**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**COMMITTEE SEEKS CONSENSUS ON AREAS OF DIVERGENCE ON ELECTORAL AMENDMENT BILL**

**Parliament, Wednesday, 29 June 2022 –** The Portfolio Committee on Home Affairs yesterday continued its consideration of the Electoral Amendment Bill and resolved that there must be space to allow for further deliberation and persuasion on areas where there are divergent views. There is in-principle agreement on various areas of the Bill, but stark differences remain.

“To avoid rushing to a vote on the matter, the committee felt it prudent to further persuade each other in order to arrive at a consensus rather than an imposition. It is for this reason that the committee will continue to deliberate on the contentious areas with the aim of finding a middle ground,” said Mr Mosa Chabane, the Chairperson of the committee.

There are in principle two areas of difference, firstly, the issue of participation of independent candidates in one or multiple regions and, secondly, the quantum and instrument to be used to calculate seats.

To ensure fairness, the committee agreed that in principle independent candidates should be allowed to have liaison agents to observe voting processes. The committee agreed that the quantum of agents will be determined by IEC regulations during elections and that the liaison structure be well defined in the regulations.

There was also general consensus on the need to include in the Bill a fair formula for signatures and election deposit requirements for participation in an election, to ensure that only serious candidates and political parties participate in an election. The quantum and modalities thereof will also be left to the Electoral Commission of South Africa election regulations to accommodate the changing environment from one election to another. Furthermore, the committee has affirmed the necessity of a cooling-off period for a member of a political party to participate as an independent candidate.

The committee will continue to deliberate to enable the committee to arrive at a decision that will facilitate the process of drafting of the A List Bill for the committee to consider. The committee remains committed to concluding its processes and delivering a Bill worth considering by the National Assembly.

Meanwhile, the committee resolved to postpone a presentation by the Minister of Home Affairs on a report by the Ministerial Committee established to review all permits and visas issued since 2004. The committee took this decision to allow for the presence of all members of the task team in the meeting to enhance discussions and deliberations. The committee will set aside a full day to ensure that the report is adequately deliberated upon.

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON HOME AFFAIRS, MR MOSA CHABANE.**

**For media enquiries or interviews with the Chairperson, please contact the Committee’s Media Officer:**
**Name: Malatswa Molepo (Mr)**
Parliamentary Communication Services
Tel: 021 403 8438