

MEDIA RELEASE PSA calls for end to political infighting and urgent stabilisation of SITA

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The Public Servants Association (PSA) is disappointed with the ongoing public spat between the Minister of Communications and Digital Technologies and the Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Communications regarding the future of the State Information Technology Agency (SITA).

The PSA is disturbed by the tone and content of the public exchanges, which have veered into political posturing and personal attacks, rather than constructive engagement on how to improve one of government's most critical agencies. Remarks such as the Minister's description of the Chairperson's views as "odious" and "agenda-driven" undermine public confidence in state institutions. SITA is the digital spine of government, with a mandate to ensure centralised, efficient, and secure IT services across departments. A leadership vacuum or instability at SITA has far-reaching implications for service delivery to citizens and public servants who rely on functioning systems to perform their duties.

The PSA is concerned about the ongoing leadership crisis at SITA. The term of office of the previous board expired, yet no new board has been appointed. An acting Managing Director is operating without a properly constituted board to provide oversight. This lack of governance is hampering administrative functions and has delayed collective bargaining processes, including salary negotiations, whilst employees are facing the increased cost of living, which will be exacerbated by the recent VAT hike.

The PSA shares the Chairperson's concerns about the Minister's handling of SITA's restructuring and his alleged attempts to sidestep the provisions of the *SITA Act* under the guise of reform. Reforms aimed at enhancing digital transformation must follow legal processes, including parliamentary approval for any amendment of existing legislation. There can be no shortcuts when it comes to transparency, public procurement, or compliance with BBBEE requirements. The PSA condemns any effort to weaken SITA or devolve its functions in a way that duplicates government systems, fragments service delivery, or opens the door to unchecked profiteering. The Minister must not allow SITA to fall prey to interests that have historically been prevented from exploiting public resources by the very checks and balances contained in the *SITA Act*.

The PSA calls on the Minister to act with urgency to stabilise SITA by appointing a full-time board of directors and a permanent Managing Director. This is essential to restore proper governance, advance critical digital transformation projects, and safeguard the rights of SITA employees.

The PSA further calls on the Ministry and Parliament to return to principled and respectful dialogue that prioritises the public interest over political differences. The PSA will continue to monitor developments closely and engage with relevant stakeholders to ensure that the restructuring or reform of SITA does not negatively affect employees' rights, job security, or the quality of public services.

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