

MEDIA RELEASE: The PSA welcomes the launching of widespread corruption probe into Government Departments and state entities by SIU

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EMBARGO: None

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The Public Servants Association (PSA), which has approximately 250 000 members in the public sector, welcomes the launch of a widespread corruption probe into Government and state entities by the Special Investigating Unit (SIU). According to media reports, the investigation will be on a large scale and will stretch from 2019 and earlier if needed. The investigations will focus on wide range institutions like Eskom, Human Settlement Department, South African Airways (SAA), Transnet, PetroSA, National Skills Fund (NSF) and many others.

All state institutions are critical and have a specific mandate to help stimulate the economy. Failures by state entities have been at the heart of South Africa's economic struggles. Corruption in South Africa has become endemic which makes this investigation by the SIU and uncovering of corruption across state entities more urgent. Many state entities have been mismanaged over the past few years, whilst the National Treasury had to bail out entities like SAA out multiple times using tax-payers money. The SIU must, in line with its mandate, ensure that all money lost through corruption or maladministration is recovered and paid into state coffers to help with social challenges and service delivery.

It was widely reported that the Zondo Commission spent to the tune of R1 Billion to unearth and uncover corruption in Government and state entities; however, perpetrators are yet to be held accountable. Some of them are high ranking officials in Government. The SIU investigation must start with those top-ranking officials identified in the commission and not only target junior employees. The investigation of top-ranking officials will not only prove that everyone is equal before the law but will also go a long way in restoring trust in our justice system.

The PSA commends the objectives of the SIU by not only holding wrong-doers accountable but also by bringing about long-term change in Government and state entities. This initiative by the SIU will most likely bring an end to the culture of acting with impunity that has bedevilled state institutions for a long time. The initiative will improve governance in state institutions and bring hope to taxpayers who are tired of seeing their money being mismanaged and looted with no consequences.

The PSA calls upon the SIU to ensure that no stone is left unturned in that the investigation must be wide enough to hold everyone who was involved in wrongdoing accountable. The SIU and other law enforcement agencies like the NPA must collaborate to ensure that wrong doers are also prosecuted successfully on cases involving criminal acts. The Investigation by the SIU should be done expeditiously and meticulously without fear, favour or prejudice.

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