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**MEDIA STATEMENT  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
09 JUNE 2023**

**SIU IS AUTHORISED TO INVESTIGATE ALLEGATIONS OF SERIOUS MALADMINISTRATION AT THE  
OFFICE OF THE PREMIER IN THE FREE STATE PROVINCE**

The Special Investigating Unit (SIU) has been authorised by President Cyril Ramaphosa to investigate allegations of serious maladministration in the affairs of the Office of the Premier in the Free State as identified by the Auditor-General of South Africa in reports which are titled "Report of the auditor-general to the Free State Legislature on vote no. 1: Department of the Premier" dated 31 July 2019 and 27 October 2020.

The SIU's investigation will also focus on the Office of the Premier's annual report for the 2017/2018 financial year concerning the approval, allocation, or payment of bursaries, including travel, accommodation and stipends to persons who were not entitled or were given in a manner that contradict the applicable manuals, policies, procedures, prescripts, instructions, or practices of the Office of the Premier.

The probe will also look into payments made in respect of student accommodation, including the causes of such maladministration and any related unauthorised, irregular or fruitless and wasteful expenditure incurred by the Office of the Premier or losses suffered by the Office of the Premier or the State.

Furthermore, the SIU will investigate any irregular, improper or unlawful conduct by officials or employees of the Office of the Premier or any other person or entity, relating to the matters that fall within this investigation.

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The Proclamation covers allegations of unlawful and improper conduct that took place between 1 January 2018 and 9 June 2023, the date of the publication of the Proclamation or before 1 January 2018 and after the date of the Proclamation that are relevant to, connected with, incidental to the matters or involves the same persons, entities or contracts investigated.

The SIU is empowered to institute civil action in the High Court or a Special Tribunal in its name, to correct any wrongdoing uncovered during its investigations caused by acts of corruption, fraud, or maladministration. In line with the Special Investigating Units and Special Tribunals Act 74 of 1996, the SIU will refer any evidence pointing to criminal conduct it uncovers to the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) for further action.

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