



MEDIA RELEASE	PSA supports President Ramaphosa's statement that Public Service is not bloated
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The Public Servants Association (PSA) that represents more than 240 000 public sector employees, welcomes the recent communications from the desk of President Cyril Ramaphosa, expressing the view that the Public Service is bloated, is misplaced.

Public servants are the first interface between government and its citizenry. The public's encounters at the various departments with public servants are thus indicative on how the state is perceived by South African citizens.

It is therefore important to ensure that public servants are equipped for their roles and are not exploited under these pressing circumstances. It is, however, a fact that most employees in government departments are over worked and burdened by understaffing. The Department of Correctional Services (DCS) as well as the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development are prime examples of this. It is a known fact that these Departments require approximately 18 000 additional employees to successfully fulfil their mandate of safe custody of inmates and ensure compliance with the White Paper on Corrections. The DCS recently called upon the National Defence Force for assistance and commenced with a drive to recruit former officials.

It is also no secret that the Department of Health has a huge shortage of health professionals, as again laid bare during the current COVID-19 pandemic. The Department is making use of other means to ensure that the required health services are rendered to the most vulnerable and poverty-stricken communities. The number of mortalities amongst health professionals at the frontline of the battle against the spread of the virus is of grave concern. The shortage of health staff places an enormous burden on workers and creates an uncondusive working environment. In some instances, clinics that are supposed to operate on a 24-hour basis, only operate a fraction of this time owing to a shortage of health professionals. The public schooling system is also hampered by a lack of educators, impacting on class sizes and the quality of education.

Citizens depend on the Public Service for critical services. This includes the Department of Home Affairs, where long queues owing to staff shortages are the order of the day, and the SA Police Service, with delayed responses crime incidents by officers who are not only short staffed, but also under resourced. Health, Policing and Education are the main essential services that citizens require as a public resource and expect service without compromise.

The PSA therefore calls upon President Ramaphosa to ensure that all Public Service vacancies are filled as a priority and that funding is provided to ensure that adequate staffing norms are adhered to as well as the 2018 salary agreement due for implementation that is now a subject of court proceedings as government want to renege from the agreement. A Consideration should also be given to good corporate governance amidst the current rampant corruption that was revealed with personal protective equipment tenders.



The PSA advises the President to apply consequence management as a matter of urgency to root out corruption and expose such elements in the Public Service and restore trust in the service.

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