**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**INSTABILITY WITHIN SAPS AN ISSUE OF GRAVE CONCERN**

**Parliament, Thursday, 29 July 2021 –**The Portfolio Committee on Police is of the considered view that the general instability within the South Africa Police Service (SAPS) as a result of various causal factors is a cause of grave concern. The committee today received a briefing from the Minister of Police and senior management of the SAPS.

Firstly, the committee is concerned about the uncertainty in relation to the vacancy of Divisional Commissioner: Crime Intelligence. It is untenable that following the transfer of the incumbent in December 2020, there has been no movement to fill the post. “It is only logical that when you transfer someone from such a critical position, a replacement is made within reasonable time. What the recent unrest has shown is the gap in quality intelligence products ideal to pre-empt criminal activity,” said Ms Tina Joemat-Pettersson, the Chairperson of the committee.

Furthermore, the information that since May 2011 to date there has been 12 acting appointments to this critical position is unnerving. The committee has called for the urgent resolution of this matter to ensure the stability necessary to strategically drive the Crime Intelligence component which is critical to crime fighting.

Secondly, it is unsustainable to have a top-heavy SAPS organisational structure which impedes the operational requirements on the ground. An effective and agile police service requires adequate human resources, especialy at police station level to render services to the people. In this regard, the committee is concerned that the police to population ratio is currently at 1:327 with an increasing ratio year-on-year. While the committee acknowledges the budget reduction for the police, especially in the Medium-Term Expedniture Framework and the potential negative impact it will have on the stability of the SAPS, it remains of the view that a top-heavy structure negatively impacts the agility and ability of the SAPS to be responsive to its mandate.

In line with this, the committee notes the update and progress on the restructuring process of the SAPS. The committee is hopeful that the process will lead to a revitalised organisation that is able to effectively implement its mandate which is critical for the socio-economic success of the country.

While the committee welcomed the consequence management that led to the dismissal of 12 senior managers (level 14 and above) as a way of eradicating corruption within the system, the fundamental concern is that there are criminal elements within the SAPS, especially at senior management level of the organisation. ‘The credibility of the SAPS is negatively imperilled by these rotten apples. We, however, urge the SAPS to continue on this drive to root out any criminal elements within its ranks,” Ms Joemat-Pettersson emphasised.

The committee has also raised concerns that the perennial Supply Chain Management (SCM) challenges continue to be an Achilles heel for the SAPS. It is even more concerning because the SCM environment is guided by legislation and internal SCM policies. “While we welcome the appointment of Component Head: Supply Chain, and progress made, we note the acknowledgement of areas of concerns that remain, and we urge the SAPS to put more emphasis on resolving the challenges within the SCM environment,” said Ms Joemat-Pettersson.

Meanwhile, the committee has called for the tabling of the SAPS Amentment Bill before the committee to enable the committee to contribute to the Amendment Bill which the committee views as critical to manage the relationship between the Minister and National Commissioner of the SAPS. Despite this, the committee has urged the Minister and National Commissioner to strengthen their working relationship to ensure improved efficiency.

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON POLICE, MS TINA JOEMAT-PETTERSSON.**