



**MEDIA RELEASE**                      **President's call to suspend Public Protector long overdue**

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EMBARGO                                        None

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The Public Servants Association (PSA) welcomes the call by President Cyril Ramaphosa to suspend the current Public Protector (PP). The PSA had previously raised concerns regarding her ability to hold the Office and her stance on union bashing by purging PSA shopstewards in the workplace. The Public Protectors Office, used to be held in high esteem owing to the work done by her predecessor, however since her appointment, the Office has become synonymous with maladministration and incompetence. One would have thought that the PP would have voluntarily stepped aside or requested special leave to allow for the processes to determine her fitness to hold the office to unfold unhindered.

The fundamental role of Chapter Nine Institutions is to strengthen constitutional democracy in the country and the PP's office is no different hence any tainted image of the office must be dealt with urgently. The high number of decisions that were successfully challenged and were set aside is also very concerning as it touches on the critical issue of the competence of the office. Further, the PP ruled with iron fist in the office forcing the PSA at one stage to approach the courts after her decision to institute malicious action against two of the Union's members in an attempt to dismiss them, which was successfully interdicted. The work environment became so toxic making it difficult for employees to do their job and people must recall that the CEO left mysteriously following the appointment of the PP. The staff purging which went against the spirit of *Labour Relations Act*, which seeks to promote labour peace and the creation of conducive environment for employees to optimally perform their job, became the order of the day resulting in low staff morale and constant fights with the PSA.

The President's decision to afford her opportunity to provide reasons as to why she should not be suspended is in accordance with rule of law and the principle of *audi partem*. The PSA supports the call by the President to request reasons why he should not suspend the PP and the fact that her office is investigating multiple matters involving the President cannot be used as the reason for the unfit person to continue tarnishing the good image of the institution.

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