**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**COMMITTEE ON COGTA TELLS CRL TO HAVE A CLEAR RESOURCE MOBILISATION STRATEGY**

**Parliament, Thursday, 29 April 2021** – The Commission for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Cultural, Religious and Linguistic Communities (CRL) briefed the Portfolio Committee on Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (Cogta) yesterday virtually on its 2021/22 annual performance plan (APP).

The committee told the CRL that the challenges mentioned in the APP, as tabled to Parliament on 20 March 2021, may render the commission unable to fulfil its mandate optimally. The main challenge, which underpins all the others, relates to inadequate funding.

The portfolio committee instructed the CRL to have a clear resource mobilisation strategy and reminded the commission that, in its APP for the 2019/20 financial year, it had a draft resource mobilisation strategy in place, which would be finalised by 31 March 2021. Cogta committee Chairperson Ms Faith Muthambi said: “We are now approaching the end of April and the commission should be in a good position to update the committee on the strategy.”

The current APP highlights that the CRL lacks adequate ICT infrastructure to transition effectively to the “new normal” way of working. “This is a serious drawback, especially in relation to the commission’s work on rural community involvement and participation, where connectivity problems are particularly acute. The commission needs to find creative ways of addressing this issue as a matter of urgency,” said Ms Muthambi.

The portfolio committee urged the CRL to improve internal controls, particularly relating to irregular expenditure. The CRL remains the only entity in the Department of Cogta portfolio that has not achieved a clean audit in recent years. “We therefore also look at the APP as an opportunity for the commission to address this matter and ensure that its house is in order,” added Ms Muthambi.

Asked about its role in the District Development Model, the CRL Chairperson, Prof David Mosoma, said it doesn’t have a role at present. Ms Muthambi called upon the commission to take its rightful place in society. “So long as you don’t assume your active role according to your constitutional mandate, challenges such as religious and cultural intolerance are going to continue and the objective of national cohesion would not be achieved,” said Ms Muthambi.

The committee has asked the Department of Cogta and CRL to present to it a clear timeframe of the amendment of the current CRL legislation. “We need clear timeframe for your amendment of this legislation,” said Ms Muthambi.

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON COOPERATIVE GOVERNANCE AND TRADITIONAL AFFAIRS, MS FAITH MUTHAMBI.**