**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**POLICE COMMITTEE TO RECEIVE MONTHLY UPDATES ON FORENSIC SERVICES TURNAROUND PLAN**

**Parliament, Wednesday, 11 November 2020 –** The Portfolio Committee on Police has resolved to give the South African Police Service’s Forensic Services Division’s turnaround strategy time to actualise and will require monthly updates on progress with implementation.

The committee believes that a functional Forensic Services Division that is committed to providing quality forensic products is integral to a functioning criminal justice system and to victims of crime, especially victims of gender-based violence. This is the context within which the committee decided to heighten its oversight over the division, particularly in light of its centrality in effective prosecutions.

The appointment of the Divisional Commissioner: Forensic Services is welcomed and will hopefully bring the stability and strategic direction necessary for success. The committee also welcomed other initiatives to capacitate the division to ensure that it can adequately meet the demand for forensic products.

The strategy to deal with backlogs in the division is also welcomed, especially the use of modern information technology systems, which will improve turnaround time and efficiency. The committee also welcomed the additional R250 million allocation to the division’s operational baseline budget, which will hopefully improve functionality.

Despite this, the committee raised concerns about contract management, especially in light of the admission of lax contract management systems within the division. The committee will receive an update on contracts in the meeting scheduled a month from today.

The committee is committed to ensuring the effective functioning of the forensic service division to ensure that prosecution is enhanced as a result of quality evidence.

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON POLICE, MS TINA JOEMAT-PETTERSSON.**

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