

## Update: Dispute - Non-payment of cash awards for 2019/20-financial year

Members were previously informed about steps taken by the PSA to challenge the employer's unilateral decision to not pay cash awards to employees for the 2019/20-financial year. The matter could not be resolved through facilitation by the Secretary of the General Public Service Sectoral Bargaining Council (GPSSBC). At the facilitation process, the employer conceded to the need to consult with labour and agreed that the matter will be tabled at the Departmental Bargaining Chamber (DBC) for consultation while the decision is put on hold.

A special DBC meeting was scheduled for the consultation process to commence but unfortunately the employer came to the meeting singing a different tune. The employer reneged from the commitment made at the facilitation and indicated that it was no longer willing to consult labour on the decision made. According to the employer, the decision taken falls within the purview of management and the Director-General exercised his discretionary power in making it. The employer further indicated that it is not compelled by anything to consult on the matter and do not want to set a precedent.

The PSA is of the view that the matter of performance bonuses is of mutual interest and any decision that seeks to alter or deviate from what has been consistently awarded and practiced for years requires consultation. The PSA believes that employees had reasonable expectations to receive their performance awards and such expectation cannot be disappointed without providing logical reasons for doing so, as well as consulting the affected party that stands to suffer prejudice.

The PSA declared a dispute on the matter, which has been set down for conciliation under case number GPBC731/2021, to be held virtually on 4 June 2021 from 12:00 to 15:00. Should the matter not be resolved through conciliation, the PSA will consult members on their willingness to embark on strike action to force the employer to pay the performance bonuses for the year 2019/20. Members are urged to wear their PSA shirts on 4 June 2021 as a sign of unity and in preparation for a battle against the employer for what rightfully belongs to workers. Members will be updated on developments.

GENERAL MANAGER