

MEDIA RELEASE

PSA supports SAHRC decision to take legal action against the Department of Education over pit toilets at schools

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The Public Servants Association (PSA) commends the actions of the South African Human Rights Council (SAHRC), by taking legal action against the Department of Basic Education for its failure to eradicate unsafe and unlawful pit toilets. The continued usage of pit toilets in rural schools in five provinces is a serious contravention of basic human rights. The Constitution demands a better and safe learning environment for learners, Administrators, and Educators. There is no political will from the Department of Education to eradicate pit toilets since the dawn of democracy in 1994. There was also the misuse of allocated budgets to improve the sanitation infrastructure and systems. The Department of Education failed to account for such deficiencies.

The PSA condemns the actions of the Education Department and urges the SAHRC to fast track the legal process to force the government and the Department to comply and improve the infrastructure in the rural schools as matter of urgency. Those found to have misappropriated the funds allocated for such projects must be reported to law enforcement agencies for swift prosecution. The legal action in this regard is necessary to enforce the right to dignity, life, basic education, and a clean learning environment with the education sector.

The PSA advocates for tangible measures to be implemented urgently to overcome the risks posed by pit toilets.

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