**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**SARU CORRECT IN APPROACHING CEO MATTER WITH CAUTION, SAYS SPORT COMMITTEE**

**Parliament, Wednesday, 16 March 2022 –** The Portfolio Committee on Sport, Arts and Culture has noted the concern about the continued absence of spectators at stadiums, which could result in bankruptcy for many sporting organisations.

The committee received a briefing from the South African Rugby Union (SARU) on Wednesday in which it heard that SARU predicted a R30 million loss in its 2022 budget if spectators are not allowed back to stadiums.

The committee Chairperson, Ms Beauty Dlulane, said the committee understands the frustration around this issue, however, she called on fans to be patient, as regulations ought to be observed at all times.

The committee heard that the matter involving SARU CEO Mr Jurie Roux is still ongoing and is headed to the Constitutional Court. "Although the meeting was not intended to deal with the matter involving Mr Roux, the committee appreciates that the process is still unfolding and that SARU will handle it, as it has already done, with maturity and sincerity," Ms Duane said.

"SA Rugby had rightly sought legal advice at various stages of this matter, which involves a previous employer of Mr Roux. The committee supports a stance where legal processes are exhausted and that a just verdict is arrived at, with no one suffering any prejudice."

SARU President Mr Mark Alexander informed the committee that following the loss at the Supreme Court, Mr Roux is taking the matter to the Constitutional Court. SARU has briefed senior counsel and is awaiting that opinion. SARU must also be mindful of the employer/employee relationship, he said.

Ms Duane said the committee will schedule a follow-up briefing on outstanding matters and that a report on the legal fees SARU will have to pay relating to this matter is also required.

The committee was satisfied with Saru's briefing on the impact of Covid-19, plans to save the industry, preparations for the Springbok's title defence in France next year, transformation, women's rugby and the development of rugby in rural areas. However, some matters still require attention including liquidity challenges at Western and Eastern provinces and Border.

Ms Dlulane said the committee is satisfied with the report-back.

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON SPORTS, ARTS AND CULTURE MS BEAUTY DLULANE.**

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