**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**COMMITTEE FOR SECTION 194 ENQUIRY HEARS FROM SUBPOENAED WITNESS**

**Parliament, Tuesday, 19 July 2022 –** The Committee for Section 194 Enquiry into the Public Protector (PP) Adv Busisiwe Mkhwebane’s fitness to hold office today agreed to resume hearing witnesses in one week’s time, in order to provide the PP and her legal team time to prepare for a court hearing next week.

Committee Chairperson Mr Qubudile Dyantyi said the committee will hear from more witnesses from Wednesday next week. He said the PP and her legal team had requested the break in the hearings to prepare for the court hearing on Monday and Tuesday next week in the Western Cape High Court.

The committee was established by the National Assembly (NA) on 16 March 2021 to conduct an enquiry into the PP’s fitness to hold office. Today, the committee continued to cross-examine Mr Tebogo Kekana, a subpoenaed witness. Adv Mkhebane’s legal representatives asserted several times that Mr Kekana was a dishonest witness whose testimony cannot be trusted.

Adv Dali Mpofu (SC), appearing on behalf of Adv Mkhwebane, said that on the PP’s instruction the report dealing with the South African Reserve Bank (SARB) was quality assured at all stages, contradicting the version of events Mr Kekana gave to the committee.

Adv Mkhwebane further denies that she had an investigator on the Vrede Dairy report removed, on the suspicion that they were a Democratic Alliance member. The committee also heard that the PP denies that she informed Mr Kekana to not rely on the so-called “Gupta leaks”. She was concerned only about the leaks’ authenticity, said Adv Mpofu.

Mr Kekana reported that his supervisor, Mr Ndou, reported that Adv Mkhwebane had told them not to use these leaks. Mr Ndou also informed him that the PP instructed that the names of politicians be removed from the Vrede Dairy report.

Evidence leader Adv Nazreen Bawa (SC) strongly denied Adv Mpofu's claim that the enquiry’s subpoena issued against Mr Kekana was simulated. Adv Bawa reported that Mr Kekana initially tried to evade all attempts by the enquiry to engage with him. It was only after Mr Kekana was subpoenaed, she said, that he met with evidence leaders last week.

After the cross-examination ended, members of the committee asked Mr Kekana about the disciplinary action against him, which he thought was driven by him “talking too much” to lawyers about the State Security Agency/South African Reserve Bank litigation.

Mr Dyantyi indicated that although the committee will not hear from any witnesses tomorrow, it will still meet to reflect on the hearings so far. The committee is expected to finalise its work by the end of September 2022.

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE COMMITTEE FOR SECTION 194 ENQUIRY, MR QUBUDILE DYANTYI.**

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