



MEDIA RELEASE

Public Service Month: PSA commits to restore pride and trust in South African Public Service

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In September, the country commemorates Public Service Month, as the public servants continue to bear the brunt of work needed to carry South Africans through unprecedented trying times. The Public Servants Association (PSA) pays tribute to the country's servants who remain true their calling despite an all-time low in morale.

The PSA, as representative Union of more than 240 000 public servants, reiterates its calls on government to have due regard for the sacrifices of its employees. Government should improve the working conditions of public servants who remain at the frontline of service delivery. In 2020, public servants faced enormous challenges with the rapid spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, impacting every sector of society. They, however, remained committed to ensure public compliance with regulations and assist those infected and affected by the virus.

It is thus deeply distressing that amidst these circumstances government opted to not honour the implementation of the 2020/21-leg of the Public Service wage agreement that would have resulted in only meagre increases for its employees. Government's efforts to side-step its commitment, owing to claimed budget constraints, is bordering on the surreal. At the same time, the same government is pushing to exploit its employees' pension fund to fund ongoing maladministration and corruption in state-owned entities.

The South African Public Service is bending under increased strains. Too many workers are exposed to unsafe and unhealth workplaces with a lack of equipment and working tools, inadequate sanitation and even no running water. Despite this, corruption within government continues unabated and with little to no consequences for the looters. This grim reality was again revealed in matters such as the procurement of lifesaving personal protective equipment, with several departments in different provinces being investigated by the Special Investigating Unit.

Public Service Month is aimed at promoting a culture of pride and ethics in the sector, while delivering services to the public. President Cyril Ramaphosa has called for action to be taken on shortcomings in the Public Service. With public servants being criticised, facing constant threats on job security, having growing fears about the security of their pension investments and still waiting for a salary increase, it is hard to foresee these changes.

The PSA is aware of these concerns and pledges its continued commitment protect and promote public servants' rights and interests to restore pride and trust in the South African Public Service.

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