MEDIA RELEASE **PSA demands termination of VFS Contract with Home Affairs**

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The Public Servants Association (PSA), the majority trade union in the Department of Home Affairs (DHA), is demanding the Department immediately termination a VFS Global contract in the face of several serious concerns.

The DHA entered into a contract with VFS Global on 27 October 2010 for the management of visa and permit applications intake at South African Missions abroad. In December 2013, the DHA entered into a similar contract with VFS Global for the management of visa and permit applications intake in South Africa. The contract expired in December 2018 but was extended by two years. The DHA stated that when these applications were handled internally, there was gross incompetency resulting adjudication delay. Based on this statement, it was clear that the former Minister and the former Director-General of Home Affairs, Mkuseli Apleni, were both not fit to run the DHA.

The PSA raised concerns regarding VFS Global at the Departmental Bargaining Chamber and demanded to know the cost of this contract. The DHA's response was that services by VFS Global were rendered at no cost to the DHA. The PSA is, however, concerned that this contract causes applicants to pay additional fees, which could be reasonable, affordable services and empowering current DHA staff who are already threatened with job cuts. The public will also realise they are being robbed by high fees for services rendered by VFS Global instead of the DHA while fees charged by the DHA would also inject cash into the state budget that is robbed by corruption and maladministration.

The PSA is challenging the DHA to disclose the shareholders of VFS Global. The previous DHA Portfolio Committee was on the verge of investigating the VFS Global contract and the PSA therefore challenges the newly-appointed Committee to continue with the investigation.

The PSA opposes the outsourcing of government functions to private companies and calls on the DHA to immediately terminate the VFS Global contract and insource the function to be executed by its employees.

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