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| MEDIA RELEASE | PSA calls for support and capacitation of NPA to ensure justice and accountability |
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The Public Servants Association (PSA), representing more than 245 000 public-sector employees, is concerned about the continued narrative that the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) is failing to successfully prosecute high-profile cases.

Whilst accountability is essential, the PSA defends the integrity and working conditions of dedicated prosecutors and support staff who are operating under untenable circumstances. The narrative, including remarks made by the National Director of Public Prosecutions (NDPP) about alleged “infiltration” of the NPA, unfairly shifts the blame to employees who serve the NPA with commitment, despite overwhelming challenges. Although the NDPP has since retracted the statement, the damage risks eroding the morale and dignity of dedicated NPA employees.

Prosecutors across the country are working under immense pressure, in dilapidated, unsafe buildings that are not fit for purpose. The lack of basic resources, including functional office infrastructure, technological tools, and sufficient administrative support, severely hampers their ability to effectively perform their duties. Compounded by unmanageable caseloads and chronic understaffing, these conditions affect the quality of work, impact on staff morale and contribute to burnout.

The PSA is further concerned about glaring salary disparities between prosecutors and their counterparts in the private legal profession. These professionals, tasked with safeguarding justice, are not remunerated in a manner that reflects the complexity and significance of their work. This disparity is demotivating and undermines efforts to attract and retain skilled prosecutors.

Whilst the PSA acknowledges the possibility of political interference in some high-profile cases and the lack of political will to act decisively, especially in matters related to state capture, broader systemic weaknesses in the NPA must not be ignored. The failure to prosecute should not be simplistically attributed to incompetence or so-called “infiltration,” but rather seen as a symptom of long-standing capacity and resource constraints that successive governments have failed to adequately address.

The NPA has a constitutional mandate to ensure that justice is done and seen to be done. To achieve this, government must urgently invest in the capacitation of the NPA, provide adequate resourcing, improve working conditions, and ensure proper compensation for prosecutors and legal professionals in the public service. Calls for leadership changes in the NPA will remain superficial unless accompanied by structural reform and genuine support for employees who carry out the prosecutorial mandate under increasingly adverse conditions. The PSA has noted the Ministry of Justice’s suggestion that the NPA alone cannot be held responsible for prosecutorial failures. Whilst this may be accurate in a narrow legal sense, such statements must not be used to deflect responsibility or hinder accountability. The Ministry of Justice has a constitutional duty to ensure that the NPA is properly resourced, governed, and protected from undue political influence.

The PSA welcomes the upcoming meeting between the President and the NDPP as a critical opportunity to take stock of the challenges facing the NPA. The PSA urges the President to act decisively and transparently in addressing political interference and resolving structural deficiencies in the NPA. Restoring public confidence in the NPA requires more than political rhetoric - demands a comprehensive, people-centred reform process that values the contribution of public servants and ensures justice for all.

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