**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT OF PARLIAMENT WELCOMES SECRETARY TO PARLIAMENT’S PRESENTATION**

**Parliament, Friday, 19 May 2023 –** The Standing Committee on Financial Management of Parliament has welcomed the briefing it received today from the Secretary to Parliament (STP) on Parliament’s performance in the fourth quarter of the 2022/23 financial year, and on Parliament’s 2023/24 budget and annual performance plan. The briefing by the Secretary to Parliament also included the macro-structure for the 7th Parliament.

The STP told the committee that Parliament hosted a four-day strategy review session from 8-11 November 2022 with the theme of “Improving the Quality of Governance and Accountability through Enhanced Oversight”. The session was attended by the executive authority, Presiding Officers and parliamentary management team members. He said the external speakers and panel members were invited to participate in the session to share insights on how Parliament is doing and what can be improved going forward.

According to the STP, the session focussed on how the institution can redefine itself, to effectively respond to the demands of citizens, within the ambit of democracy and the prescripts of the Constitution, and the type of leadership and capacity that would be required to enable and transform the institution. He said the constitutional mandate of Parliament of legislation and oversight, international engagement, public participation, and co-operative government was thoroughly discussed.

He said the revised 2023/24 annual performance plan puts in place the building blocks of the 7th parliamentary term and closure of the final chapter of the 6th parliamentary term and incorporates the new transformational targets to drive the new strategic direction toward the 7th parliamentary term, service and operational targets to maintain operational performance as the end of the 6th term of Parliament approaches.

He said the 2023/24 approved allocation from National Treasury is R3,895 billion. The allocation of R4,451 billion is recommended with a baseline review by Treasury to address budget pressures within Parliament’s baseline. He said the meeting between the Minister of Finance and Parliament’s Presiding Officers recommended to address the shortfall in terms of section 17 of the Financial Management of Parliament and Provincial Legislators Act to address items that distort Parliament’s budget baseline.

The committee welcomed the STP’s presentation and during the engagements on the presentation the committee called on the STP to ensure that there are strategies in place to boost the public’s trust level in Parliament, which stood at 63% in 2003 and is currently at 23%. The committee also asked the STP to say more on the implementation of the Zondo Commission’s report on Parliament. However, the STP replied by saying that is not part of the annual performance report as presented.

On the upcoming BRICS Summit, the committee asked the STP to brief it on preparations and other details related to the summit. The STP confirmed that the summit will take place in Gauteng from 22 to 24 August and will be followed by a sitting of the BRICS parliamentary forum from 26 to 29 September and parliaments are going to be invited. He said the next National Assembly Programming Committee will discuss the issues of BRICS Summit and BRICS parliamentary forum.

The Co-Chairpersons of the committee appreciated the work of the STP and his team in the 6th Parliament. Ms Peace Mabe said: “Well done Secretary to Parliament for the wonderful work you have done. We have been able to shake issues that were untouched before. We can say without fear of contradiction that we have set the agenda for the 7th Parliament.”

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CO-CHAIRPERSONS OF THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT OF PARLIAMENT, MS DIKELEDI MAHLANGU AND MS PEACE MABE.**

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