**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SERVICE AND ADMINISTRATION CALLS FOR USE OF PRESIDENTIAL HOTLINE TO DEEPEN PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY**

**Parliament, Tuesday, 1 June 2022 –** The Portfolio Committee on Public Service and Administration asked the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation to resurrect the Presidential Hotline and ensure that it meets the objective for which it was established in 2009. Furthermore, its benefits must translate into better government performance and the deepening of participatory democracy.

The committee urged the department that the Presidential Hotline must be easily used by the poorest of the poor and be responsive to their needs. The committee told the department that mobile phone companies must be called to assist in ensuring that the resource is free of charge. It called upon the department to incorporate social media and email into the hotline’s services, as the fast-changing times demand.

The department informed the committee that budgetary limitations in the previous financial years also contributed in the hotline’s poor performance. However, the department reassured the committee that it will consolidate the innovations suggested by the committee to improve the hotline’s performance and to use the employment opportunity it represents, as identified by the committee.

The Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation appeared before the committee today to brief it on the modernisation of the Presidential Hotline, as well as challenges and success rates. It also presented a status report on performance evaluations for heads of departments and Directors-General for the 2021/22 financial year, as well as signing performance agreements for the 2022/23 financial year.

On the heads of department status report, the department told the committee that non-alignment between the performance agreements of heads of departments and their political principals, as well as delays in political principals signing heads of departments’ performance agreements has been a problem. The department informed the committee that there will be alignment between the performance agreements of the heads of departments and their principals.

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SERVICE AND ADMINISTRATION, MR TYOTYO JAMES**

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