

<b>MEDIA RELEASE</b>	PSA calls for urgent reforms amidst findings by SIU regarding widespread irregularities and fraud at Department of Home Affairs
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The Public Servants Association (PSA), as the Union representing the majority of employees at the Department of Home Affairs, demands the immediate overhaul of systems after the Special Investigating Unit (SIU) uncovered extensive visa and permanent residence fraud.

The investigation into visa and permits processing was authorised by President Cyril Ramaphosa in terms of *Proclamation 154 of 2024*. The investigation by the SIU has uncovered massive permit and visa fraud at the Department, with South African borders being compromised. Findings further indicated that the permit system was turned into a marketplace. The SIU so far uncovered a coordinated network of religious figures, pastors and prophets, exploiting the immigration system through fraudulent documentations, fake retirement confirmation, falsified financial means, marriages of convenience and syndicate supported by faking financial stability. The foreign religious leaders are reported to have manipulated the visa system to enter South Africa. Prominent foreign nationals exploited and manipulated immigrations systems to secure fraudulent resident permits. Their *modus operandi* included obtaining fraudulent asylum seeker permits and later use these to apply for permanent residence and ultimately citizenship.

The PSA condemns any form of abuse of immigration services and calls for immediate, decisive and transparent corrective measures. The integrity of the country's immigration framework is of critical national importance. Urgent interventions are required to restore public trust, strengthen oversight mechanisms, and prevent further abuse. The SIU's findings pointed to a systemic weakness and, in certain instances, deliberate acts of fraud and corruption that undermine the rule of law. This abuse of the immigration system further compromises national security and erodes public confidence in public institutions. Internal controls must be strengthened, and comprehensive institutional reforms are required to prevent a recurrence of such abuse. The integrity of the immigration system is of national importance and must be protected without exception.

The PSA calls on the Minister of Home Affairs and Parliament to implement immigration reforms to modernise the system, focusing on skills attraction, digital transformation, and stricter border controls to restore credibility and affirm accountability.

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