

MEDIA RELEASE **Workers' Day: PSA calls on government to respect workers**

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Workers' Day 2022 comes as Public-Sector wage negotiations enter a critical phase in the wake of the recent Constitutional Court ruling, which denied public servants a negotiated wage increase as part of a 2018 three-year agreement.

The Public Servants Association (PSA) was the only union that did not sign this agreement and was ready to embark on industrial action to ensure public servants of a fair wage increase. This failure by government to pay heed to its employees' needs is just one example of the increasing onslaughts and challenges faced by public-sector employees.

Public servants are blamed for government's failures, whilst Ministers and others are seemingly protected when caught misappropriating public funds. Vast amounts, which should have been used to improve public infrastructure, service delivery, and provide public servants with a decent living wage, have been lost to fraud, corruption, and maladministration. Despite lip service by government to root out these evils that are robbing South Africans of quality services, the abuse continues. Several Commissions of Inquiry and investigations, including by the Special Investigating Unit, have failed to recoup lost monies as the country continues to be plagued by poverty and soaring unemployment. In addition, the public service is failing to attract and recruit young professionals as government is not filling vacancies. As a result, workers are overburdened, and the public service is leaning towards collapse. The public is increasingly expressing their anger for the resulting poor service delivery in many departments at frontline workers who are unable to change these realities and are at the mercy of an uncaring employer.

The PSA calls on government to take heed of the impending crisis, especially in key sectors such as health, safety and security, and education. Government should address its own failures as further manifested by the poor state of the public transport systems, roads, hospitals, and unsafe government buildings. Public servants are expected to service the public, whilst their workplaces fail to meet occupational health and safety standards.

On Workers' Day, the PSA reassures all public-sector workers that the Union will continue its mission of promoting and protecting the rights and interests of workers. The PSA of yesterday is the PSA of today, and will be the PSA of tomorrow, fearlessly following the mandate of its members.

The PSA will on Workers' Day reach out to victims of the recent devastating floods in KwaZulu-Natal by providing meals, food parcels, blankets, and other support items.

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