**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**COMMITTEE ON TOURISM WELCOMES THE TOURISM RECOVERY PLAN**

**Parliament, Tuesday, 6 October 2020 –**The Portfolio Committee on Tourism, (National Assembly), today received a briefing from the Department of Tourism on its First Quarter Performance Report for the 2020/21 financial year.

The 2020/21 Quarter 1 report is made against the backdrop of the budget adjustments that were made due to the Covid-19 pandemic. An amount of R1 billion was adjusted downwards from the initial appropriation of the R2.5 billion. This had impacted on the initially planned activities for the department and South African Tourism, such as marketing, various incentive schemes, training programmes and the Working for Tourism Expanded Public Works implementation projects. This was understandable as due to level 5 lockdown restrictions, the department had to cease some of its activities.

However, given that there has now been a lifting of some of the restrictions and tourism is expected to make a recovery, the committee would support the department’s quest to acquire the R1 billion back from National Treasury so that it can implement the Tourism Recovery Plan and programmes to assist the sector to recover.

The committee received the response from the department on the criteria which was used to disburse the R200 million Tourism Relief Fund to the 4 000 businesses in the sector, and is satisfied with the criteria which was used. The gradual shift towards funding tourism businesses in villages, townships and small dorpies is welcomed as this will generate employment and local economic development in these areas.

The allocation of R30 million for Tourism Guides Relief Fund is welcomed as these people will once again be the forerunners to showcasing our beautiful country when the sector fully opens up to both domestic and international tourists.

The Chairperson of the Tourism Committee, Mr Supra Mahumapelo, said: “I urge the Minister of Tourism to continue talks with supporting departments such as Home Affairs, Transport and other departments essential to bringing tourists to South Africa, and at the same time to focus on reviving and reigniting the domestic market to get South Africans into tourism.

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON TOURISM, MR SUPRA MAHUMAPELO.**