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**MEDIA STATEMENT
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
20 NOVEMBER 2024**

SIU WELCOMES THE DISMISSAL OF TWO NLC OFFICIALS FOLLOWING DISCIPLINARY HEARINGS

The Special Investigating Unit (SIU) welcomes the dismissal of Mr. Sibonelo Vilakazi, former Client Liaison Officer, and Mr. Sanele Dlamini, former Chief Financial Officer and Acting Chief Operations Officer, at the National Lotteries Commission (NLC). The dismissal is a direct result of disciplinary proceedings initiated following SIU referrals based on findings of serious misconduct during its investigation under Proclamation R32 of 2020.

Details of Misconduct and Charges

Mr. Sibonelo Vilakazi

The SIU's investigation revealed that Mr. Vilakazi exploited his position to enable his spouse, Ms. Nosipho Zanele Zuma, to receive 48 payments totalling R31.2 million from entities benefiting from NLC grants. The funds were funnelled through Ms. Zuma's company, ZZET Enterprises, and purchased luxury vehicles and properties, including two Toyota Quantum's, a Toyota Hilux, and two real estate properties.

The disciplinary process, conducted from 29 November 2023 to 01 August 2024, found Mr. Vilakazi guilty of all charges. His dismissal was finalised on 04 October 2024, marking a decisive step in addressing his gross misconduct, abuse of office, and breaches of fiduciary duty.

Mr. Sanele Dlamini

Mr. Dlamini faced six charges stemming from misconduct during his tenure in senior positions, including Provincial Manager: KwaZulu-Natal, Senior Manager: Grant Operations, and Acting COO. The charges highlighted his involvement in fraudulent activities, gross negligence, and dereliction of duty.

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The disciplinary process found Mr Dlamini guilty on four of the six charges, including approving falsified reports and gross negligence. His dismissal was finalised on 27 September 2024.

In line with the SIU Act, the SIU referred both cases for disciplinary action following an extensive investigation authorised by Presidential Proclamation R32 of 2020. The investigation focused on allegations of corruption, maladministration, and misuse of NLC grant funds. It revealed systemic governance failures and personal enrichment at the expense of public resources.

Key findings from the SIU investigation included:

- The misappropriation of grant funds earmarked for community development.
- The use of falsified documentation to facilitate payments to non-compliant entities.
- Failures in oversight and accountability, with senior officials acting outside their authority to benefit themselves or their associates.

The dismissal of Mr. Vilakazi and Mr. Dlamini forms part of the implementation of the SIU's investigation outcomes and consequence management to correct any wrongdoing it uncovered during the investigation.

The SIU commends the NLC for acting decisively on its referrals and ensuring that individuals who undermine public trust are held accountable.

END.

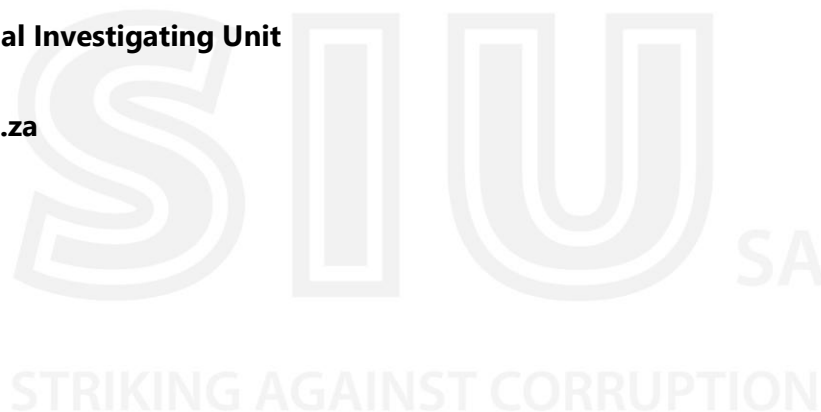
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