**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**STATE OF READINESS AT POINTS OF ENTRY COMMENDABLE BUT IMPLEMENTATION AND COOPERATION BETWEEN NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES CRITICAL**

**Parliament, Friday, 14 October 2022 –** The Portfolio Committee on Home Affairs has welcome advanced plans made by the Border Management Authority (BMA) to ensure effective and efficient movement of people and goods during the busy festive period. The committee received an update from the Minister and the BMA on their state of readiness for the coming December period.

“We are particularly appreciative of the plans put in place at land ports of entry primarily because of the volumes normally crossing at these borders. It is important that the BMA learns from past challenges faced at these border crossings to ensure the implementation of remedial measures,” said Mr Mosa Chabane, the Chairperson of the committee.

In line with this, the committee has welcomed interaction with the Freight Movers Association to find solutions to recurrent challenges of excess of trucks at various ports of entry. The committee welcomes the assurance that concessions have been made that will see the reduction of trucks during peak days. Despite this, the committee have called on stakeholders to ensure that the reduction of goods does not impact negatively on trade, especially during the festive season.

The committee also acknowledged the continuous interaction with neighbouring countries to enable seamless movement across the border. The committee accepts that engagements are ongoing and that work will continue to ensure the seamless crossing of goods and people.

The committee welcomes the cooperation with labour to ensure that all challenges are ironed out. The committee will continue to monitor the progress in operationalising the BMA because it views it as central to dealing with challenges at our ports of entry.

Also to be commended is the speed with which sister government departments like the South African Police Service and Department of Defence have moved to sign cooperation arrangements with the BMA. The committee remains of the view that real cooperation is the primary solution to challenges faced along our borders.

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON HOME AFFAIRS, MR MOSA CHABANE.**

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