

**MEDIA RELEASE** PSA appalled by Dawie Roodt's attack on South African public servants

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**EMBARGO** None

**ENQUIRIES** communication@psa.co.za

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The Public Servants Association (PSA) noted with extreme concern recent statements by Dawie Roodt in which he claimed that South Africa is a “parasitic state” and that public servants are the real “state capturers”.

These statements are unfounded and highly offensive to the Country's hundreds of thousands of hardworking public servants who serve citizens with dedication. The PSA strongly rejects these remarks. To label all public servants and describe them as “parasitic” or “state capturers” is a dangerous generalisation. It demonstrates a total lack of understanding of the realities under which public servants perform their duties. These include difficult conditions, with limited resources, and enormous pressure to deliver essential services. Public servants are not the enemy of the public. They are the people who serve the public. They are the nurses in hospitals, teachers in schools, police officers on the streets, and administrative staff who ensure that government institutions continue to function.

The PSA also strongly objects to the claim that public servants are “overpaid”. This assertion is not grounded in reality. Public servants also have financial obligations in support their families, paying loans, and coping with rising living costs like all South Africans. In the current economic climate, with rising inflation and increasing costs of basic necessities, it is entirely reasonable for workers to expect fair and acceptable salary increases. Assumptions by Mr Roodt regarding the so-called “average salary” of public servants are so far removed from the truth that it raises serious questions about the source of his information. Policy debates should be based on facts and credible data, not on loose assumptions and populist statements.

The PSA wishes to make it clear that salaries and benefits in the public service are not determined by individuals or commentators, but through formal collective bargaining processes where trade unions have the legitimate mandate to negotiate on behalf of their members for increases that are fair, reasonable, and sustainable. If Mr Roodt genuinely wishes to contribute constructively to the debate about the Country's economy, he should focus on his field of expertise and economic analysis.

The PSA will not allow public servants to be unfairly stigmatised or used as scapegoats for broader economic challenges. Public servants are at the core of service delivery in South Africa. They deserve respect, not unfounded malicious accusations.

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