

MEDIA RELEASE **Public Service salaries: PSA awaits Labour Court date**

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The Public Servants Association (PSA), which represents more than 240 000 public servants, on 3 August 2020 filed its replying affidavit at the Labour Court in response to government's answering affidavit and now awaits a set-down date for the matter.

Public Service Coordinating Bargaining Council (PSCBC) Resolution 1/2018 provided for a three-year, multi-term agreement on salary adjustments and improvements to condition of service for public servants in the financial years 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21. Clause 3.3 of the agreement deals with salary adjustments, percentages, and the projected CPI for the 2020/21 financial year. The Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) is bound by this agreement.

In terms of clause 3.3. of the Resolution, it was agreed that with effect from 1 April 2020 until 31 March 2021, the salary adjustments for employees on salary levels 1 to 12 will range between projected CPI plus 1.0% and projected CPI.

Leaving aside issues arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, the DPSA and Treasury allege that government should be permitted to renege on an agreement as honouring the agreement will have catastrophic consequences. This despite that fact that such consequences were foreseen prior to the conclusion of the agreement and that Cabinet authorised the agreement and that payments were made in terms of the agreement. It is purported that the only reason for concluding the agreement was because Cabinet did not want to deal with the potentially negative public perception.

The PSA is of the view should such an argument be permitted to succeed, it will destroy collective bargaining processes in the public sector and, possibly also in the private sector. It is unfortunate that government is resorting to a range of weak excuses to not pay salary increases rather than looking at the interests of public servants who remain at the frontline of the battle against the COVID-19 pandemic amidst trying circumstances.

END