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## **MEDIA STATEMENT FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE 14 FEBRUARY 2024**

### **SIU COMPLETES 90% OF PHASE TWO IN THE NLC INVESTIGATION AND MAKES NEW REVELATIONS**

The Special Investigating Unit (SIU) has completed 90% of the second phase in its three phased National Lotteries Commission (NLC) investigation. The investigation in its totality is worth approximately R1.4 billion, which the State and the NLC have allegedly lost due to corruption at the organisation.

The value of each phase is:

- Phase 1 - R279 710 409.
- Phase 2 - R246 659 310.
- Phase 3 - R905 901.910.04

The SIU appeared before Parliament's Portfolio Committee on Trade and Industry on Wednesday, 14 February 2024, to give an update on the investigation.

In the presentation, SIU revealed new investigation findings. One of the findings is related to award-winning actress, Moiteri Pheto, unduly benefitting once again from the NLC grant funding. The NLC approved grant funding of R5 million to Zibisibix Non-Profit Company for a chicken farm in December 2018. After receiving the R5 million, money moved from the account and the following payments were made:

- Black Planet Trading (Director: Thula Sindi)- R140 000.00
- Tsoeletso (Director: Moitheri Pheto)- R253 000.00
- Pheto Safe and Cleaning (Director: Dimakatso Pheto)- R124 000.00
- Sunguti projects (Director: Moitheri Pheto)- R2 800 000.00
- Moitheri Pheto's personal bank account - R182 000.00

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- Dimakatso Pheto (Moitheri's sister) - R315 500.00
- Vehicle dealership- R252 400
- Agricultural Supplies- R209 500.00

The farm was purchased for R850 000, and the SIU found that the former chairperson of the NLC board Prof. Alfred Nevhutanda signed the offer to purchase the farm in the Vaal area. Furthermore, the evidence that SIU gathered revealed that the farm was purchased for the benefit of Dimakatso Pheto. The case has been referred for civil litigation for recovery and criminal referrals are being prepared.

The SIU also presented to Parliament how the South African Youth Movement (SAYM) applied for grant funding on behalf of the Presley Chweneyagae Foundation, which belong to award winning actor, Presley Chweneyagae. The main purpose of the application was for the Take Back the Future Musical, Documentary and Poetry Arts programme. The NLC approved a grant funding of an amount of R15 million.

From the R15 million, R2 999 967.00 was transferred to Iron Bridge Travelling Agency and Events in August 2016. Iron Bridge Travelling Agency and Events is owned by the former NLC Chief Operating Officer, Phillemon Letwaba's wife, Rebotile Malomane.

In May 2017, a further R950 190.00 was transferred to VNMM Consulting Engineers CC. VNMM Consulting Engineers is owned by Prof Nevhutanda's son-in-law, Meshack Makhubela. On 25 May 2017, an amount of R500 000 with a reference plot purchase was transferred to conveyancing attorneys. From the balance of R 450 190.00, Prof Nevhutanda received R100 000.00 for a bus purchase and a further R60 000 for a funeral and debit orders for a car finance account.

The SIU investigation also revealed how a Non-Profit Organisation (NPO) was hijacked and funds that were meant to uplift poor women in Marikana and surrounding areas in the North West province on a chicken farming project were misused.

The application was adjudicated and the grant funding for the value of R13 million was awarded to an NPO and was to be paid in two tranches of R7 million and R6 million. In November 2020, the hijacked NPO made an application for additional funding and received a further R3.5 million.

The SIU's investigation revealed that a shelf company named Silverlite Trading bought the land in Marikana for this project for R400 000. Adv. William Huma, a former NLC board member is the current sole director of Silverlight. The SIU went on a site visit and found that the farm was well-built and completed. The chicken farm contains a workers' house, guard house, egg packaging and

storehouse and chicken egg production house and there is a borehole. However, since the chicken farm is not in operation. It is being vandalised, and some of the electric cables and solar panels are stolen from the farm.

The SIU has so far made eight criminal referrals to the National Prosecuting Unit and 11 disciplinary referrals to NLC officials.

The SIU was, in terms of Proclamation R32 of 2020, authorised by President Cyril Ramaphosa to investigate allegations of corruption and maladministration in the affairs of NLC and the conduct of NLC officials and to recover any financial losses suffered by the State.

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

**END.**

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