**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**JOINT DEFENCE COMMITTEE URGES DEFENCE FORCE SERVICE COMMISSION TO FIND SOLUTIONS TO CAPACITY CHALLENGES**

**Parliament, Friday, 26 August 2022 –** The Joint Standing Committee on Defence has urged the Defence Force Service Commission (DFSC) to urgently find solutions to its capacity challenges to ensure its effectiveness. The committee received a briefing on the DFSC’s 2021/22 annual activity report.

“While the committee is cognisant of the financial challenges facing the country and the National Treasury instruction for departments to reprioritise budgets, the committee remains of the view that the commission must be adequately staffed to render effective services to the Minister of Defence,” said Mr Cyril Xaba, the Co-Chairperson of the committee.

Only 68.42% of the DFSC’s approved structure is staffed, which the committee believes is not commensurate with the level of research support it requires. This is a risk factor that will directly affect the commission’s ability to implement its mandate.

Also, as a result of capacity challenges, the DFSC was unable to execute some of its strategic activities, such as conducting consultative and follow-up visits to some of the military bases. The committee has called for the urgent implementation of mitigating strategies, such as the secondment of SANDF members to augment the DFSC’s skills capacity.

Meanwhile, the committee was pleased that the DFSC did not incur any unauthorised, irregular, fruitless or wasteful expenditure for the year under review. The committee considers good governance to be the bedrock of an effective and efficient entity that will ensure its mandate is implemented.

The committee has considered the letter from President Cyril Ramaphosa on the extension of the employment of the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) as part of Operation Chariot in KwaZulu-Natal in response to the floods in the province. The committee welcomed the SANDF’s humanitarian work to assist the people in the province. The extension is for a period of three months from 15 June to 15 September 2022, with an expected expenditure of R95 308 200. The committee supports the deployment and its work.

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CO-CHAIRPERSONS OF THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE, MR CYRIL XABA AND MR MAMAGASE NCHABELENG**

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