

NUPSAW

NATIONAL UNION OF PUBLIC SERVICE & ALLIED WORKERS

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NEWSFLASH

NURSES DAY 2021: TIME TO APPRECIATE NURSES AMID COVID-19 CRISIS

The National Union of Public Service and Allied Workers (NUPSAW) joins the international community in recognising the admirable and invaluable contributions nurses make in the communities they serve in nursing our country back to health. We acknowledge and thank nurses for their expertise, professionalism, and dedication to keeping people healthy.

The International Council of Nurses' theme for Nurses' Day 2021, "Nurses: A Voice to Lead," with "A Vision for Future Healthcare" as a theme, does regrettably not strike genuine in South Africa.

In the wake of Covid-19, the pandemic has shown the critical shortage of professional nurses in South Africa and worldwide. Thousands of nurses took on leading roles on the frontlines of the pandemic, often protected by nothing more than plastic bag gowns and homemade masks. Lack or inadequate provision of personal protective equipment for frontline workers and particularly nurses played out during the pandemic. NUPSAW had to take to the streets in many institutions to highlight the nurses' plight.

As nurses, you know that the war is not over as the country we are bracing ourselves for the third wave of resurgence, at the time when healthcare workers are out of energy due to exhaustion. As NUPSAW, we continue to appreciate our nurses. They are the first people that our poor people have to consult when they are sick before being referred to hospitals. At the same time, the employer has been uncooperative to adhere to processes as prescribed in the Constitution, thus has overall destroyed the collective bargaining and dropped the country into labour disruption.

Failure by the employer to negotiate with labour in good faith at the bargaining council has prompted a call for nurses and other public servants to start mobilising in preparation for the prolonged general strike.

It is about time workers who keep the country afloat during the COVID-19 pandemic receive the respect and recognition they deserve from their employers.

Yours in the Worker Liberation

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Success Mataitsane
GENERAL SECRETARY