**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**COMMITTEE ON COGTA WELCOMES PROGRAMMES AIMED AT IMPROVING TRADITIONAL LEADERSHIP INSTITUTIONS**

**Parliament, Thursday, 22 April 2021 –** The Portfolio Committee on Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (Cogta) yesterday received a briefing from the Department of Traditional Affairs on its 2021/22 Annual Performance Plan (APP).

The committee welcomed the APP, as its annual targets include interventions that will have a positive impact on traditional communities. The committee noted the rise of gender-based violence, femicide and violence towards LGBTQ+ persons in traditional communities. The committee therefore welcomed the fact that South Africa’s eight houses of traditional leaders will receive training to raise awareness of gender-based violence and femicide.

The committee urged traditional leaders to ensure that they play an active role in government development programmes in terms of the District Development Model (DDM), as the committee has previously heard that in some municipalities traditional leaders are excluded from participating and further that they were not aware of their role in the DDM.

It is imperative that traditional leaders participate to ensure that the development needs of their communities are included in municipalities’ Integrated Development Plan, thus ensuring the economic development of rural communities.

On previous oversight visits, the committee noted that the infrastructure of some traditional administrative centres is dilapidated and in need of serious repair. It therefore requests that the Department of Cogta pay attention to this so that municipalities and other government departments can utilise this administrative infrastructure to provide much-needed services to rural communities.

The committee further noted that the Department of Traditional Affairs will monitor the implementation of the Traditional and Khoi-San Leadership Act and the Framework on Resolution of Traditional Leadership Disputes and Claims. The committee welcomes the research that the department will undertake in the coming year to document the genealogy of royal families and the customary laws of succession. This research will help to resolve any disputes between the heirs of king and queens, as they arise.

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE ACTING CHAIRPERSON OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON COOPERATIVE GOVERNANCE AND TRADITIONAL AFFAIRS, MR GCINIKHAYA MPUMZA.**