

MEDIA RELEASE **PSA welcomes Cabinet reshuffle**

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The Public Servants Association (PSA), representing more than 235 000 public-sector employees, welcomes the recent Cabinet reshuffle but remains concerned that President Cyril Ramaphosa missed an opportunity to cut state expenditure by not reducing the Cabinet size.

Although the continuity brought about by the appointment of the Deputy Minister of Health during a critical period in South Africa is welcomed, it is also noted that this type of “promotion” is an exception rather than the norm. It is not justifiable to hold so many deputy-minister positions without plausible purpose. Government cannot afford continued wasteful expenditure whilst the country is economically battling to rise from the ruins of government corruption.

The PSA further welcomes the resignation of the Minister of Finance, Tito Mboweni. Any country faced with racial inequality that brings about economic inequality, should focus on developing a strategic budget to stimulate economic growth to relieve poverty. Whether the current “austerity” budget was developed to address this, remains questionable, especially regarding salary increases for public servants. The PSA believes that the budget was not developed with the interest of the poor at heart but rather to benefit the elite and soothe rating agencies. A budget that addresses poverty alleviations, could have prevented the recent lootings.

The replacement of Senzo Mchunu as Minister of Public Service and Administration is also welcomed. The unbalanced approach that was followed during all recent wage negotiations by both Mr Mboweni and Mr Mchunu, was arrogant and not in the interest of a country or of the biggest employer in the country. It not only set a poor example for other employers who followed suit but could have resulted in major labour unrest and instability, which the economy cannot afford.

Irrespective of the outcome of the corruption investigation around the former Health Minister, Zweli Mkhize, the PSA noted his resignation. A public office bearer should be beyond reproach and allegations. The PSA welcomes the appointment of Dr Joe Phaala as Minister of Health as he has experience in government, coupled with expertise and knowledge to guide the country through the COVID-19 pandemic.

The PSA commends President Ramaphosa on his bold action, which we hope will decisively address unemployment, poverty and crime for the better of all South African citizens, particularly public servants.

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