MEDIA STATEMENT

MINERAL RESOURCES AND ENERGY COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED AMENDED CO-OPERATIVE AGREEMENT FOR RESEARCH

Parliament, Tuesday, 31 May 2022 – The Portfolio Committee on Mineral Resources and Energy has unanimously adopted the amended African Regional Co-operative Agreement for Research (AFRA) as presented by the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy (DMRE).

South Africa has been signatory to the AFRA since its inception in 1990. The agreement is amended to include two aspects, including the fact that it remains in force indefinitely and to make provision for withdrawal.

Paragraph two of Article XIV of the agreement gives a member state an opportunity to withdraw from the agreement through a written notification to the Director-General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) which will take effect after six months of receipt of such withdrawal notification.

The agreement is classified as section 231(2) of the Constitution thereby requiring ratification from Parliament.

AFRA seeks to promote cooperation in the peaceful application of nuclear science and technology for socio-economic development amongst the IAEA member states from the African region.

The committee further noted South Africa’s benefit from the agreement including, amongst others, technical cooperation to use the available regional expertise and existing facilities for planning and implementation of cooperative programmes under human health, food and agriculture, energy, environment, water management and industrial applications.

Meanwhile, the committee has tasked both Parliamentary legal service and research to prepare a comprehensive presentation on how it should attend to the two issues that can potentially affect investment in the mining sector, including the Glencore’s $1.186 billion saga involving the United States of America as reported in the media as well as the recent arrest of the former DMRE’s Deputy Director-General (DDG) in connection with allegations of fraud and money laundering of the mining rehabilitation funds.

The committee took keen interest on both issues owing to the fact that Glencore is a South African company with Chief Executive Officer who is South African, whereas the former DDG is accused of crimes committed in the department that is accountable to the committee.

The committee Chairperson, Mr Sahlulele Luzipo, said: “We need a comprehensive presentation in order to come to terms with the depth of these issues, considering that they emerged at the back of the state capture revelations.”

Lastly, the committee has resolved to place on its third quarter programme a slot to be briefed by DMRE on the status of the mining rehabilitation funds.

ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON MINERAL RESOURCES AND ENERGY, MR SAHLULELE LUZIPO.

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