**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE WELCOMES ICASA’S GAZETTING OF REGULATIONS TO GOVERN LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS**

**Parliament, Friday, 7 May 2021 –** The Portfolio Committee on Communications has welcomed timeous gazetting of the Municipal Elections Broadcasts and Political Advertisements Regulations by the Independent Communication Authority of South Africa (Icasa). The regulations were gazetted on 31 March 2021.

The committee was briefed by ICASA, SABC, Media Development and Diversity Agency (MDDA), and National Community Radio Forum (NCRF) on their state of readiness for the local government elections. According to Icasa, the regulations will be applicable to broadcasting service licensees, political parties and independent candidates during the election period.

The committee welcomed measures put in place to monitor compliance with the regulations, and the work done by NCRF to coordinate and capacitate community media, which plays integral part during the election period. It also welcomed the work done by MDDA to provide financial and training support to community media in order to ensure a diversity of views.

Although it welcomed SABC’s presentation, the committee further agreed to find time to visit the SABC headquarters in order to assess its state of readiness before the elections, if Parliament’s programme permits.

The committee noted the fact that SABC did well in covering past elections and it is in this spirit that it decided to visit SABC to satisfy itself that the public broadcaster is ready to cover the local government elections in line with its public service mandate. The committee believes that SABC plays an integral part in the delivery of free and fair elections.

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON COMMUNICATIONS, MR BOYCE MANELI**