**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**COMMITTEE ON AUDITOR-GENERAL WELCOMES BRIEFING FROM DEPUTY AUDITOR-GENERAL ON AG MATTER**

**Parliament, Friday, 16 September 2022 –** The Standing Committee on Auditor-General received a briefing today from the Auditor-General of South Africa (AGSA) and the Audit Committee on the legal opinion report regarding allegations levelled against the Auditor-General (AG) by the Chief People Officer (CPO) in the Office of the AG.

The briefing on the matter follows a briefing the committee received from the AG and the Deputy Auditor-General (DAG) at the end of August on the matter involving the CPO. The AG informed the committee that the matter emanated from performance reviews conducted by the AG. The performance reviews led to further meetings between the AG and the CPO, where the CPO insisted on a mutual separation agreement which the AG refused.

According to the AG, the CPO then advised the AG that he will expose a list of areas of alleged transgressions committed by the AG. However, the AG did not succumb to the CPO’s demands and instead reported the issue to the DAG and requested a full independent investigation on the matter. The committee appreciated the Office of the AG for transparency and for upholding the ethics of accountability.

The Office of the AG hired an independent law firm to investigate the matter and Bowmans Law Firm was appointed for the investigations. The DAG and the Audit Committee presented to the committee a final independent Bowmans report. The report cleared the AG from most of the allegations. However, the report indicated that the appointment of the Head of Communications in the Office of the AG which was among the allegations, was not made according to all the requirements in the advert, but that was attributed to HR weakness.

Also, on an allegation related to the remuneration of the former AG, the late Mr Kimi Makwetu, the DAG reported that the deviation was lawful, however, a recommendation was made that a policy must be developed on the remuneration of the AG.

The Audit Committee told the committee that it was satisfied with the AG’s open and frank responses to the questions posed by its members and commended the AG for living up to the constitutional values of transparency and accountability by subjecting the nine allegations to independent and objective scrutiny.

In welcoming the report, the committee welcomed the manner in which Ms Maluleke handled the matter and for not hesitating to subject her actions to scrutiny. Furthermore, the committee has assured the AG about its trust in the Office of the AG. “We appreciate the way you have handled the matter. The committee is going to meet the Makwetu family, especially Mrs Makwetu to express a word of consolation to the family, as these allegations certainly have reopened the painful wound of the death of the late Mr Makwetu,” said Mr Somyo.

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON AUDITOR GENERAL, MR SAKHUMZI SOMYO.**

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