

**MEDIA RELEASE****PSA welcomes Special Investigation Unit investigation of alleged fake qualification of DPSA Minister**

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The Public Servants Association (PSA) is extremely concerned about the Minister of Public Service and Administration's alleged fraudulent qualifications.

In terms of *Public Service Act*, the Minister is responsible for establishing norms and standards relating to integrity, ethics, conduct, and anti-corruption. This allegation places a dark cloud over the Minister's head and questions her fitness to hold this position of high responsibility. On this basis, the PSA welcomes the investigation to determine the facts.

Government employees are subjected to verification processes of their qualifications, whilst public representatives and politicians are not subjected to this, thus creating fertile ground for misrepresentation. Corruption at most tertiary institutions has also made it easier for connected persons to register and obtain qualifications without meeting the necessary requirements. Many universities are in the news based on allegations of maladministration and corruption pertaining to the offering of qualifications. At the same time, many government departments are still engaging in irregular appointment processes, including employing senior managers without verification of their qualifications or ignoring the lack of qualifications. In most instances, ministerial appointments are not open to competition as they are handpicked owing to their proximity to politicians at the expense of competence and to facilitate corruption.

South Africa has seen prominent figures at PRASA, the SABC, Cabinet Ministers and an Ambassador lying about their qualifications, without any consequence management. The *National Qualifications Framework Amendment Act 12 of 2019* provides that misrepresentation of qualifications may result in possible imprisonment, a fine or both as a measure to curb fraudulent misrepresentation by employees. The PSA thus calls on the Presidency to ensure that qualification verification is conducted for all public representatives. This will support transparency and assist to eradicate misrepresentation in moving towards an ethical and clean government. It cannot be condoned that an office bearer with fake qualifications can be part of the process to eradicate corruption.

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