**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON DISAPPOINTED ABOUT STATE OF AFFAIRS AT LILY AND OPTIMUM MINES**

**Parliament, Wednesday, 24 June 2020 –**The Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Mineral Resources and Energy, Mr Sahlulele Luzipo, has expressed disappointment with the state of affairs at the Lily mine and Optimum coal mine in Mpumalanga.

The committee was briefed yesterday on issues related to the two mines by the Executive Director of Vantage Gold Fields, Mr Fred Arendse, for Lily mine, and the business rescue practitioner for Optimum mine.

Mr Luzipo then said that the committee will deliberate further on Mr Arendse’s presentation. He further said that the committee will also seek permission from Parliament to urgently visit Lily mine. Mr Luzipo held a view that the committee needed to see for itself what is causing the delay in exhuming the remains of three workers whose bodies are trapped underground.

The committee heard that operation at the mine was scheduled to resume on 25 March 2019, but was delayed due to the long drawn out litigation between the parties involved.

Mr Luzipo was concerned about Optimum coal mine’s continued non-compliance with the social labour plan and the environmental management programme. The mine has an environmental liability shortfall of R112 million.

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON MINERAL RESOURCES AND ENERGY, MR SAHLULELE LUZIPO.**