**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**POLICE COMMITTEE DEMANDS CORRECT FIREARMS AMNESTY STATISTICS**

**Parliament, Tuesday, 16 February 2021 –**The Portfolio Committee on Police has today resolved to suspend its meeting with the South African Police Service (SAPS) due to inaccurate statistics provided by the SAPS to the committee. The meeting held today was scheduled to receive a final report on the number of firearms surrendered during the approved firearms amnesty for 2020/21.

“We have decided as the committee that due to the inconsistencies in statistics given to the committee, that the SAPS must be given time to reconcile its numbers and present accurate and reliable statistics to the committee. This will ensure transparency and effective oversight by the committee on the work of the SAPS,” said Ms Tina Joemat-Pettersson.

The committee was critical of the discrepancies in statistics and highlighted how these shortcomings affect its oversight work, and further highlighted the implications of giving incorrect information to Parliament.

The committee also raised serious concern regarding the firearm licence backlog at the Central Firearms Registry. The concern is premised on the assurance of the availability of a plan of action to deal with challenges that the SAPS management had given to the committee prior to the approval of the amnesty. “It is thus concerning that only 280 applications were processed for the 2020/21 amnesty against 30 356 applications made. This, according to the committee, is an indictment to the work of the SAPS,” Ms Joemat-Pettersson emphasised.

Furthermore, the committee decried the inadequate communication of the amnesty by both the SAPS and industry, and has cautioned that inadequate communication has the potential to undermine the good intentions of the amnesty.

As a result, the committee suspended the meeting and demanded that the SAPS must reconcile its numbers to give an accurate representation of both amnesties. Also, the committee has instructed the Deputy Minister of Police and the SAPS National Commissioner to visit the Central Firearms Registry (NFR) to resolve challenges faced there.

Following this visit, the Deputy Minister and the National Commissioner will table a report on the challenges at the CFR and proposed action plans to resolve any challenges. For its part, the committee has committed itself to visit the CFR in efforts to oversee the implementation of the recommendations that will be made by the Deputy Minister and National Commissioner.

The meeting will be rescheduled to a later date and time which will be communicated accordingly.

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