**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**MULTI-PARTY WOMEN'S CAUCUS ENGAGES WITH GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND ENTITIES ON GBV AND FEMICIDE**

**Parliament, Thursday, 31 March 2022 –**The Multi-Party Women's Caucus (MPWC) today engaged with progress reports from several government departments and agencies on the implementation of the National Strategic Plan on Gender-based Violence (GBV) and Femicide.

Committee Chairperson Ms Nkhensani Kate Bilankulu described the meeting as fruitful, saying that the MPWC now has a fuller understanding of the individual plans. "We were also able to highlight concerns and challenges that should be addressed."

The committee met with, among others, the Department of Justice and Correctional Services (DoJ), the South African Police Service (SAPS), the Department of Basic Education (DBE), the Department of Higher Education and Training, the Department of Health and Brand South Africa.

SAPS raised a concern in its presentation that the perpetrators of GBV are becoming younger and younger. The DBE assured the MPWC that it was working in close collaboration with various sister departments to address not only GBV, but also statutory rape when school girls fall pregnant. The DoJ said during the first year of the Covid-19 pandemic from 2020 to 2021, statutory rape increased by 2,75% and all indications are that another increase will be recorded in this quarter.

The Department of Sports, Arts and Culture (DSAC) said it is in the process of creating a gender policy dealing with women in sports and is re-looking at its sexual harassment policy. The DSAC agreed that there is a need to do more about awareness of GBV and patriarchy.

The Department of Transport told the MPWC that campaigns to educate drivers on GBV and to empower more women to enter the job market as taxi drivers have been held at taxi ranks in Gauteng, Limpopo, North West, KwaZulu-Natal, Northern Cape and Mpumalanga. Another campaign will be held in the Free State next month during the Presidential Imbizo. SANTACO signed a memorandum of understanding with TransAid to run a pilot in the Western Cape on GBV focusing on the empowerment and capacitation of women in the taxi industry.

Ms Bilankulu commended the departments and agencies for their plans and urged them to continue with even greater collaboration and to ensure all plans are integrated with one another. She said the MPWC will continue to monitor these plans to ensure effective implementation on the ground.

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE MULTI-PARTY WOMEN'S CAUCUS, MS NKHENSANI KATE BILANKULU.**

For media enquiries or interviews with the Chairperson, please contact the committee's Media Officer:
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