**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS DISSOLUTION OF DITSOBOTLA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY DUE TO SERVICE DELIVERY COLLAPSE AND OTHER CHALLENGES**

**Parliament, Monday, 3 October 2022 –** The Select Committee on Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (Cogta), Water and Sanitation and Human Settlements today resolved to recommend that the National Council of Provinces (NCOP) approve the intervention into Ditsobotla Local Municipality in terms of section 139 (1) (c) of the Constitution. The committee believes that there is clear evidence of exceptional circumstances to support this decision.

Following its visit to the municipality on 29 September 2022, the committee was of the opinion that the challenges facing the municipality, which include financial mismanagement, inadequate service delivery and lapses in governance, were enough grounds to recommend the dissolution of the municipality.

“Our preoccupation has always been about ensuring that the people receive the best basic services and a dysfunctional municipality will not be able to ensure that. We must hasten to emphasise that if approved by the NCOP, this intervention should solely be focused on ensuring efficient service delivery to the people,” said Mr China Dodovu, the Chairperson of the committee.

The existence of two parallel municipal councils operating in the municipality, with two mayors, two speakers and two chief whips, is another compelling reason for dissolution, as this makes it impossible to fulfil executive and legislative obligations, with the residents of the municipality bearing the full brunt of the impact of the dysfunction.

Another, even greater concern for the committee is the existence of what appear to be criminal elements within the municipality, which is the root of the non-compliance with legislation and supply chain management policy. This has allowed corruption and malfeasance to flourish. The leadership squabbles between the offices of the mayor and the speaker exacerbated an already toxic environment, which has made it difficult for the municipality to discharge its constitutional obligations.

The committee also questioned the appointment of skilled and qualified municipal officials who will ensure that functions are implemented with the highest professionalism and in compliance with the requirements of the National Development Plan to build a capable and developmental state. The committee therefore resolved that a skills audit is necessary to ascertain what skills are available within the municipality and which areas need augmentation.

Meanwhile, the committee is concerned to learn that the Cogta MEC has hired an administrator for the municipality, even though legal process has not been concluded. “The steps taken by the MEC to appoint an administrator are not procedural and thus invalid, as the NCOP has not as yet taken a decision on the intervention. Only after adoption of this report can the MEC appoint administrators,” Mr Dodovu emphasised.

The committee was concerned that the MEC’s actions undermine the legal process and perpetuate the unfounded perception that the NCOP process is merely a formality. The committee therefore resolved to invite the MEC to appear before the committee within the month, so she can give reasons for her actions.

The committee will table a report in the NCOP recommending the dissolution of Ditsobotla Local Municipality on Wednesday, 5 October 2022.

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON COOPERATIVE GOVERNANCE AND TRADITIONAL AFFAIRS, MR CHINA DODOVU.**

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