**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**HOME AFFAIRS COMMITTEE ADOPTS MOTION OF DESIRABILITY ON LEKOTA BILL**

**Parliament, Wednesday, 23 February 2022 –**Following extensive consideration, the Portfolio Committee on Home Affairs resolved yesterday that it will not proceed with the Electoral Laws Second Amendment Bill [B34 – 2020], a Private Members Bill sponsored by Member of Parliament Mr Mosiuoa Lekota. The committee considers the Electoral Laws Amendment Bill unsuitable legislation to amend the Electoral Commission Act 1996 and Electoral Act 1998.

The committee has taken due regard of the feasibility of the Private Members Bill to provide a remedy required by the Constitutional Court on the New Nation Movement NPC and Others v President of the Republic of South Africa and Others case, and highlighted that among the reasons it considers the Bill unsuitable include that Bill proposes broad, wide-ranging and substantive changes that could therefore not be passed and implemented by the constitutionally-set provincial and national elections in 2024.

Despite this, the committee highlighted that some of the matters raised by the Bill could very well find expression in the executive Bill before the committee. The committee has decided to undertake countrywide public hearings on the Electoral Amendment Bill and has called on all stakeholders to ensure that the committee hears their views.

Meanwhile, the committee has called on the Department of Home Affairs to develop an implementation plan that will enable the department to urgently implement the programme of action as it relates to the department and as directed by the President during the State of the Nation Address. The committee should be furnished with this implementation plan within a reasonable time to enable the committee to monitor and oversee implementation.

Regarding the recommendations made by the committee during the Budget Review and Recommendations Process, the committee appreciates progress in implementing some of the highlighted areas. This includes the development and implementation of an audit action plan to enable the department to achieve a clean audit, the reopening of refugee reception offices, assessing the feasibility of having home affairs at some malls to enhance access, modernising all Home Affairs offices, and finding solutions to the department's irregular expenditure.

Also, the committee has emphasised the need for the Government Printing Works (GPW) to urgently deal with its ICT lapses and finalise the filling of positions within this environment. The committee is cognisant of the plans by GPW to deal with the ICT challenges, but highlighted that implementation is necessary to remedy some of the lapses. The committee welcomes progress on the Security Printing Bill and appreciates the extension of consultations, which will serve to enhance the Bill. The committee awaits its turn to interact with the Bill.

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON HOME AFFAIRS, MR MOSA CHABANE.**

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