

Officials reject 'ridiculous' 1.5% pay hike offer

Cape Town – The Public Servants Association of South Africa (PSA) has said it will not accept the offer of a 1.5% increase that was made to other labor parties during the facilitation.

According to Reuben Maleka, Acting Deputy Director of Membership Affairs at PSA, their exclusion from salary negotiations became clear after learning of what he describes as a ridiculous offer. He said the decision to exclude PSA was childish and showed a lack of vision on the part of the Civil Service Bargaining Coordination Council (PSAB) and the unions involved.

On May 11, the PSA, which represents nearly 235,000 officials, filed its dispute in conciliation against the PSCBC. This dispute led the PSA to be excluded from the process of facilitating the salary discussion due to the fact that it had declared a dispute with the CFPC.

Maleka said the conciliation process was a 30-day process. Almost seven days had passed and the delay by the Negotiating Council in submitting the matter to conciliation in an attempt to resolve the matter would ultimately lead to a strike.

“The parties to the CFPC have been at an impasse during civil service salary negotiations since April 23. The parties then began a 10-day facilitation process with the employer in anticipation of a revised offer from the employer.

“During the facilitation process, it became clear to the ASP that the employer had not presented anything new and he subsequently requested conciliation on May 11th. Other unions continued to engage the employer in a facilitation process while the PSA was excluded from this process,” says Maleka.

He added that the offer made was that employees would not receive a pensionable pay raise in 2021, but would see their pay adjusted by at least 1.5% and a monthly non-pensionable cash bonus. pension of R978 (depending on their tax bracket, it can vary by around R625.92 after tax) for 12 months.

Maleka said, “They wasted time and money organizing meetings just to get a 1.5% offer. Our demand is around 7%, so the supply of 1.5% is a joke and far even from the CPI (consumer price index) or 2.8% made to municipalities.

“We are writing to the PSCBC to set up our conciliation because we are not going to accept this ludicrous offer filed. We want a serious offer so that we can face our members for a term.

He added that from the clarity obtained, it appears that the 1.5% offered is already in place in the form of a salary progression to which employees qualify due to satisfactory performance. Essentially, employees only receive a non-pensionable bonus (allowance type) of R978 before tax.

“This offer is very far from the requests made by the PSA. Employees are struggling to make ends meet with the rising costs of basic needs and the effects of the pandemic. Frontline workers are still expected to continue performing their duties in unsafe conditions, even though they did not receive a pay raise last year.

“The PSA calls on the employer to seriously consider the offer on the table and to present serious proposals to break the deadlock.”

Meanwhile, the National Union of Miners has started talks with the general management of Eskom for this week. Spokesman Phakamile Hlubi-Majola said wage negotiations would continue until June.

The union also appealed to the Constitutional Court to force Parliament to intervene in the future of all large public enterprises (SOC). Specific reference was made to SA Express and Denel, as both SOCs were on the verge of collapse following decisions taken by Finance Minister Tito Mboweni and Public Enterprise Minister Pravin Gordhan, Hlubi-Majola said.

“It must be submitted to the National Assembly if Denel or SA Express (SAX), and indeed any other major SOC, is to be liquidated or liquidated.

“Parliament’s portfolio committee on public enterprises and / or the standing committee on public accounts (Scopa), and ultimately the National Assembly itself, should be the ones to decide whether SAX and Denel or any other major SOC should be liquidated.

“This is not something that the courts should have the power to decide solely with a view to liquidation given the strategic role these companies play in the economy and development of the country.

“If these entities are no longer considered strategic state assets, then Parliament must pass a resolution on this and legislate accordingly. If the decision is that they are strategic entities, then the executive must give effect to the acts of parliament and ensure that these entities are properly funded and resourced.

“The purpose of our request to the Constitutional Court is to compel the SOE portfolio committee and the standing committee on public accounts to hold public hearings on whether SAX or Denel, or any other SOC similarly placed, should be allowed to become insolvent, and therefore be liquidated by a court,” said Hlubi-Majola.

She added that SOCs were crumbling due to the Treasury’s strategy of extending guarantees instead of capitalizing SOCs, and therefore “heads must roll for the unbearable suffering caused by both Gordhan and Mboweni”.