**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**POLICE COMMITTEE ADOPTS CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT BILL TO GIVE IMPETUS TO THE FIGHT AGAINST GBV**

**Parliament, Wednesday, 11 May 2022 –** The Portfolio Committee on Police has today unanimously adopted the Criminal Law (Forensic Procedures) Amendment Bill [B25 – 2021] and will recommend to the National Assembly to adopt the Bill. The committee is of the view that the Bill strengthens the fight against the scourge of gender-based violence and violent crimes in general.

The purpose of the Criminal Law (Forensic Procedures) Amendment Bill is to make provision for the full implementation of certain transitional arrangements contained in the Criminal Law (Forensic Procedures) Amendment Act, 2013 and to provide for the enforcement of the obligation to submit to the taking of a buccal sample and to provide for matters connected therewith.

“The committee diligently processed the Bill and is pleased that the Bill has been adopted by all Members of Parliament. In order to win the fight against GBV we need to utilise all resources on hand and this Bill will ensure that buccal samples are taken from convicted persons serving time on any offenses listed in Schedule 8 of the Criminal Procedures Act to enable connection to any other crimes. This will strengthen investigations and prosecution of GBV and violent crimes,” said Ms Tina Joemat-Pettersson, the Chairperson of the committee.

The committee has always been of the view that DNA forensic investigations are a central pillar in ensuring prosecution against GBV and violent crimes in general.

The committee is also of the view that Section  7(c) strengthens the oversight function of the committee with the requirement for submission of quarterly reports on the progress made concerning taking of buccal samples from convicted Schedule 8 offenders.

Also, the provisions proposed by Clause 2(b) which provides for a process to be undertaken in a case where a convicted offender does not consent to the taking of a buccal sample is a necessary provision to prevent loopholes.

In adopting this important Amendment Bill, the committee appreciates all the inputs it received during its public participation process, ensuring that the Bill is strengthened and responsive to current challenges.

Meanwhile, the committee has resolved to relook the date of the proposed Firearms Summit it is planning. The committee remains committed to holding an inclusive summit aimed at finding solutions to the challenges within the firearms control environment, but to achieve this requires time to consider all matters such as availability of participants, agenda items to be considered and adequate time needed to have meaningful engagements. The committee will, in due course, communicate a date where such a summit will take place.

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

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