

MEDIA RELEASE **Eastern Cape: State of the Province Address (SOPA)**

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The Public Servants Association of South Africa (PSA) welcomes certain aspects of the State of the Province Address as presented by the Eastern Cape Premier Oscar Mabuyane but believes bold decisions were needed on certain aspects.

As a union representing workers in the Eastern Cape, the PSA welcomes the priorities outlined in the State of the Province Address. It is encouraging to see a focus on job creation and infrastructure development, as these are key areas that directly impact members. The PSA is committed to working collaboratively with the government to ensure that these plans are implemented in a way that benefits all workers in the province. The PSA will be closely monitoring the progress of these initiatives to ensure that they are carried out transparently and fairly. The voices of workers must be heard and considered in all decision-making processes to create a more equitable and prosperous Eastern Cape for all.

As PSA notes the promise of job creation and infrastructure development, the SOPA failed to address means to combat the occupational health and safety issues of employees as a result of dilapidated buildings that they work in and the current spate of robberies facing the province in school and health facilities, which are daily targets of criminal activities as the results of lacking securities, teacher shortages; quality of education; and employment of doctors.

The existing infrastructure is cause for concern and should be prioritised as the safety of employees and children in school is compromised and violates the Occupational Health and Safety Standards. The PSA is dissatisfied with the state of healthcare services and understaffing, long waiting times, and inadequate facilities and believed SOPA would address such. The non-filing of vacancies at government institutions calls for concerns about public service delivery and governance in the province, including allegations of corruption, nepotism, and mismanagement. The address ducked the emphasis on accountability, transparency, and consultation with unions and other stakeholders in decision-making processes.

The PSA urges government to do more to prioritise the needs of workers and provide better working conditions. There is a need for greater accountability and transparency in government operations, a stronger focus on job creation and economic development, and a more consultative approach to governance that includes inputs from workers and unions. The PSA call for increased investment in public services and infrastructure and to ensure that all citizens have access to necessities such as healthcare, education, and clean water.

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