

MEDIA RELEASE **Youth Day: PSA calls for empowerment of future leaders of South Africa**

DATE 15 June 2024

EMBARGO None

ENQUIRIES communication@psa.co.za

On Youth Day 2024, the Public Servants Association (PSA) urges government to intensify efforts to address and erase the challenges of rampant unemployment, inadequate access to education, and socio-economic inequalities facing South Africa's embattled youths.

Government has profoundly failed young people, evidenced by alarming youth unemployment, a failing education system, and the catastrophic collapse of the NSFAS. Countless young South Africans have been left without access to education and the financial support to build their future. Stark underrepresentation of youth in the public sector exacerbates a looming crisis, depriving the nation of fresh perspectives and innovations essential for progress. The PSA urges government to make the empowerment and inclusion of young people a top priority by investing in educational initiatives and cultivating generations of informed, skilled citizens. It is imperative to implement robust policies that create meaningful employment opportunities, overhaul the education system, and ensure that young voices are heard.

The legacy of the youth of 1976 should be honoured by a recommitment to nurturing and empowering the youth as the next generation of leaders and empowered citizens. The nation has a responsibility to champion the youth's aspirations and provide them with the support and opportunities they need to thrive. The PSA recognizes the importance of youth participation in decision-making processes at all levels of society. Their voices must be heard, their perspectives valued, and their concerns addressed. Through targeted programs, scholarships, and mentorship opportunities, the youth can be equipped with tools and knowledge necessary to navigate and positively influence the complexities of the modern world. By fostering a culture of learning and innovation, an empowered youth sector will enrich lives, strengthen communities, and pave the path for sustainable development and economic empowerment.

The PSA continues to support learners by means of targeted interventions at schools across the country and the distribution of thousands of solar-powered lights to assist secondary-school learners to continue with studies, despite loadshedding.

On Youth Day, the PSA urges government to intensify efforts to create an environment where every young person is empowered to contribute to the nation's development by a renewed commitment to youth empowerment and upliftment by means of tangible interventions.

END