



MEDIA RELEASE **PSA outraged by Eskom 20.5%-tariff increase request**

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The Public Servants Association (PSA), representing close on 240 000 public-sector employees, is increasingly concerned about the escalating cost of living in South Africa against the background of Eskom applying for a 20.5%-tariff increase from the National Energy Regulator of South Africa (Nersa).

Citizens cannot not afford the increasing financial strain. In addition, public servants were denied salary increases by the State in 2020 whilst the country's economy continues to deteriorate. Eskom's financial injections have been crippling the economy over many years. Despite this, there has not been significant changes or improvements over the past ten years by the country's national energy provider. Eskom continues to be a "black-hole" where funds are continuously invested at the expense of strained tax payers, only for these funds to disappear and problems in the utility escalating. The PSA is yet to hear any reports of funds being recovered by Eskom in any of the alleged cases of mismanagement and corruption.

The burning question remains on when or if stability will return to the utility. The PSA calls on Government to reconsider its strategy and position on Eskom. As Eskom now begs for yet another increase, it is now time for Eskom and its functions to be critically reviewed, free from any political agenda in the interests of the country and its economy.

The PSA is due to table the Union's wage demands for 2022 together with other unions in the Public Service Coordinating Bargaining Council (PSCBC) within the coming months. The PSA states upfront that it rejects the narrative that it is intentional when increases are demanded, including that the Public Service is either bloated, over-paid, and blamed for poor service delivery or that it is not professionalised. Government also needs to capacitate the Public Service in order for institutions to operate effectively. Public servants work excessive hours of unpaid overtime and have to take on extra functions when vacancies are not filled. Yet, when it becomes convenient to build a defence for the country's economic woes, they are publicly blamed.

The PSA will ensure that it participates in the public consultation process and will raise its objection for such an increase to be granted to Eskom. Instead of once gain investing in a doomed entity, Government is advised to make alternative means of energy generation available to circumvent the draining effect that Eskom has on the country.

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