

MEDIA RELEASE	PSA calls for urgent action as porous borders threaten national security
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The Public Servants Association (PSA) is extremely concerned following revelations by the Joint Standing Committee on Defence (JSCD) and the Portfolio Committee on Defence and Military Veterans (PCDMV), regarding the deteriorating state of border security in Limpopo.

During a recent oversight visit to the Beitbridge Border Post and surrounding areas, these Committees found that South Africa's borders are effectively open, with minimal control to prevent illegal crossings. The South African National Defence Force (SANDF) is reportedly operating with only 15 companies instead of the required 22, and is critically under-resourced in terms of personnel, vehicles, and surveillance technology such as drones.

The PSA has previously called for increased resourcing of the border posts, of which are under sourced. The PSA is alarmed by the implications of these findings for national security, public safety, and the integrity of state institutions. The porous borders facilitates illegal migration and contributes to the smuggling of goods, trafficking, and other cross-border crimes that undermine the rule of law and economic stability.

The PSA, as a Union representing hundreds of thousands of public servants, including those in security-related departments, calls on government to urgently allocate additional funding to the SANDF and the Border Management Authority to strengthen border-patrol operations. There is an urgent need to improve interdepartmental coordination among the SANDF, the South African Police Service, the South African Revenue Service, and other relevant entities to ensure a unified and effective border-management strategy. Government must prioritise investment in a modern surveillance infrastructure, including drones and communication systems, to enhance monitoring capabilities. Human resources can, however, never be replaced by technology and there is a dire need to address staffing shortages by recruiting and training additional personnel for deployment in high-risk border areas.

The PSA supports the Defence Committees' commitment to continued oversight and engagement with stakeholders. Oversight must, however, be matched with decisive action. The safety of South African citizens and the sovereignty of the country cannot be compromised.

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