

MEDIA RELEASE PSA condemns Gauteng Provincial Government's diversionary tactics following Tembisa Hospital fires: Calls for urgent accountability

DATE 15 May 2025

EMBARGO None

ENQUIRIES communication@psa.co.za

The Public Servants Association (PSA) is outraged and deeply disappointed by the Gauteng Provincial Government's (GPG) response to the recent fire incident at Tembisa Hospital following the Easter holidays.

Rather than acknowledging its glaring failure to comply with the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* and addressing longstanding infrastructure neglect, the GPG has resorted to diversionary tactics, including unsubstantiated claims of arson. These political theatrics are irresponsible and extremely disrespectful to employees and the public who continue to be exposed to unsafe and potentially life-threatening conditions.

The Gauteng Premier's reported welcoming of a suspect's arrest in connection with one of the fires is premature and deflection. The PSA views this as an attempt to manufacture a narrative that avoids accountability for years of infrastructure decay and ignored warnings. The PSA had raised red flags long before the fires, alerting authorities to hazardous conditions and warning of the Hospital's impending collapse. These warnings were ignored.

Additionally, the Department of Employment and Labour had issued contravention notices to Tembisa Hospital management, highlighting numerous risks, including in the Accident and Emergency section, which was severely damaged in the fire. These incidents, which could have resulted in serious injuries or fatalities, are the consequence of gross negligence and a continued disregard for employee and patient safety.

The PSA demands immediate interventions including, a full, transparent investigation into the fire incidents and the GPG's recent conduct. Accountability by the GPG and Tembisa Hospital management is required for their failure to ensure a safe working environment and urgent infrastructure upgrades and strict enforcement of health and safety compliance to safeguard employees and patients.

END