**MEDIA STATEMENT: COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT NOTES STALLING OF MOLOTO RAIL PROJECT DUE TO FUNDING CHALLENGES**

**Parliament, Friday, 19 March 2021** – The Portfolio Committee on Transport has noted the official confirmation of the stalling of the Moloto rail corridor project due to lack of finances.

In a meeting on Thursday (18 March) with both the Department of Transport (DoT) and the National Treasury, the committee was informed that although two feasibility studies had been undertaken, the project was found to be unviable, unaffordable and unsustainable.

The Chairperson of the Committee, Mr Mosebenzi Zwane, said it was important that the information is communicated to the prospective beneficiaries of the project.

“The financial position of the country is understandable and halting Moloto rail should not be misconstrued as the denial of the people of Mpumalanga where the project would bear fruits. The committee is satisfied by the fact that while there are no funds for the rail component a lot more is being done to improve the Moloto road corridor,” said Mr Zwane.

He added: “This situation calls on all the leaders to think about how to make the project self-sustainable when the rail component is realised. The concerns as outline by the National Treasury are understandable and surely should be accepted.”

The DoT and the National Treasury briefed the committee on the status of the project. The committee heard that putting rail infrastructure would have been costly and that emphasis has shifted as a result of making the road component of the project safe and economically viable.

Mr Zwane said the committee will provide leadership on the matter and supports all the efforts the Minister of the DoT, Fikile Mbalula, is putting into resolving challenges of the people of kwaNdebele.

The committee will always have an interest to see the Moloto rail realised and the people benefiting from the project.

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT, MR MOSEBENZI ZWANE.**