**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS RESCHEDULES MEETING WITH SOUTH AFRICAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION DUE TO ABSENCE OF BOARD**

**Parliament, Wednesday, 23 November 2022 –** The Standing Committee on Public Accounts (SCOPA) was compelled today to adjourn its hearing with the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) due to the absence of the broadcaster’s Board as an accounting authority.

The term of office for the previous SABC Board expired on 15 October 2022 and the new Board has not been appointed. The committee was informed that there is no one that has been designated as the Board which leaves a vacuum in the accountability structure of the public broadcaster. The committee understands that the responsibility for the absence of the Board does not lie completely with the SABC as the parliamentary process of appointing a new Board has been delayed by the vetting process which is the responsibility of the State Security Agency (SSA).

There are provisions in law that state that the Group Chief Executive Officer (CEO) can be designated as the accounting authority in the absence of the Board. That designation has not taken place. SCOPA understands that a request to designate the Group CEO as the Board of SABC in the interim was made timeously to the National Treasury, however, the SABC is still awaiting the designation from the National Treasury.

This means the reporting framework is absent and therefore the committee could not proceed and engage with the executives of the SABC who in part may be implicated in issues the committee will be dealing with.

SCOPA had structured today’s hearing to deal with the annual report, financial statements, investigations as well as fruitless and wasteful expenditures for the 2021/22 financial year. It would be irregular for SCOPA to proceed with the hearing in the absence of the Board. The committee will await the processes of regularising the SABC leadership in order to close the vacuum that is there as a result of the absence of the Board.

SCOPA also wants to emphasise the impact of the delays in the vetting process by the SSA which is negatively affecting the governance in the public sector. The vetting issue in its entirety poses a serious challenge to the architecture of oversight and good governance in this country. This impasse with the SSA is creating a favourable environment for people to be in office when they should not be something that poses a risk to financial management.

The committee has resolved to invite the SABC to appear before it on these matters in the first term of 2023.

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF SCOPA, MR MKHULEKO HLENGWA.**

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