



MEDIA RELEASE: **PSA calls for decisive action to address DCS understaffing**

DATE: 10 February 2022

EMBARGO: None

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The Public Servants Association (PSA), representing thousands of officials employed by the Department of Correctional Services (DCS), repeats the Union's urgent calls for the filling of vacant DCS posts in the wake of recent attack at Johannesburg Prison, which left three officials injured.

The PSA has continuously impressed the urgency of the matter in various forums, including the Departmental Bargaining Chamber, the Ministerial Consultative Forum, Regional and National Bargaining Forums, and the Parliamentary Port Folio Committee. The ongoing brutal attacks on DCS officials by inmates at various Correctional Centre across the country can be directly linked to inadequate staffing levels. The DCS needs to urgently ensure that it complies with its own member-inmate-ratio document for adequate staffing. It is a shame that the DCS is spending vast amounts on litigation in defending disputes and pleas poverty rather than investing in ensuring a safe working environment for its officials.

The DCS is fully aware of the safety risks associated with the understaffing but has dismally failed to address the situation. It is unacceptable that DCS officials are expected to carry out their duties, including the monitoring of dangerous inmates, without the necessary support and with policies that promote the interests and rights of inmates, whilst glaringly neglecting the rights of DCS employees. The PSA demands immediate and decisive action by the Minister of Justice and Correctional Services to resolve this understaffing before lives are lost.

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