**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**MINERAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE WELCOMES UPDATE ON DEVELOPMENTS IN RELATION TO THE KETLAPHELA PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANY**

**Parliament, Wednesday, 18 November 2020**– The Portfolio Committee on Mineral Resources and Energy has welcomed an update on the developments in relation to the Ketlaphela state-owned pharmaceutical company.

The committee was briefed in this regard by the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy (DMRE) together with its two entities, namely the South African Nuclear Energy Corporation (Necsa) Group and Mintek.

Necsa Group is a holding company of Ketlaphela Pharmaceuticals. It reported six key milestones that were achieved in 2020 relating to Ketlaphela. Those milestones are the approval of section 54 by the DMRE Minister, establishment of an operationalisation team, appointment of a regulatory pharmacist, negotiations with the Department of Health on the set-aside agreement, completion of site selection study, and the appointment of board of directors.

Mintek made a presentation about its contribution to the pharmaceutical value chain, which is to produce diagnostic test products. In the short term, the entity has produced test kits for Covid-19, HIV, TB and malaria. It also plans to broaden its product portfolio in the long term.

The committee has commended the progress made thus far and noted timelines for the new milestones from 2021 to 2027. The committee further applauded the cooperation between Necsa Group and Mintek.

The Chairperson of the committee, Mr Sahlulele Luzipo, said: “It is encouraging to see entities under one department working so closely. The Director-General should prepare a comprehensive report on coordination between Ketlaphela, Mintek and the Mine Health and Safety Council (MHSC).”

The main task of the MHSC is to advise the Minister of Mineral Resources and Energy on occupational health and safety legislation and research outcomes focused on improving and promoting occupational health and safety in South African mines.

The committee will expect the report before the end of February 2021.

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