**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**Police Committee Remains Concerned By High Rate Of Sexual Offences**

**Parliament, Friday, 18 February 2022 –**The Portfolio Committee on Police is seriously concerned about the stubbornly high number of gender-based violence (GBV) cases, despite the marked decline in numbers, after a briefing from the Minister of Police and senior management of the South African Police Service (SAPS) on the third-quarter crime statistics for 2021/22.

The committee highlighted the ongoing importance of time, strategies and resources to defeat GBV. "While we welcome the 9% decrease in sexual offences during the quarter, the reality is that 14 188 is alarmingly high incidence and requires concerted effort to overcome. In line with this, the committee has emphasised the need for strengthened collaboration between police and the community to enhance the fight against GBV," said Ms Tina Joemat-Pettersson, the Chairperson of the committee.

Despite this, the committee is of the view that the urgent passing of the Criminal Law (Forensic Procedures) Amendment Bill, which will allow buccal samples to be taken from everyone convicted and imprisoned for any offence listed in Schedule 8 of the Criminal Procedure Act, 1977 (which includes murder, rape, sexual assault, any sexual offence against a child or a person who is mentally disabled, child stealing), will add to the arsenal in the fight against GBV.

Similarly, the committee raised concern with persistent high murder and attempted murder rates in South Africa. The 8.9% increase in murders and 3.5% increase in attempted murder signals an inability to stabilise the commission of these contact crimes. The committee believes in the value of moving towards preventative policing, anchored to a strong multidisciplinary approach, as well as stakeholder and community participation in fighting crime.

The committee is also concerned about the impact of the SAPS stabilisation intervention in addressing crime committed within the areas of the 30 police stations identified as having the highest crime rate. These concerns are based on the fact that these stations have been on this list before, which indicates that previous interventions are ineffective or need to be intensified.

The alarmingly high incidences of carjacking also requires a focussed approach, looking at the market that benefits from the stolen cars. In line with this, the committee has called for strengthened collaboration with neighbouring countries to stem the tide of illegal cross-border vehicle smuggling.

The proliferation of illegal firearms on South Africa's streets has also been highlighted as a causative factor that must be dealt with urgently. The removal of illegal firearms is one pillar necessary to fight crime in South Africa.

The committee has committed itself to working with the SAPS to find lasting solutions in the war against crime.

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

For media enquiries or interviews with the Chairpersons, please contact the Committees' Media Officer:
Name: Malatswa Molepo (Mr)
**Parliamentary Communication Services**
Tel: 021 403 8438
Cell: 081 512 7920
E-mail: mmolepo@parliament.gov.za