

Update: Public Service wage negotiations

It was previously reported that the PSA tabled its wage demands for 2021 on 1 March 2021 with a view to conclude a collective agreement so that public servants will receive a wage increase due to them. Clause 16 of the PSCBC Constitution provides for the procedure to be followed during the negotiation process. It is important to follow this process meticulously to avoid any possible technicalities that might arise in the event that a dispute is declared.

Parties agreed to a timeframe to engage on the demands as tabled by labour. A Council meeting was scheduled for 23 April 2021 for the employer to respond to labour's demands. Unfortunately, the employer has made every attempt to frustrate the process and its continued delaying tactics have created a negative atmosphere during the negotiation process. It must be pointed out that public servants have now for two consecutive years not received any increases, placing an enormous financial constraint on the livelihood of each individual. In addition a fuel increase was announced recently, which will have a knock-on effect on all other commodities.

Public servants have placed their lives at risk by ensuring that citizens have been taken care of during the COVID-19 pandemic and are still committed to continue serving the public. The PSA will not allow public servants to be used as scape goats for the maladministration and corruption perpetrated by Government.

Parties declared a deadlock on 23 April 2021. The employer requested a Special Council meeting on 2 May 2021 with the aim of appointing an independent facilitator. The PSA did not agree as it was of the view that facilitation could be done through a conciliation process. Eventually, most of labour agreed to a facilitation process. The facilitation process was scheduled for three days from 9 to 11 May 2021. Unfortunately, the facilitation process did not yield any results and no substantive revised offer was tabled by the employer.

The PSA is very disappointed with the way the employer conducted itself and is of the view that the employer did not show any commitment to resolve the deadlock. The PSA was left with no option than to officially declare a dispute and served parties with an application for conciliation. The PSA believes that all labour parties will follow suit. Members will be informed of developments.

GENERAL MANAGER