**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**JOINT DEFENCE COMMITTEE CALL FOR REVIEW OF OUT-DATED SUCCESSION PLANNING POLICY**

**Parliament, Friday, 9 September 2022 –** The Joint Standing Committee on Defence has urged the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) to urgently review their succession and career management policy which is old, out-dated and not responsive to current and future challenges facing the armed forces. The committee received a report from the Minister of Defence and senior management of the SANDF.

While the committee called for the review, it appreciated the frank and candid conversation with the SANDF, which the committee views as a critical step in resolving the challenge. “The fact that the SANDF is utilising a career management policy adopted in 2001 is in itself problematic, in that it was responding to a different environment altogether. But we acknowledge the fact that the SANDF were forthright with the recognition of the shortcomings of the policy,” said Mr Cyril Xaba, the co-Chairperson of the committee.

The call for a review is to ensure that there is a succession planning system that improves the morale of the serving members, which will ultimately qualitatively improve output. Also, an effective succession plan will ensure armed forces rejuvenation, which will guarantee deployable members within the SANDF.

Furthermore, the committee has advised that the succession planning must be transparent, as opposed to the current highly secret process which is a breeding ground for unhappiness within the force.

Despite these concerns, the committee welcomes the assurance that there is an ongoing process to integrate, update and simplify the process. If effectively implemented, a reviewed system will ensure that the processes are adequate for a complex organisation such as the SANDF. As part of the process, the committee has committed to meeting experts to further discuss the issue of succession planning, especially tapping into experiences from different countries.

Meanwhile, the committee has welcomed the assurance from the Minister that she is in the final stages of appointing the Reserve Force Council. Also, the committee welcomes the assurance that the SANDF will soon announce the name of the person appointed as the Chief Defence Reserves.

**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**

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