**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**COMMITTEE ON AG WELCOMES MEASURES PUT IN PLACE BY THE AG IN RESPONDING TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

**Parliament, Friday, 22 May 2020 –**The Standing Committee on the Auditor-General (SCOAG) has welcomed the measures put in place by the Office of the Auditor-General (AG) in responding to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The committee is aware that situations such as the Covid-19 pandemic create opportunities for integrity violations such as fraud and corruption. This is why the committee appreciates the pro-activeness from the Office of the AG when it comes to the manner in which it will audit the material procurement, particularly transversal procurements, distribution of funds and related transactions when it comes to the R500 billion fiscal relief package.

The committee has been informed that the office of the AG has capacitated itself with information technology tools to enable it to work remotely while ensuring the security of its operations and its teams, as well as the detection of fraud, particularly in high-risk transactions.

The committee is also pleased with the fact that there will be special audit reports that will focus on how the funds allocated to the Covid-19 pandemic were spent. The committee also supports the position of the AG in ensuring that even though there is emergency procurement and transactions taking place as a result of the pandemic, these transactions should take place within the parameters of the controls that are in place.

The AG has also tabled a preliminary report of the Municipal Finance Management Act (MFMA) audits before the committee today. The committee took a decision during the meeting not to engage with the report, as the AG is currently in consultations with various stakeholders on the contents of the report and the contents of the report might change as a result of these consultations. The committee has committed to engage with the AG as soon as that report has been finalised.

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE AUDITOR-GENERAL, MR SAKHUMZI SOMYO.**