**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**TOURISM COMMITTEE PROMISES ROBUST AND CONSTRUCTIVE OVERSIGHT**

**Parliament, Tuesday, 25 January 2022 –**The Portfolio Committee on Tourism has welcomed the corrective measures adopted by the Department of Tourism to deal effectively with the Auditor-General's (AG's) negative findings in relation to the department's procurement processes and the allocation of Covid-19 relief funds.

The committee also welcomed Minister of Tourism Ms Lindiwe Sisulu's commitment to pursue cases against officials involved in corrupt and fraudulent procurement activities. This includes securing the return to Covid-19 relief funds wrongly paid out to people and organisations.

Minister Sisulu was updating the committee on progress in dealing with the AG's concerns with the audit outcomes for the 2020/21 financial year. Acting committee Chairperson, Ms Luzizo Sharon Makhubela-Mashele, said the committee is satisfied with the manner in which the department is tackling the 117 matters identified by the AG. The committee is also pleased that proper checks and balances have been put in place to prevent irregular and fraudulent supply chain management processes.

The committee also welcomed "the department's efforts to deal with the red flags raised by the Auditor-General. Limited state resources directed to the tourism industry must be utlilised to ensure that the industry grows and benefits people actively involved in and dependent on the tourism space."

Committee members reaffirmed their commitment to work collectively with the department. "We understand our role of oversight and accept that the department understands their service delivery role" said Ms Makhubela-Mashele. She cautioned the department that the committee will deal robustly and constructively with administrative and procurement processes not undertaken in the proper way.

The committee called on the department to provide it with regular progress reports on resolving the outstanding issues, including disciplinary and criminal cases related to the AG's findings.

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE ACTING CHAIRPERSON OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON TOURISM, MS LUZIZO MAKHUBELA-MASHELE.**

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