**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**SCOPA BELIEVES THAT AN INQUIRY INTO WATER AND SANITATION DEPARTMENT IS NECESSARY**

**Parliament, Friday, 5 June 2020**– The Standing Committee on Public Accounts (Scopa) believes that a full Parliamentary inquiry should be conducted on the Department of Water and Sanitation.

Scopa was this morning briefed by the Office of the Auditor-General on the 2018/2019 audit outcomes of the department and its entities.

Towards the end of its term, the Fifth Parliament undertook to conduct a full Parliamentary inquiry into the department. Scopa believes this process should resume to give clarity on how the department ended up where it is financially. It is important for the full extent of the financial mismanagement at the department and its entities to be known. This is why Scopa believes the inquiry should begin as far back as 2014. The committee will proceed with the necessary processes in its efforts to ensure that the full Parliamentary inquiry into the department takes place as soon as conditions allow.

Another matter that should be carefully probed is the War on Leaks project, which has cost the department R2.97 billion. Scopa has been informed by the Auditor-General that supply chain management processes were not followed in the establishment of this project. There was no budget allocation for it, but the department ended up paying this exorbitant amount for the project.

The committee has been informed that the people trained on the War on Leaks project will now be expected to guard water tanks during this Covid-19 pandemic. Scopa believes the people capacitated with those skills could be better utilised in working with municipalities in their communities, rather than guarding water tanks.

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF SCOPA, MR MKHULEKO HLENGWA.**