**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**COMMITTEE CALLS FOR ADDITIONAL PRESENTATION ON ADOPTION CLAUSE IN THE BILL**

**Parliament, Tuesday, 6 October 2020** – The Portfolio Committee on Social Development was today briefed by the Department of Social Development on clause-by-clause amendments contained in the Children’s Amendment Bill.

Before it received the briefing, the committee sought confirmation from the department that its approach in the consideration of the Bill is aligned with the legal advice that was given by both the Parliamentary Legal Adviser and the department’s Legal Advisers.

The advice given was that the Bill is considered in its entirety and the department confirmed the advice. The department also confirmed that its application to the North Gauteng High Court for an extension will factor in all the parliamentary legislative processes regarding the President assenting the Bill and publishing it in the Government Gazette as well as drafting of the Regulations to the Bill by the department.

The objectives of the Bill include the amendment of the Children’s Act, 2005, to further promote and protect the child’s right to physical and psychological integrity; to further regulate the position of unmarried fathers; to extend the children’s court jurisdiction to hear applications for guardianship; to further provide for funding of early childhood development programmes; to provide for the designation and functions for a Registrar of the National Child Protection Register; to strengthen provisions relating to the National Child Protection Register; to further provide for matters relating to adoption and inter-country adoption; and to regulate the care of abandoned or orphaned children by family members.

Most importantly, the Bill seeks to contribute towards the comprehensive legal solution as ordered by the North Gauteng High Court, in the matter of the Centre for Child Law versus Minister of the Department of Social Development (Case No: 72513/2017) to deal with challenges relating to the provision and administration of foster care.

Although the committee expressed its happiness about the manner in which the Bill is crafted and the manner in which it was presented to it, it however, expressed its concerns with the manner in which certain clauses, that included a clause on the adoption processes were explained. Based on that, it asked the department to come back with much clearer explanation before it can further process the Bill.

**ISSUED BY PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE PORTFOLIO ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, MR MONDLI GUNGUBELE.**