**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS APPLAUDS KENYA AND ANGOLA ON SUCCESSFUL ELECTIONS**

**Parliament, Wednesday, 28 September 2022** – The Portfolio Committee on International Relations and Cooperation today received briefings from the Department of International Relations and Cooperation on the recent elections held in Kenya and Angola, and on Lesotho’s readiness to hold elections in October 2022.

The committee was briefed by Ambassador Mbulelo Bungane, Director of East African Community Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Eritrea and Somalia on the elections in Kenya, which took place on 9 August 2022. The committee heard that the voter turnout was the lowest in 15 years at 65.4% of the total population. However, international observers noted that the elections were successful and peaceful.

Thereafter, Mr Khazimula Chabane, Director of Botswana, Lesotho, Eswatini, Namibia, Angola and the Democratic Republic of Congo briefed the committee on the elections in Angola on 24 June 2022, which had a voter turnout of 44 per cent. South Africa was part of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Electoral Observer Mission. The SADC mission observed that the pre- and post-election phases were peaceful and commended all stakeholders for respecting the law.

The committee noted that the voters roll is still being finalised in Lesotho and that an estimated 800 000 to 900 000 people are expected to vote. The committee raised its concerns about food security and the rise in crime, especially cross-border gang crimes. These issues may affect preparations for the elections on 7 October 2022.

Committee Chairperson Mr Supra Mahumapelo said, “We wish the government and the people of Lesotho well as they prepare for their elections. And, as neighbours on the African continent, we will support a free and fair election.”

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND COOPERATION, MR SUPRA MAHUMAPELO.**

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