



## Workers' Day 2023: A time when SA labour movement is divided

IOL - 1 May 2023

Workers' Day 2023: A time when SA labour movement is divided Reuben Maleka Published 6m ago Written by Daily News Reporter By Daily News Reporter | Published 6m ago Share Durban – The Public Servants Association of South Africa (PSA) has said that Workers' Day needs to be more than a commemoration of past gains. The PSA's Reuben Maleka said Workers' Day 2023 came at a time when the South African labour movement was divided on the goals of promoting and protecting the rights and interests of all workers. "Unions driven by political affiliations and personal gains have impacted labour's influence regarding negotiations on the terms of service, benefits, and wages of public servants," Maleka said. He said that this was already evident in 2018 when the PSA was the only union not to agree to the government's three-year wage deal for public servants which the government reneged on in 2020. This signified a blatant attack on collective bargaining. Maleka said that from this, it was clear that Workers' Day needed to be more than a commemoration of the rights gained by workers since the 1880s. More on this IFP in KZN raises concerns over police officer salaries after decision to increase danger allowance Military health-care practitioners deployed to SA hospitals as Nehawu's strike action intensifies Nehawu vows to intensify its strike action from Monday Police unions to strike over pay demands "Workers currently have to contend with depressing working and living conditions and various forms of injustice, and experience high levels of physical, mental, and emotional strain that could lead to self-alienation, disaffection, despondency, and even hopelessness," Maleka said. "Workers are demotivated by poor remuneration, increasing demands on their labour and the fact that they do

not determine the value of their labour. These factors impact their physical and mental well-being, forcing them to find ways of rising above these stressors to be productive in the workplace.” Maleka said the poor, inconsistent application of labour laws and workplace policies often exacerbated conditions in the workplace. He said the PSA continued to address and eradicate factors that impacted public-sector employees’ well-being. In addition, the PSA assisted future workers through initiatives such as the #SchoolSafety project, aimed at creating a safe school environment conducive to teaching and learning, he said. During Workers’ Month the PSA would donate rechargeable LED solar lights to thousands of disadvantaged Grade 11 and 12 pupils across the country to help to continue with school work during load shedding. Maleka said the PSA called on workers “to continue efforts in pursuit of improvements to their workplaces, including holding employers accountable for unsafe and unhygienic work environments”. “Workers’ Day should also be a solid reminder to workers of their duty to protect the collective bargaining processes that impact their future as workers,” he said.