**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**TRADE, INDUSTRY AND COMPETITION COMMITTEE RECEIVES PROGRESS UPDATE ON MPUMALANGA OVERSIGHT VISIT CONCERNS**

**Parliament, Wednesday, 12 October 2022 –** The Portfolio Committee on Trade, Industry and Competition today received a status update from the Mpumalanga Department of Economic Development and Tourism (MDEDT) and the Mpumalanga Economic Growth Agency (MEGA) on the development of the Nkomazi Special Economic Zone (SEZ) and the Ekandustria Industrial Park.

In April 2022, the committee visited Mpumalanga to engage the MDEDT and the MEGA on the progress made in developing the Nkomazi SEZ and the funds spent on Ekandustria from the Revitalisation of Industrial Parks Programme. In Ekandustria, the committee visited two tenants, namely Mala Dyeing and Mazikenzi Recycling. During this visit, it also visited Electrotron (Pty) Ltd, Gegana Business Enterprises, Mixcorp, Roadgrass Investments and Agrigel, who had all benefited from funding from the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition, the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC) and the National Empowerment Fund (NEF).

Today, the committee received a progress report on the issues uncovered during this visit. The committee commended progress made by Electrotron, Gegana and Roadgrass, as a result of the continuous support provided by the NEF and the IDC. It heard that, as a result of the visit, the NEF and the Small Enterprises Development Agency was assisting Mazikenzi Recycling to develop a business plan and to address its other technical challenges.

However, the committee was disappointed by the winding up of Mixcorp, a youth-owned enterprise. The logistics company had a five-year contract with Eskom to offload coal from the trains to the power station. This contract was being terminated early due to a lack of demand for these services. The committee welcomed the on-going support offered by the IDC during this process.

The committee welcomed the progress made at the Nkomazi SEZ. However, it encouraged the MDEDT to urgently address outstanding matters, in particular the filling of critical posts in the SEZ entity and the resolution of access to the SEZ.

The committee acknowledged the progress made at Ekandustria Industrial Park. “We however remain concerned by the challenges facing the MEGA in terms of the maintenance and management of the park, in particular the loss of the landfill site licence, and the condition of the water and electricity supply infrastructure. While the committee recognises the MEGA’s vision for Ekandustria, much work is required to realise this. The committee will continue to monitor this as part of its oversight mandate,” said committee Chairperson Ms Judy Hermans.

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON TRADE, INDUSTRY AND COMPETITION, MS JUDY HERMANS.**

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