

Youth Day: PSA calls for youth empowerment

On Youth Day 2024, the PSA reiterates the challenges of unemployment, inadequate access to education, and socio-economic inequalities facing South African youths, with an urgent call on government to intensify efforts to create an environment where every young person is empowered to contribute to the nation's development.

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.

Government has failed young people, evidenced by the alarming rate of youth unemployment, a failing education system, and the catastrophic collapse of NSFAS. Countless young South Africans are without access to education and financial support necessary to build their future. Stark underrepresentation of youth in the public sector exacerbates a looming crisis, depriving the nation of fresh perspectives and innovation essential for progress. The PSA urges government to make the empowerment and inclusion of young people a priority. It is imperative to implement robust policies that create meaningful employment opportunities, overhaul the education system, and ensure that young voices are heard and valued in public service.

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. The PSA champions for the empowerment of youth through education as a cornerstone of societal progress. The PSA urges government to invest in educational initiatives to cultivate generations of informed, skilled citizens, poised for a brighter future. Through targeted programs, scholarships, and mentorship opportunities, the youth can be equipped 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 way for sustainable development and economic empowerment.

The PSA continues to support learners through targeted interventions at schools nationwide, including a school-safety program and the distribution of thousands of solar-powered lights to assist secondary school learners in overcoming loadshedding challenges.

On Youth Day, the PSA urges government to reaffirm its commitment to youth empowerment and upliftment through tangible interventions. The time for action is now, as the future of South Africa depends on the investment made in the youth today.

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