**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**COMMITTEE COMMENDS DEPARTMENT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF UNDERTAKINGS MADE BY MINISTER**

**Parliament, Wednesday, 18 November 2020** – The Minister of Social Development, Ms Lindiwe Zulu, today briefed the Select Committee on Petitions and Executive Undertakings on progress made in respect of commitments she made in her budget vote speech in the National Council of Provinces (NCOP) on 22 July 2020.

In welcoming the update from the Minister and the Director-General of the department, the committee appreciated the update, which it described as “thorough and detailed”. Furthermore, it commended the department for implementing the commitments and for playing a pivotal and central role in pushing back the frontiers of poverty, especially against vulnerable South Africans.

The committee also expressed its displeasure and outrage over the acts of corruption that opportunistically affected the good work of the department when it implemented its programmes, especially of food distribution to vulnerable people during the hard lockdown levels. The committee told the department it is disappointed that resources which were earmarked for vulnerable people were diverted to wrong people.

Members of the committee asked the department to give answers on reasons why food that was made available for needy people ended up with councillors who stole it for their relatives. Also, the committee asked the department to ask for the extension of hours of service at post offices to ensure that people who get special grants there don’t go back home without assistance.

In appreciating the department for using technology in carrying out its work, the Chairperson of the committee, Ms Zukiswa Ncitha, asked it to present its plans on rural areas where there is no network and other challenges of connectivity. She mentioned the Eastern Cape’s Alfred Nzo District where network is a challenge. The Director-General, Mr Linton Mchunu, told the committee about its plans where there is no assistance of technology.

On gender-based violence (GBV) and femicide, Mr Mchunu said the department has programmes in place to fight GBV. He said the department works very closely with other role-players in the fight against GBV and is involved in joint programmes. He mentioned Khuseleka and shelters programmes which the department has for the victims of GBV.

The committee has also adopted the report on Lesawell Petition, the petition which seeks the intervention of the NCOP in relation to the alleged service delivery challenges facing the Masilonyana Local Municipality

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON PETITIONS AND EXECUTIVE UNDERTAKINGS, MS ZUKISWA NCITHA.**