**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**JUSTICE AND CORRECTIONAL SERVICES COMMITTEE ENGAGES WITH NPA AND PUBLIC PROTECTOR PLANS**

**Parliament, Tuesday, 10 May 2022 –** The Portfolio Committee on Justice and Correctional Services today engaged with both the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) and the Public Protector of South Africa (PPSA) on their annual performance plans for the 2022-2023 financial year.

Committee Chairperson Mr Bulelani Magwanishe indicated that both the NPA and PPSA have made significant strides, but room for improvement remains. He further noted: “Although it is important for the committee to argue that the budget of departments, entities and especially Chapter 9 institutions not be reduced, it is also of paramount importance that innovative ways and collaborations be found to ensure we stretch the rand, as we will be in this difficult economic times for some time to come.”

The committee noted the NPA’s need for additional funding to respond to the Zondo Commission reports as well as its longer term structural-needs funding to strengthen its capacity to respond to rising levels of crime. The NPA said it requires additional funding of R750 million and R1 billion per annum for these purposes from the 202/24 financial year onwards. The additional funding will mainly be used to appoint NPA Act Section 38 capacity, to modernise the NPA, and to improve capacity in the Investigating Directorate (ID), the National Prosecutions Service (including specialised units) and the Office for Witness Protection, as well as various goods and services, machinery and other equipment.

The committee heard that under the leadership of the new head of the ID, the directorate has declared 82 investigations and enrolled 20 cases with 65 accused. The ID has prioritised nine corruption matters for enrolment within the next six months. The NPA assured the committee that it will continue to find innovative ways to leverage private sector support while closely protecting its independence and compliance with the relevant regulation.

The PPSA, meanwhile, advised the committee of the recently launch of its mobile referral application, which will provide potential complainants with the information on which institutions they should approach to resolve their specific problems, rather than approaching the PP in error. This innovation will also significantly shorten the time it takes to respond to a complainant. This encourages the public to be their own liberators, and to demand quality services and accountability from state functionaries.

The committee also heard that the PPSA’s funding pressures have eased after additional funds were allocated in the 2021/22 financial year. Thanks to this funding, the PPSA was able to make provisions for ICT infrastructure, an e-library, 22 staff posts and an electronic document management system. Current funding pressures include the filling of the additional 22 positions, with the estimated costs of R15.1 million. The posts would have been funded by the PPSA over the medium-term economic framework had the baseline not been reduced in the 2019/20 financial year, as the baseline reduction affected the cost of employment in the main.

Mr Magwanishe said the committee will this week continue its engagement with entities over which it has an oversight mandate.

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE AND CORRECTIONAL SERVICES, MR** **BULELANI MAGWANISHE.**

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