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| **MEDIA STATEMENT** **RULES COMMITTEE ADOPTS MEASURES TO IMPROVE EXECUTIVE ACCOUNTABILITY** **Parliament, Friday 13 August 2021** – The National Assembly (NA) Rules Committee met today to deliberate on, amongst other things, the election of the NA Speaker, the work of the Section 194 Enquiry Committee and establishing a new Portfolio Committee. The vacancy of the Speaker of the NA arose following appointment of former Speaker Ms Thandi Modise as Minister of Defence and Military Veterans. The election of the new Speaker is provisionally scheduled for Thursday, 19 August at 11h00. Consultations regarding this date are underway with the Chief Justice of the Republic,  who in terms of the Constitution is responsible for presiding over the election of Speaker.  The NA Rules Committee also adopted recommendations of its Subcommittee on Review of National Assembly Rules about implementing NA Rule 136 and a mechanism to more closely monitor questions to the Executive, which are unanswered. The subcommittee submitted that if there was non-compliance or lack of improvement by the Executive in answering questions, the Speaker would consider a public reprimand in a plenary sitting of the NA. As a last resort, the Speaker could escalate the matter through a formal complaint directed to the Leader of Government Business. This will be the first time such harsher measures are taken against ministers who do not comply with the rules of the House.The recommendations will be taken for adoption in the House. The meeting also agreed that the Portfolio Committee on Human Settlements, Water and Sanitation will he split into two committees. This decision is in light of the recent changes made by President Ramaphosa to the Cabinet which resulted in separation of the human settlements portfolio from the water and sanitation portfolio.  Also considered at today’s meeting were the implications of the Western Cape High Court judgment on Advocate Mkhwebane’s application challenging the constitutionality of NA rules on implementing Section 194 of the Constitution. The adverse findings which the Court made would be appealed and further legal advice would be sought about how the Section 194 Enquiry Committee should proceed when an appeal is registered. **ISSUED BY PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA****Enquiries: Moloto Mothapo 082 370 6930**    |

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