

## **Statement of ANC Caucus on the election of comrade Patrick Chauke as Secretary of the Association for Public Accounts Committees (APAC)**

The ANC Caucus in the North West Legislature wishes to congratulate comrade Hlomane Patrick Chauke on his recent election as the National Secretary of the Association of Public Accounts Committees (APAC) at its recent Annual Conference held in Port Elizabeth.

Comrade Chauke earned his stripes and vote of confidence among conference delegates for his unwavering and robust engagement with organs of state where non-compliance with laws governing our finances are prevalent, and this has earned him friends and foes alike. He has been the epitome of change for the betterment of our people's lives in his role as Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts in the province, and an embodiment of the ethos of democratic accountability.

Under his stewardship, the oversight work of SCOPA in the North West Legislature gained impetus and reached a higher trajectory, as the committee familiarised itself with a full spectrum of powers bestowed upon itself by the Constitution and the Standing Rules of the Legislature. This restored the meaning previously distorted in the discourse on oversight, which portrayed oversight institutions as organs which merely play a spectator role with no mandate to make interventions where challenges exist.

In the discourse alluded to above, Committees of Parliament, and to some extent other watchdog bodies such as the Public Protector's office, were deemed to be institutions which merely play the role of conveyor belts of reports on non-compliance by state organs. Their power was only thought to be restricted to making recommendations. However, an appreciation has been made that Committees of Parliament are the centrepiece of our constitutional democracy and SCOPA in the North West took the lead in revealing this constitutional mandate.

The preamble of the constitution of the Republic of South Africa commits the people of this country, united in their diversity, to improve the quality of life for all citizens and free the potential of every person, and these are rights earned through just a condition of simply being human.

It is the role of organisations such as APAC and its affiliate Public Accounts Committees at all spheres of government to defend this right, and we encourage comrade Chauke as the new Secretary, to deepen the culture of selflessness and ensure that the commitment to better the lives of our people finds resonance in our collective conduct as citizens of South Africa and the global community.

**Mike Madumo, ANC Caucus Secretary, North West legislature**