

MEDIA RELEASE **PSA warns SARS to honour salary agreement**

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The Public Servants Association (PSA), representing more than 5300 employees at the South African Revenue Service (SARS) is disappointed that the employer will not implement the final year of the salary agreement that was signed and agreed to in 2019.

On 1 April 2021, members were due to receive the final leg of a multi-year salary agreement. The agreement was reached in 2019 after prolonged negotiations that ended up in members embarking on strike action. The employer and the PSA reached a three-year, multi-term agreement that was believed to will bring much-needed stability to SARS and provide an opportunity to rebuild the organisation to its former glory after the deliberate dismantling of its powers and inability to collect revenue.

The PSA believes that the current Public Service wage dispute set to be heard by the Constitutional Court on 24 August 2021 played a role in the decision by SARS not to implement the last leg of the salary agreement. This action by SARS has angered employees as they witness attempts by their employer to further reduce their benefits. The PSA is currently involved in various disputes against SARS to ensure that members' rights and benefits are protected and that the employer, including government, do not unilaterally withdraw negotiated benefits from workers.

The travel allowance, bursaries and leave encashment are amongst the benefits that the employer is currently trying to unilaterally remove from employees. SARS employees should not be punished for the corrupt activities of senior managers, mismanagement of tax-payers' money and cannot be held responsible for the country's economic woes.

Despite the lack of growth in the South African economy and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, SARS managed to collect R38 billion more than expected. The PSA fails to understand why this key institution that is responsible for ensuring that government can execute its functions and deliver its mandate by collecting revenue is not capacitated by National Treasury. The PSA calls on the Minister of Finance and the SARS Commissioner to implement the final leg of the salary agreement without delay.

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