**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**JUSTICE AND CORRECTIONAL SERVICES COMMITTEE WANTS QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORTS ON TRC MATTERS**

**Parliament, Wednesday, 8 December 2021 –** The Portfolio Committee on Justice and Correctional today resolved to meet on a quarterly basis with the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) in order to receive regular updates on progress regarding Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) matters.

The undertaking comes after the committee noted last week that the NPA missed the deadline to provide information on whether to prosecute in the matter of the so-called "Craddock Four". The families of some of the Craddock Four have taken the NPA to court in order to get a firm commitment with timeframes for a resolution to the matter.

The committee today receiving a briefing from the Ministry of Justice and Correctional Services and the NPA on why the 2 December 2021 deadline was missed for issuing a prosecutorial decision for apartheid-era officials and ministers implicated in the 1985 murder of the Cradock Four.

Committee members across the political spectrum expressed concern that these matters have been delayed for so long. More than two decades into democracy, families like those of the Craddock Four still do not have closure. The committee further expressed its disappointment at how the matter was handled, as families were not informed prior to the deadline that it would not be met, as further investigations are required.

"It is regretful that we have made so little progress. We could have done more for the families and our fallen heroes. It is further worrying that these families were not informed prior to the time that the NPA would not meet the deadline," said committee chairperson Mr Bulelani Magwanishe.

The committee has urged that the appointment of a judge, as promised by the Minister, should be urgently finalised. The NPA conceded that it should have handled the matter better, by informing the families' legal representatives earlier of the delay. It agreed that in future it will communicate timeously.

The committee was also briefed on the sudden resignation of Investigating Directorate (ID) Head Adv Hermione Cronje some two and a half years into her five-year contract. Adv Shamila Batohi, National Director of the NPA, told the committee: "Sometimes there are tensions between individuals in high profile positions that come with lots of stress." She went on to say that it is not expected that individuals in positions at this level leave due to "personality clashes". Adv Batoyi insinuated that there are other reasons for the resignation, but would not go into detail at this stage. She assured the committee that neither the NPA nor the ID are in crisis, as systems are in place, institutional knowledge is still available, and neither of the organisations are dependent on a specific individual.

Mr Magwanishe said that, further to the regularly updates on TRC matters, the committee will also require an update early next year on the appointment of a retired judge to assist with this.

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE AND CORRECTIONAL SERVICES, MR** **BULELANI MAGWANISHE.**

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