

MEDIA RELEASE **PSA concerned about ongoing unrests and further COVID-19 vaccination delays**

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The Public Servants Association (PSA), representing more than 230 000 public-sector employees, is extremely concerned about the ongoing looting and vandalism of infrastructure gripping the country. In addition, this volatile situation also has serious repercussions for the COVID-19 vaccine rollout.

These attacks are a threat to society, workers, and the embattled economy. The PSA is deeply concerned that whilst frontline workers are stretched to capacity to control the pandemic, criminal activity is on the rise. The PSA is further concerned about the imminent collapse of the economy and the eruption of a state of anarchy if no decisive action is taken by government. Looting, arson, and damage to property are pure criminal acts and have nothing to do with public protests, which are condemned in the strongest terms.

The PSA calls for the establishment of a special unit to investigate these attacks and for decisive action against the culprits and instigators of violence. These criminal elements must face the full might of the law and must be brought to book. The PSA also calls for stringent security measures across the country to avoid further damage to the economy. The PSA further call upon all public servants to distance themselves and discourage fellow community residents to participate in the unrest, which will ultimately have dire consequences for the country's economic sustainability.

Whilst the country started making good progress with the vaccine roll out across all provinces, this ongoing violence and looting have curbed the roll out program to such an extent that some vaccination centres had to close owing to violence and safety concerns. This further delays the achievement of mass immunity that is desperately needed as South Africa reels under the thirds wave of infections.

The PSA acknowledges the public servants who are at the coalface of providing professional services under the current unprecedented circumstances. The PSA also expresses gratitude towards those workers tasked with protecting the country and its infrastructure during these tumultuous times. These workers are deserving of the appreciation of all citizens who value peace, harmony, and stability.

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