

MEDIA RELEASE	PSA cautious on DPSA establishment of new unit to protect whistle-blowers
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The Public Servants Association (PSA), representing more than 230 000 public servants, is concerned following the announcement made by the Minister for Public Service and Administration, Ms Ayanda Dlodlo, on the creation of a new Anti-Corruption Unit to protect whistle-blowers, namely the Public Administration Ethics, Integrity, and Disciplinary Technical Assistance Unit. The PSA also notes that there is currently a witness protection unit that resides within the National Prosecution Authority that provides an almost similar function. The PSA calls on Government to consider one unit that performs this function for the entire Public Service, which is fully capacitated, instead of having fragmented units that duplicate these tasks. The NPA and SIU are well resourced to deal with all kinds of corruption, not only by government officials, but by politicians and those in the private sector.

The establishment of this Unit comes at a time when the country is starting to see the effects and manifestation of years of corruption in the Public Service, which continues in all spheres of Government without any repercussions. Manifestations which are seen in service delivery protests and the state's failure to provide effective basic public services to citizens. Safety and Security have also been compromised with the continued killings of Police Officers. Vacancies in the Public Service remain vacant for years, while public servants are expected to work excessive overtime, sometimes without compensation to fill in the gaps left by the non-filling of vacancies. Government even failed to honour the implementation of an agreement reached with its employees on salary increases due to a lack of funds. Monies which could have been recovered over the years with interest from those who looted and stole from State coffers without any repercussions.

Corruption in Government started years ago, and several anti-corruption units have already been established, by Government as an answer in response to allegations of corruption with no accountability. None of these units have yielded measurable results.

The PSA warns Government, that it will actively ensure that this unit is not established to only prosecute lower levels of public servants, who sometimes carry the blame for the conduct of senior managers who escape accountability. Government already has established disciplinary procedures and avenues available, yet prosecution escapes the actual culprits. This Unit should rather have been established at a level where Senior Executives and Politicians are held to account and not only for the functionaries in the Public Service which are at lower levels.

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