

MEDIA RELEASE	PSA concerned about lack of regard to prescribed procedures at DTI
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The Public Servants Association (PSA) is concerned about the disregard of prescribed processes and procedures at the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI). The PSA, representing hundreds of employees at DTI, handed over a petition to the Trade and Industry Minister, Rob Davies, on 27 July 2018 signed by over 50% of employees of the Department and citing issues such as immediate suspension of DG and DDGs and requesting a forensic investigation into their conduct, Foreign Economic Representation (FER) recruitment process and FER recruitment policy, Irregular appointments of three directors at Trade Invest Africa (TIA).

“The DTI has not adhered to Public Service regulations governing recruitment for senior management service members. The DTI deviated from the required recruitment and selection process. When the PSA brought this to the attention of the DTI’s Director General, it was regarded as a ‘mistake’ by the Department, which the PSA regards as an unacceptable breach of regulations and directives. This incident has fuelled the outcry against corruption in the DTI and the PSA is calling for a forensic investigation into appointments over the last five years,” said PSA General Manager, Ivan Fredericks.

“Since 2014, the DTI has not adhered to provisions of FER policies and has manipulated the recruitment process to favour individuals who would otherwise not qualify in terms of the approved policy. The PSA engaged with the DG on this matter and discovered that the approved FER policy was replaced by an amended policy signed into effect on 3 August 2018, just five days after the PSA presented its petition to the Minister. This was done without consultation with labour at the bargaining chamber. The PSA views the unilateral change of the FER policy as violating the rights of DTI employees. The PSA is concerned about the autocratic approach to policymaking which nullifies the duties of the bargaining chamber in the workplace. For the power to amend policies to rest with an individual, in this case the DG, creates an unstable and unpredictable working environment,” said Mr Fredericks.

A Special Chamber meeting was held on this matter on 24 August 2018, but no resolution was made. The PSA then invoked clause 17 of the bargaining chamber rules for the matter to be taken to a facilitation process.

“The PSA also is concerned about the formation of Trade Investment Africa (TIA), which was not approved by the Department of Public Service and Administration as well as National Treasury. Again, the DTI did not follow prescribed recruitment processes when it appointed existing interns into unapproved contract posts in TIA. There was no process set to fairly compete for the positions. When engaged on the matter, the DG indicated that ‘TIA is a creation of specific political instructions’, and has not caused any prejudice of DTI employees,” said Mr Fredericks.

The PSA is demanding that the DTI stops applying policies that were unilaterally changed by the DG until consultation with labour is done. The Union also requests action to be taken against individuals involved in the

appointment of three directors without due procedures and proof that the forming of TIA was a political directive as claimed by the DG.

“The PSA will take all necessary steps to ensure that the flouting of prescribed processes and procedures, the *Public Finance Management Act* and Public Service Regulations, which amounts to corruption is exposed and measures taken against those responsible,” said Mr Fredericks.

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