



MEDIA RELEASE

1 Military Hospital: Lack of political will to recover R156 million irregular expenditure and press charges

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EMBARGO None

ENQUIRIES communication@psa.co.za

The Public Servants Association (PSA) was shocked to learn the both the Department of Defence and the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure (DPWI) failed dismally to ensure successful completion of renovations at 1 Military Hospital in Gauteng, despite spending R411 million on the project.

What is even more concerning is that for the R156 million spending that was found to be wasteful and irregular, no one was held accountable for this enormous failure as the first two floors of the Hospital remain non-operational, despite work commencing as far back as 2006.

The Deputy Minister apologised in the recent meeting with the Parliamentary Joint Standing Committee and acknowledged that this matter should not have taken this long to be resolved. The forensic report recommended that senior executive officials from both Departments must be held liable for irregular expenditure of R156 million in respect of repair and maintenance at the Hospital. The report also points out that there were corrupt activities, including cash payments, theft, irregular expenditure, and the mismanagement of state funds with irregular contracts being awarded to service providers. The investigation also found that the DPWI dismally failed to play an oversight role to ensure a complete status report before the appointment of contractors. This situation further contributed to the Hospital losing its accreditation as a level-4 hospital by the African Union and United Nations to support external and international peace-keeping operations.

The PSA calls upon the Minister of Defence to make public the forensic report, recover irregular expenditure, and implement consequence management, including opening criminal cases against senior employees and service providers who colluded to defraud the state. The Minister must further recommend that these service providers be blacklisted. The Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure must equally ensure implementation of consequence management and join the Minister of Defence in opening criminal cases and holding those accountable who are implicated in the forensic report. Should these Departments fail to act, the PSA will be left with no choice but to engage the Office of the President for intervention as corruption must be eradicated and evil flourishes when overlooked or condoned.

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