

MEDIA RELEASE	PSA calls for Ministerial intervention to prevent SITA collapse
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The Public Servants Association (PSA) is alarmed by ongoing instability at the State Information Technology Agency (SITA) and underhanded attempts to remove the acting Managing Director (MD) from his position.

The PSA presented critical concerns to the Portfolio Committee on Communications and Digital Technologies on 26 November 2024 and trusts that the Portfolio Committee will hold those responsible for destabilising SITA accountable.

The PSA is urgently calling on the Minister of Communications and Digital Technologies to intervene and ensure the stability of this vital entity. SITA has faced leadership challenges over the past few years, severely impacting its ability to provide critical ICT services to national and provincial governments. In 2023, Dr Bongani Mabaso was appointed as MD with the concurrence of Cabinet. His tenure was short-lived owing to what he described as operational interference and abusive treatment by the Board of Directors. Dr Mabaso's resignation left employees and clients disheartened, creating a leadership vacuum and disrupting SITA's operations. After months of instability, the Minister appointed Mr Simphiwe Dzengwa as acting MD in February 2024. Despite initial scepticism, Mr Dzengwa has in less than a year revitalised SITA, resolving procurement backlogs, addressing client complaints, and restoring staff morale.

The PSA is, however, concerned that certain members of the SITA Board are orchestrating a campaign to unseat Mr Dzengwa. Recent developments indicate that there is operational interference from the Board. The Board has reversed disciplinary proceedings against implicated executives without consulting the acting MD, thus undermining his authority. The Board has further sought unjustified legal opinions regarding Mr Dzengwa's appointment, bypassing proper channels, including the Minister's approval. Following his submissions in Parliament, the Board has allegedly concocted charges against Mr Dzengwa, seeking to fast-track his removal. The PSA was also informed by its members of an apparent intention by the Board to extend the contract of an implicated Chief Procurement Officer whose term ends in December 2024, despite prior disciplinary actions.

The PSA is extremely concerned about the regressive instability these actions have caused. Employees are disillusioned. The Board's interference threatens to undo the progress made in restoring SITA's reputation and operational efficacy. The PSA urges the Minister to stop the Board's interference and prevent further operational meddling to ensure that the acting MD can perform his duties without intimidation or victimisation. The Minister should investigate Board activities and examine the Board's decisions regarding disciplinary reversals and questionable legal opinions.

The Minister is urged to safeguard SITA's stability and extend support to the acting MD and ensure that critical appointments and contracts align with SITA's long-term interests. The PSA Minister is urged to provide decisive leadership to prevent SITA's collapse.

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