

Commission recommends single agency for all social grants

FROM SAPA

Cape Town – The Financial and Fiscal Commission has recommended a national social security agency be set up to administer the payment of all social grants.

Presenting the commission's submission for the 2003/04 financial year to parliament on Tuesday, chairman Murphy Morobe said the grants often became "soft targets" when

provinces ran short of money to pay for other services. "It is one of those things that really needs to be rationalised," he said.

The commission is a constitutionally mandated body that advises the national treasury and parliament on spending between national, provincial and local government.

"The commission believes social security should be a national responsibility administered through the establishment of a national

social security agency," the commission said in its submission.

The move would stop provincial priorities from "thwarting" the implementation of national norms and standards by using cash entitlements to crowd out basic services.

"If the government is to remove any kind of subjectivity in the issuing of grants it should be administered by a separate agency," deputy chairman Jaya Josie said.