

**MEDIA RELEASE                      PSA concerned about issues not considered in Mpumalanga SOPA**

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EMBARGO                                None

ENQUIRIES                              communication@psa.co.za

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The Public Servants Association (PSA) welcomes the 2023 Mpumalanga State of the Province Address (SOPA), delivered by Premier Refilwe Mtsweni-Tsipane as the Premier acknowledged the challenges faced by the people of Mpumalanga.

Issues such as unemployment, load shedding, water shortages, dilapidated roads, a high crime rate, and other socio-economic were acknowledged but the PSA is extremely concerned that the Premier failed to provide solutions for addressing these matters. The Premier further failed to mention other crucial issues that are currently affecting the province. She did not indicate how communities affected by flooding will be assisted.

The PSA further expected the Premier to prioritise the issue of education and it is disappointing to hear that the Mpumalanga government does not have adequate plans for people living with disabilities. There is an urgent need for schools to accommodate learners with disabilities, specifically deaf learners. The PSA further expected that more public rehabilitation centres would be constructed. Most of Mpumalanga's residents cannot afford private rehabilitation services. People suffering from substance abuse, for example, do not get the necessary assistance as rehabilitation centres cannot accommodate the number of affected people. This has a ripple effect on crime rates and unemployment. The severe shortage of staff and medication at health facilities remains a major challenge, for which the Premier did not provide any solutions.

The Premier recently held a Provincial Summit with organised labour where progressive resolutions were taken. The PSA therefore urges the Premier to continue consulting all labour on pressing issues in the province to ensure that citizens receive the best service.

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