



Statement: Delaying Firearms Control Amendment Bill is right thing to do Parliament gives government more time for stakeholder engagement

26 November 2021: GFSA welcomes yesterday's decision by the parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Police to delay tabling amendments to the Firearms Control Act.

Says Adèle Kirsten, GFSA's Director, "Yesterday's decision is not a sign that parliament is opposed to strengthening the Firearms Control Act. Instead it ensures that the best possible version of the Bill comes to parliament, and was the right thing to do."

The delay means that government now has more time for bilateral stakeholder engagement. Considering the significant interest in proposed amendments, this extra time is critical to ensure that all stakeholders are heard, including the voices of youth and communities living with the daily reality of gun violence.

23 people shot and killed every day in South Africa. The Bill, aligned to government's policy for the control of firearms in South Africa, aims to ensure that measures are strengthened to reduce the availability of guns and increase state accountability for the control of its own weapons. The policy notes that "the high level of violence, and especially of lethal violence, is driven by the easy availability of firearms. The programme to reduce the proliferation and availability of firearms is central to our efforts to reduce violent crime and break the cycles of violence that characterise our society."¹

Ends

¹ Department of Safety and Security. 2000. Policy for the Control of Firearms in South Africa, January.