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SNAT UPDATE ON TODAY'S [08-05-2024] JOINT NEGOTIATIONS FORUM [JNF] MEETING

A. INTRODUCTION

Today [08-05-2024] the Leadership of the four [4] Public Sector Unions [PSUs] attended the Joint Negotiations Forum [JNF] in Mbabane to meet with Government Negotiations Team [GNT] as invited by the GNT. The invite followed a petition and a picketing by the Leadership of the PSUs on the 24th of April 2024 in Mbabane.

B. GIST OF THE UPDATE

1. The meeting could not take off after the Ministry of Public Service [MoPS] Principal Secretary [PS]-one Mr. Siphos Tsabedze, who is the Government's Chief Negotiator, together with other Government Officials, walked out of the Meeting before it could be opened by the Chairperson-Mr. Nxumalo who happens to be the Secretary to the Cabinet. The rude and arrogant PS could not wait for the Chairperson of the JNF to 'open' the meeting and quickly pointed out that, as government they have a mandate not to meet the SNAT President Mbongwa Dlamini because he was dismissed by the TSC.
2. This is despite the 21 March 2024 ruling of the Industrial Court, in favour of the SNAT President, with the TSC ordered to go and start afresh the disciplinary action: starting at school level up to the TSC. The Court set aside

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the verbal and written decision of the 23rd and 24th of August 2023, respectively, to dismiss the SNAT President from work.

3. The MoPS PS further alluded that they are aware of the Judgement but the Government will not abide by Court Orders but will await an instrument from the Teaching Service Commission [TSC], confirming the reinstatement of the President. The PS said the Government will not be dictated to by the Courts of the Land.

WAY FORWARD

- I. After the adjournment of the Meeting, PSUs resolved to urgently report the matter of the unforeseen behaviour of the GNT to the Commissioner of Labour to intervene in the deadlock as per Section 82 of the Industrial Relations Act of 2000 [as amended].
- II. PSUs also resolved to meet the Prime Minister to report what is unfolding at the JNF. Worth-noting is: PSUs did write to the Office of the PM few weeks ago requesting to meet him on the disappearance of the JNF.
- III. PSUs agreed to convene GCs in their Unions to refresh their mandate with their Principals [members].
- IV. The SNAT NEC is fully behind the Union's President as he is facing persecution by the State for doing Union work.
- V. The SNAT President will form part of Education International [EI] delegation to the International Labour Organisation [ILO] Congress and will be reporting to the Congress about the state of union bashing in Swaziland and the absence of collective bargaining as per Convention 87 and 98 as ratified by the country on the 26th of April 1978.

C. CONCLUSION

Members will be kept abreast on other developments regarding this subject matter. We are aware that the Government is buying time instead of addressing critical issues such as the protracted salary review, allowances and Cost of Living Adjustment [CoLA] for civil servants.

ISSUED BY THE SNAT SG ON WEDNESDAY [08-05-2024]



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