

**MEDIA RELEASE**                      **PSA condemns attacks on public servants by KwaZulu-Natal politician**

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**EMBARGO**                                None

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The Public Servants Association (PSA) is disturbed by utterances of the ANC KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Secretary, unleashing an unwarranted attack on public servants, and creating tension between citizens and public servants.

It is disheartening to witness political leaders making unfounded accusations against public servants that tarnish their reputation and dedication to service. Such behaviour underscores a lack of leadership. The PSA demands that facts be determined before making inflammatory statements. The allegations that public servants are responsible for delays in emergency services and vital documentation are entirely unfounded. These claims are poor attempts to deflect attention from the real issues plaguing and hampering public services, such as understaffing and a lack of resources. South Africans have to deal with ineffective online systems at the Department of Home Affairs and technical failures hindering the functioning of essential services.

There is a shortage of ambulances and staff face attacks, including hijackings and killing of ambulance personnel on duty. An ambulance was recently hijacked in Pinetown and a paramedic was attacked. There have been numerous incidents of emergency services personnel being attacked and killed on duty, including in 2022, when a paramedic was stabbed to death in KwaMashu whilst responding to a call, In 2020, an ambulance was hijacked in Durban, and the paramedic on board was seriously injured. These incidents highlight the perilous conditions under which public servants, particularly those in emergency services, operate. It is unacceptable for political leaders to incite the public against these dedicated professionals.

Public servants work tirelessly with limited resources to deliver essential services to the public. They are the backbone of society, and it is unacceptable for politicians to malign their efforts. The PSA demands an immediate apology from the Provincial Secretary for the insulting and inflammatory remarks.

The PSA further urges all political leaders to engage in responsible, fact-based engagements that supports, rather than undermine the invaluable work of public servants.

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