MEDIA RELEASE	**PSA concerned about cyber-attacks on government systems**
DATE	14 March 2024
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The Public Servants Association (PSA) is extremely concerned and appalled by recent cyber-attacks on government systems and implications for citizens.

In February 2024, the Government Pensions Administration Agency (GPAA) system experienced an attempted cyber-attack when an unauthorised party attempted to access information at the GPAA. Fortunately, this failed. The Department of Justice was also attacked in 2023. The PSA is further aware of a recent incident at the Department of Home Affairs where an attempt was made to attack the systems .

It is a grave concern that government systems are vulnerable to such acts of criminal activity. Such attacks disrupt government services. Government must be proactive and put stringent measures in place against such attacks. In addition, departments must have contingency plans to restore systems in case of any breach.

The PSA further urges government to ensure that critical and confidential information of citizens and employees is secured. Such breaches expose the vulnerability of government systems with the potential of being compromised. Failure over years to invest in upgrading information technology security systems may have far-reaching implications for the personal data of citizens. Government should install the latest technologies and security systems and have enough resources and right skills to prevent such attacks. Cyber-attacks would further impact the country and citizens as government will not be able to render effective services.

The PSA warns government employees to be vigilant against such acts of cyber-crimes. They must report any suspicious information they receive to the authorities.

The South African government must prioritise cyber security, including investing in skills development. Government must update and improve its systems to prevent such attacks and take the necessary steps to safeguard information. Cyber-attacks are linked to cyber extortions and the PSA urges crime intelligence to be proactive in this regard.

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