**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**SCOPA TO ASK PRESIDENT RAMAPHOSA TO RESPOND TO ALLEGATIONS RELATED TO MISUSE OF PUBLIC FUNDS**

**Parliament, Tuesday, 25 January 2022 –**The Standing Committee on Public Accounts (SCOPA) today received a submission from Mr Mervyn Dirks on the allegations related to the misuse of public funds which implicate the President of the Republic of South Africa, Mr Cyril Ramaphosa.

The SCOPA also received a legal opinion from the Parliamentary Legal Services on the matter. The committee deliberated extensively on both the submission by Mr Dirks and on the legal opinion in order to map out a process to follow in exercising its oversight duty as a public accounts committee.

The committee agreed to present this matter to President Ramaphosa and seek his written response on it in a form of a statement or affidavit to solicit facts from him on this issue. The committee reserves a right to invite him to appear before it.

A written submission by President Ramaphosa will enable the committee to plan correctly for the hearings, that is why it is important for it to receive a written response in this regard. Upon receipt of that information the committee will make a determination on the process of hearings on this matter. The committee will afford President Ramaphosa seven to ten working days for the submission of the written response.

The SCOPA will also require written responses from other stakeholders that are implicated in this matter, which include the State Security Agency. The committee has also resolved to advise the Joint Standing Committee on Intelligence that it is dealing with a matter that has a direct and material bearing on the State Security Agency. The committee will also require the Auditor-General to provide written responses on these matters as per the recommendation of the legal opinion.

The SCOPA is aware that Mr Dirks has instituted a parallel process of writing to the Public Protector on this matter. He has also informed the committee that he intends to write to the Deputy Chief Justice Raymond Zondo in his capacity as the Chairperson of the Commission of Inquiry into Allegations of  State  Capture.

The committee will in this regard inform the Public Protector that it is dealing with an issue that has been brought before her by Mr Dirks, to maintain a healthy cooperation with all the state institutions that are affected by this matter.

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF SCOPA, MR MKHULEKO HLENGWA.**

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