**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**HOME AFFAIRS COMMITTEE ACCEPTS PSC REPORT ON ACTING CEO OF GPW**

**Parliament, Tuesday, 02 June 2020 –**The Portfolio Committee on Home Affairs has welcomed a report by the Public Service Commission (PSC) which has no finding in relation to the allegations of corruption against the Acting Chief Executive Officer of the Government Printing Works.

The committee is of the view that, according to the process, the issues raised by the whistle-blower regarding the Acting CEO have been addressed adequately. The committee is satisfied that due diligence was followed by both the committee and the Minister to get to the bottom of the matter. “Our desire was to see this matter reaching its finality and to ensure that any allegation of corruption is addressed adequately. We remain steadfast that we must fight corruption with every might of our being, hence we appreciated the urgency with which the Minister addressed this matter,” said Adv Bongani Bongo, the Chairperson of the committee.

The committee notes that the PSC has made various recommendations addressed to the Minister of Home Affairs and will monitor the implementation by both the Executive Authority and the entity. Furthermore, the committee welcomed the information that the Government Printing Works has implemented some of the recommendations and has already strengthened Supply Chain Management policies at the institution.

The referral of the allegations made against the Minister of Home Affairs, Dr Aaron Motsoaledi, in relation to the appointment of a permanent CEO at GPW and allegations of corruption to the Hawks for further investigation was welcomed by the committee. The committee highlighted its support for this process going forward and appreciated the speed with which the Minister referred the matter to relevant independent investigative agencies to ensure that the matter is thoroughly investigated.

Regarding the procurement of the Automated Biometric Identification System, the committee notes that the Auditor General (AG) found that the contract to develop the automated biometric identification system (ABIS) was awarded irregularly. While the committee recognises the contention by the department that the contract is above board, it has committed itself to urgently facilitating an engagement between the State Information Technology Agency and the Department of Home Affairs to resolve the issue of documentation required by the AG.

The committee accepts the decision by the department and the AG to appoint an independent audit firm to investigate the matter. It will await a full report from the audit firm to reach an informed decision on the way forward.

In relation to the contract with VFS, the committee welcomes the intention of the department to continue with the contract beyond 31 December 2020, to minimise the risk on Visa application facilitation. While the committee understands this, it remains concerned by the lack of foresight and planning by the department in ensuring that there was a system in place to perform the role being played currently by VFS. Despite this, the committee reaffirmed its earlier decision to accept the extension of the VFS contract to allow for proper transition to the Public Private Partnership process which the department has already initiated with National Treasury.

Furthermore, the committee has highlighted that the repositioning of the department presents an opportunity for a re-imagined visa application process. It has urged the department to speedily conclude the Public Private Partnership process which will allow the department to have a scope to expand the delegation of functions to a frontline business partner, and this could even make provision for the substitution of foreign mission deployments which are costly and limited in efficiency of both civic and immigration services.

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON HOME AFFAIRS, ADVOCATE BONGANI BONGO**