**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION URGES HSRC TO DO AWAY WITH SILO APPROACH IN ADDRESSING GBV IN ITS SURVEY**

**Parliament, Wednesday, 24 February 2021 –** The Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) briefed the Portfolio Committee on Higher Education, Science and Technology on 23 February 2021 on the South African National Survey on health, life experiences and family relations. This comprehensive research undertaking follows the national impetus to respond to and eradicate the alarming extent of GBV (gender-based violence) and femicide in the South African society.

In welcoming the HSRC delegation to the committee, the Acting Chairperson of the committee, Ms Nompendulo Mkhatshwa, acknowledged the importance of this particular research as “a lot of work has been done in attempting to address this particular scourge in society, which the President has even noted as the second pandemic faced by the country, yet the challenge persists”.

As such, she stressed the importance of ensuring that this research compliments existing research across the public sector and particularly within entities of the department so as to ensure that tangible, implementable and sustainable recommendations can be brought forth.

The HSRC, led by the DSI, presented the phased approach rollout of the research survey:

· The project initialisation phase began in September 2020 and will end in February 2021;

· Survey piloting phase is between March and April 2021;

· Main study implementation phase will take place from May 2021 to May 2022;

· Data cleaning, analysis and report phase starts in June to August 2022;

· The review of results by an expert panel and consultations with key stakeholders will take place between September and November 2022; and

· The launch of the study in December 2022 will coincide with the 16 Days of Activism Against Genderr-Based Vioence campaign.

The committee emphasised the importance for the scope of the research survey to be broadened regarding age, class, race, gender, language and other categories to ensure the intersectional participation of a wide spectrum of South Africans. Members of the committee found it important that the research considers elements such as the impact of the country’s apartheid past, alcohol abuse, and the violent ukuthwala type of marriage, among other things.

The delegation assured the committee that the work of the survey relates directly to the 6th pillar of the Gender-Based-Violence and Femicide National Strategic Plan as asked by Ms Mkhatshwa. Ms Mkhatshwa cautioned the meeting from the silo approach, tick-box exercises in relation to addressing GBV, thus stressing the importance for empirical solutions.

The delegation also assured her that the international donor funding does not come with conditions that will inadvertently affect the interests of the South African sovereignty.

The committee appreciated the mammoth task that was undertaken by the HSRC delegation and wished them well. As such, Ms Mkhatshwa highlighted the importance for the HSRC to have links with various social institutions which have been doing work of this nature.

She quoted the sentiments of the President in his 2021 SONA Speech: “Gender-based violence will only end when everyone takes the responsibility for doing so in their homes, in their communities, in their workplaces, in their places of worship, and in their schools.”

The committee asked the delegation to update it regularly and to be open to engagements on recommendations from the committee on the research survey, moving forward.

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE ACTING CHAIRPERSON OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, MS NOMPENDULO MKHATSHWA.**