**MEDIA STATEMENT

HOME AFFAIRS COMMITTEE DEMANDS CONSEQUENCE MANAGEMENT AGAINST CORRUPT OFFICIALS**
**Parliament, Tuesday, 25 May 2021 –**The Portfolio Committee on Home Affairs has urged both the Department of Home Affairs and the Department of Communication and Department of Communications and Digital Technologies to ensure consequence management against officials identified to have acted corruptly during the procurement of the Automated Biometric Identification System (Abis).

The ABIS contract was initiated by the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) in 2015 in efforts to migrate from the current Home Affairs National Information System to an Abis. The State Information Technology Agency (Sita) was entrusted with the responsibility of procuring a new system. Following the awarding of the contract to EOH, the Auditor-General considered the R409 million contract irregular.

The committee received a detailed forensic report into the contract and was shocked by the brazen corruption identified in the report, with evidence that a Sita official made available tender information to EOH for about a year prior to the advertisement of the tender. This gave undue advantage to EOH to the detriment of other bidders, undermining the spirit of competition.

The committee was unanimous in appreciating the work done to investigate the matter, which led to the final report with concise recommendations. In line with this, the committee calls for urgent implementation of the forensic report.

“Now that the forensic investigation has been concluded, effective consequence management must be implemented. We are in support of the recommendations of the forensic report that both criminal and institutional disciplinary actions must be urgently implemented,” said Mr Mosa Chabane, the Acting Chairperson of the committee.

The committee has instructed both Sita and the DHA to investigate if any of the officials who resigned prior to the conclusion of the forensic report are employed by the state. “If they are still employed by the state, then they must be charged and taken through a disciplinary process,” Mr Chabane said.

The committee notes the progress to recoup any undue monies from service providers and the committee will await a detailed progress report on recouping outstanding monies.

Meanwhile, the committee has welcomed the establishment of the Electronic Document Management System at Sita to ensure the safety of procurement information, which was a major shortcoming around the contract.

The committee has, for its part, committed to invite the three stakeholders back to a meeting before the end of 2021 to update the committee on progress in implementing the recommendations of the forensic report. The committee has also committed to monitor the implementation of the ceded contract and the positive impact this will have on providing services to the people.

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE ACTING CHAIRPERSON OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON HOME AFFAIRS, MR MOSA CHABANE.**