**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE PLEDGES UNWAVERING SUPPORT TO COOPERATIVE SECTOR ORGANISATIONS**

**Parliament, Wednesday, 30 November 2022 –** The Portfolio Committee on Small Business Development has pledged its unwavering support to the organisations working in the cooperative sector, in order to facilitate growth in the sector.

The committee was briefed today on the operations undertaken by five sector organisations: the South African National Apex Cooperative, the National Cooperatives Alliance of South Africa, the National Association of Cooperative Banking Institutions Working Group, the South African Informal Traders Alliance and the Informal Economy Development Forum.

Committee Chairperson Ms Violet Siwela welcomed all presentations, saying they were informative and educational. “It is good that all presentations came up with some recommendations, which makes it impossible for us not to support them. We will find a date in the coming year to consider and deliberate on all proposed recommendations and determine a way forward.”

The committee has acknowledged the high mortality rate of cooperatives from across different sectors in the country and attributed the challenge to inadequate government support, as well as the culture of greediness amongst cooperative members.

Ms Siwela said that the committee will engage with the Department of Small Business Development to find out how it is planning to support cooperatives in order to grow the sector and create jobs.

Ms Siwela further welcomed the participation of some sector organisations at the international level and reiterated the importance of benchmarking in order to align the sector with other cooperatives internationally. She said the committee will heed a call to work together with sector organisations on an ongoing basis.

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, MS VIOLET SIWELA.**

For media enquiries or interviews with the Chairperson, please contact the committee’s Media Officer:
**Name: Justice Molafo (Mr)**