

<b>MEDIA RELEASE</b>	PSA welcomes legislative efforts to address prison overcrowding through repatriation of foreign nationals
<b>DATE</b>	5 December 2025
<b>EMBARGO</b>	None
<b>ENQUIRIES</b>	communication@psa.co.za

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The Public Servants Association (PSA), representing thousands of employees of the Department of Correctional Services, noted the announcement by the Minister of Correctional Services regarding plans to repatriate approximately 27 000 foreign nationals currently incarcerated in South African prisons.

This initiative aims to alleviate severe overcrowding in South African correctional facilities, some of which are operating at over 200% capacity, posing risks to safety, rehabilitation, and human dignity. The PSA acknowledges the urgent need for sustainable solutions to address overcrowding and resource constraints, which directly impact the working conditions and safety of correctional officials.

The PSA has long advocated for measures that balance justice, human rights, and operational efficiency. Whilst the PSA supports the principle of repatriation, the Union urges government to ensure that legislative amendments to enable transfers are expedited in consultation with all stakeholders. Robust and enforceable bilateral agreements must ensue to ensure that human-rights standards are upheld during transfer and detention processes. Correctional staff involved in implementation should be adequately trained and resourced.

The PSA further calls on the Justice, Crime Prevention and Security Cluster, together with the Department of Home Affairs, to accelerate consultations and legislative reforms, particularly amendments to the *Criminal Procedure Act*, to enable the lawful and humane transfer of sentenced foreign offenders.

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