**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS RECEIVES THE 2023 DIVISION OF REVENUE BILL**

**Parliament, Wednesday, 1 March 2023 –** The Standing Committee on Appropriations today welcomed the changes to the Provincial equitable share allocations such as the R1.6 billion added to the Early Childhood Development Grant. The committee also applauded the R1.5 billion added to the National School Nutrition Programme to ensure that meals are provided to almost 9 million learners.

The Committee received a briefing from the National Treasury on the 2023 Division of Revenue Bill and the 2022 Second Adjustments Appropriation Bill.

National Treasury informed the committee that R6.8 billion will be added to the Provincial roads maintenance grant for the backlog in the refurbishment of provincial roads and another R307 million in Provincial roads maintenance for disasters that happened in April 2022.

The committee remains concerned with South African Airway's continued recapitalization process. The Chair of the Appropriations Committee, Mr Sfiso Buthelezi said there may be confidential information about the Takatso consortium and the bailout of SAA, but given that public funds were used, details of the bailout will have to be shared with the Minister of Finance and Parliament in due course.

The committee further recommended that there is a need for a proper evaluation of the national airline.

The committee noted that the impact of load shedding has shattered the finances of various municipalities and their ability to generate revenue. The committee further notes that many municipalities have had to purchase generators and pay for diesel to keep services such as water treatment plants operational. The committee said that local municipalities are losing at least 50 per cent of their revenue due to increased load-shedding hours.

The committee recommended that National Treasury needs to relook at the funding model of municipalities due the increased levels of load shedding.

The committee welcomed the transfer of R5 Billion by Parliament to the Land Bank. The committee further welcomes the R3 billion blended finance programme of the Land Bank which is aimed at assisting emerging farmers.

Regarding the South African Post Office, the committee recognizes the importance of the service it offers especially to rural communities. The committee would like to see the retention of jobs in the postal services sector. To this end, the committee recommended that when SAPO begins selling all non-core assets including properties, especially in rural areas, where these sales must benefit the community.

The committee recommends further engagements with the Post Office on progress regarding its turnaround strategy.

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS, MR SFISO BUTHELEZI.**

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