

MEDIA RELEASE	PSA urges government to take decisive action against attacks on police officers
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EMBARGO	None
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The Public Servants Association (PSA) stands in solidarity with sentiments expressed by acting President, Paul Mashatile, that any attack on the South African Police Service (SAPS) is an assault on the state.

These acts, tantamount to treason, require decisive government action. The PSA commends the SAPS for honouring the 39 officers who lost their lives in the line of duty between April 2023 and March 2024 during the SAPS National Commemoration Day. These officers made the ultimate sacrifice in protecting communities, and their service must never be forgotten, and this trend must be reversed.

The PSA supports the call by the Minister of Police and the National Commissioner for police officers to prioritise their safety when faced with dangerous criminals. Officers should be empowered to defend themselves and others when under fire, ensuring that they do not lose their lives with their service firearms still holstered. The PSA acknowledges the inherent dangers of being a police officer in South Africa, where the risk of not returning home to loved ones is a constant reality. The PSA urges police officers to remain vigilant and act decisively, using appropriate force to protect themselves and the public.

Government must intensify efforts to combat crime, ensuring that police officers are equipped with the necessary tools to perform their duties effectively. The PSA urges government to address broader social challenges, including the increasing population, which continues to outpace police recruitment.

The PSA commends the work of the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigations (Hawks) for the successful arrest of 18 suspected police killers between April and June 2024. The conviction of 12 such killers, resulting in cumulative sentences of 139 years in prison and life imprisonment, demonstrates the importance of a strong criminal justice system in combating these heinous crimes.

Since 2021, the SAPS has lost 140 officers to criminal acts whilst they were performing their duties. This number is alarmingly, especially considering the loss of experienced officers who could have shaped a safer South Africa. The PSA urges government and the Police Ministry to ensure that police officers are fully equipped to combat crime and that those arrested for killing police officers are denied bail. Words must be turned into action.

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