority of pilots and cabin crew were white.

Some members called this situation a worrying factor and called for action to address this. One suggestion was to reduce the fees for pilot training, which would make it more accessible.

“Continue to bring hope to our people, bring hegemony by empowering those who have not been empowered. We understand the challenges of Covid-19, but the issue of transformation needs to be addressed urgently,” said committee Chairperson Mr Mosebenzi Zwane.

The committee also welcomed reports from Acsa that the company’s airports were ready for level 3 of the lockdown, where limited domestic flights will be allowed to operate.

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT, MR MOSEBENZI ZWANE**