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| MEDIA RELEASE | PSA appalled by Minister of Public Service and Administration's call for public proposals to resolve salary deadlock |
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| EMBARGO | None |
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The Public Servants Association (PSA) is appalled by tactics deployed by the Minister of Public Service and Administration to gain public sympathy for Government's quandary related to public servants' overdue salary increases.

The PSA, representing more than 235 000 public-sector employees, regards the Minister's invitation to the public to submit proposals on how to break the current deadlock in Public Service wage negotiations as another effort by Government to undermine Public Service collective bargaining processes. The Minister's continued "negotiations" through the media commenced even before labour tabled a wage demand on 1 March 2021 and are regarded as disrespectful and undermining labour and the negotiation process.

It is unfortunately not the first time that Government has undermined collective bargaining under the leadership of the Minister. Government was timeously approached last year to clarify the situation on the non-implementation of the last leg of the 2018-wage agreement. In the absence of an honest response, the PSA was forced to approach the Constitutional Court for relief with the hearing scheduled for 24 August 2021.

Government is the author of its own demise in this matter and is now requesting the public to get involved and resolve its self-created problem. This is disingenuous and malicious. It was not the public who advised Government to spend state funds fruitlessly and to fund corruption, or to use public funds for frivolous litigation by subjecting public servants to unwarranted disciplinary action. It was also not the public who approved the irregular appointments of unqualified staff, which led to further wastages, maladministration and service-delivery collapses. Government must take accountability for its actions and stop involving the public when it needs a scapegoat to avoid answering for the dismal state of the economy. Recently, the same Minister squandered public funds by sending public servants to China to "learn" about governance whilst South Africa has enough expertise at universities and private institutions to assist with governance training. If citizens are to be consulted, Government shockingly also enlisted Cuban engineers at great expense for solutions to the country's water crisis without public consultation.

The first act of corruption in the Public Service and by this Government was reported years ago. Despite this, South Africans are soothed with Commissions of Inquiry and anti-corruption forums that were established without yielding tangible results or recovery of funds into the fiscus. The public will no longer be misled by fables whilst looting continues. The PSA advises Government to face its self-created problem head on. Government must now take responsibility. Solutions to the Public Service salary deadlock can only be found jointly with labour in the recognised forums, using an honest approach rather than deflecting problems.

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