

**MEDIA RELEASE                      PSA welcomes National Minimum Wage increase**

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The Public Servants Association (PSA) welcomes the government's decision to increase the national minimum wage by 8%, although a double-digit would have gone a long way to advance the battle for a living wage. The constant increases in fuel, food, electricity and public transport have made life exceedingly difficult for most workers who are not even paid the minimum wage. The fact that more than 60% of employers do not comply with the already low minimum wage is not encouraging to say the least. There is a need to enforce compliance lest the employers continue to disregard the authority and government directives knowing that there is no consequence for non-compliance.

PSA will continue to fight for a living wage and the establishment of the minimum wage as a step in the right direction to ensure achievement of the same, noting the escalating cost of living. The Minister of employment and labour is called upon to strengthen the inspection and monitoring service to curb the unacceptably prominent level of non-compliance. Failure to comply with minimum wage does not help the course to advance the lives of the most vulnerable workers who are struggling to make ends meet hence the increment of the minimum wage without enforcement does not change their difficult circumstances.

The failure to increase the compliance rate can be attributed to the non-filling of posts for inspectors as they are not able to cover the whole country, making it easy for most employers to get away with murder. Filling of vacancies is critical for the success of any organisation or entity to meet the service delivery mandate hence the Minister must consider filling the vacancies. A country's laws have no meaning if no one adheres to them and employers cannot be allowed to act contrary to the laws of the country. The workers are no one's slaves and should not be treated as such by arrogant employers.

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