**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION TELLS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO TRANSLATE ITS APP INTO ACHIEVEMENT OF GOALS**

**Parliament, Wednesday, 12 May 2021 –** The Select Committee on Education and Technology, Sports, Arts and Culture, received a briefing from the Department of Higher Education and Training on the department’s annual performance plan (APP) and budget vote for the 2021/22 financial year.

In welcoming the briefing, the Chairperson of the committee, Mr Elleck Nchabeleng, appealed to the Deputy Minster of the Department of Higher Education and Training, Mr Buti Manamela, to ensure that the plans of the department on all the programmes are translated into the achievement of the department’s goals for the betterment of the South African children.

On plans on the eradication of gender-based violence (GBV), Mr Nchabeleng asked the department to outline in simple terms its strategies to translate its goal on the fight against GBV. The department told the committee that there is a directorate within the department which is dedicated for the fight against GBV in the higher education sector. It said R60 million has been allocated over the Medium Term Economic Framework for GBV.

The committee heard that R3 billion was reprioritised from the skills fund and infrastructure for universities and TVET colleges to deal with the National Student Financial Aid Scheme’s (NSFAS’s) budget shortfall for 2021. The committee expressed its concern over the impact of the reprioritisation of funds particularly for infrastructure in the medium- to long-term.

Furthermore, the committee highlighted the impact of the reduction of NSFAS’s budget, especially for children from working-class family backgrounds. It also told the department that the infrastructure of TVET colleges must be prioritised as these institutions must be always attractive to students. The committee said poor infrastructure at universities and TVET colleges exposes girl students to crimes such as GBV.

The committee heard that in as much as the department supports the University of Cape Town (UCT), but the university depends largely on its insurances for the repairs of the damaged infrastructure by the recent fire disaster which destroyed some of its buildings, including a library.

Expanding on the department's support to UCT, Mr Manamela assured the committee about the unwavering psycho-social support to the university during this very difficult time. He said Minister Blade Nzimande is going to visit the university to provide support to the university following the fire disaster.

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND TECHNOLOGY, SPORTS, ARTS AND CULTURE, MR ELLECK NCHABELENG.**