

<b>MEDIA RELEASE</b>	<b>Supplementary Budget 2020: PSA disappointed about short-sighted plans</b>
<b>DATE</b>	24 June 2020
<b>EMBARGO</b>	None
<b>ENQUIRIES</b>	communication@psa.co.za

---

The Public Servants Association (PSA), which represents more than 240 000 public-sector employees, is disappointed that the 2020 Supplementary Budget presented by the Minister of Finance, Mr Tito Mboweni, today blindly ignored grim realities in the country.

The PSA pointed out that in a country where the majority of citizens owing to, amongst others, rising unemployment depends on the public sector as they cannot afford private education, security, and health care, government's threat to reduce the public sector is misplaced. The PSA is therefore ready to oppose plans that will impact on public servants' job security.

In the face of a devastated economy, the PSA is furthermore deeply concerned about government's intended gambling on unnecessary nuclear power projects, which rings alarm bells reminiscent of the arms deal. A country where, for example, schools are still without water and decent facilities, simply cannot afford such projects. Equally so, the continued bailout of doomed state-owned enterprises and major investments in municipalities that cannot account for expenditure while citizens are left without services, can no longer be condoned.

The Minister's statement that public finances are dangerously overstretched and that the wide gate is a passive country that lets circumstances overwhelm it are indeed true. Government's passive approach towards eliminating ongoing fraud and corruption has cost the country's citizens dearly with COVID-19 merely compounding the crisis.

In addition, the Minister's statement that government values the "important work public servants do" seems empty in the absence of a firm commitment to ensure that the salary agreement that would have offered these employees meagre salary increases is honoured.

The COVID-19 pandemic has revealed the dire need to have a reliable Public Service in place. It also quickly exposed how fraud and corruption linked to tenders robs the neediest of basic services. If anything, South Africa needs to strengthen and capacitate its Public Service to rescue the economy and bring service delivery to citizens.

END