

PRESS STATEMENT ON THE TRANSNET STRIKE

By Ministers Gordhan, Nxesi, Didiza

Pretoria 12 October 2022. It has been almost a week since organised labour declared a dispute with Transnet over wage negotiations. Presently, the membership of the labour unions at Transnet have downed tools.

Government is extremely concerned about the negative impact on the South African economy, particularly, those sectors that are dependent on Transnet for their logistical services. We need to remind all that if we are able to, as soon as possible, resume exports of agricultural products (eg. Citrus, grapes, berries), mineral resources (eg. Coal, iron ore etc.) and other manufactured products, we will be contributing to sustaining hundreds of thousands of jobs across the economy.

During this period, Government has been in conversation with all affected parties: Labour, Industry and the Board of Directors of Transnet. We have met with both unions this morning and, in addition, have been meeting the business sector regularly to keep them informed of developments and explore areas of collaboration.

Furthermore, this enables us to appreciate the extent of the impact of the strike on industry on the one hand, and the gap that exists in the negotiations between Labour and Transnet Management on the other.

It is the view of Government, that it will be in the interests of the country to find a speedy resolution to this impasse and for parties to continue to engage and, where appropriate, to employ the facilitation services of the CCMA. Our country cannot afford further job losses in other sectors of the economy and the interruption of imports and exports to and from South Africa.

Government urges both parties to return to the negotiating table and to adopt an approach which balances the rights of workers, who are affected by rising prices, against the long-term stability and growth of Transnet, and the economy as a whole.

Government understands that our labour relations regime allows for Labour to exercise their right to strike and picket within the limits of the law. However, Government reiterates its view that the right of workers to picket and strike must not be marred by violence and destruction of property.

We appreciate the constructive engagement we have had with the unions. Equally, we acknowledge the offers of industry to assist where they can. Government commends the work of the Department of Labour and the CCMA in assisting the two parties to finalize picketing rules.

From Government, Ministers Gordhan, Nxesi and Didiza will continue to engage all relevant parties as well as to monitor progress, in order to resolve this matter speedily and constructively.

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