

**MEDIA RELEASE**                      **PSA: Freedom Day not so free for many, including public servants**

**DATE**                                      26 April 2021

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The Public Servants Association (PSA) on Freedom Day 2021 offers appreciation to the country's public servants for their continued service and dedication to service delivery in the absence of two consecutive wage increases.

Public servants continue to await the implementation of the 2020-Public Service wage agreement whilst prices of all commodities continue to soar. The COVID-19 pandemic and its economic implications also affected public servants severely whilst they remained at the frontlines of combatting the pandemic.

For many South Africans, their hard-won freedom and democracy has not resulted in liberation from unemployment, poverty, discrimination, and abuse. The country has been ravaged by fraud, corruption and wasteful expenditure. Vast amounts could have used towards improved workplace infrastructure, services to communities, job creation and remuneration due to loyal employees. The low success rate in recovering such funds offers little consolation and could be regarded as further wasteful expenditure on commissions without tangible results and effective prosecutions.

For years, the Public Service was subject to cadre deployment at the expense of qualified persons, which in many instances resulted in political interference, nepotism, mismanagement and corruption. This is also true for the years of poor management of state-owned enterprises, which continues to drain valuable financial resources by bailing out doomed entities such as the South African Airways and Eskom. The deployment of incompetent senior managers and government officials played a critical role in the country's current economic crisis. This reality was recently confirmed by the Minister of Public Service and Administration to Parliament when it was indicated that out of 9 477 senior Public Service managers, 3 301 do not have the required qualifications. Of these, 1 987 officials are employed in national departments. Until these practices have been addressed and rectified, the Public Service will continue to be a fertile ground for maladministration, fraud and corruption at the expense of South Africans.

In continuing the Union's work in the interest of public servants, the PSA has received confirmation that the Constitutional Court will hear the matter of the non-implementation of the Public Service wage increase as determined in Clause 3.3 of Public Service Coordinating Bargaining Council Resolution 1/2018, on 24 August 2021 at 10:00. In addition, Public Service wage demands for the 2021/22-financial year are already in process and the PSA has issued a warning that should the employer not accede to labour's demands, industrial action by embattled public servants is imminent.

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