

# Guyana Public Service Union

"RIGHTS AT WORK - ENDING POVERTY & INEQUALITY"

PRESIDENT: Mr. Patrick M. Yarde  
GEN. SECTY: (ag) Mr. Kemton Alexander



Tel.: 225-0518; 225-4811, 225-9251. Fax: 226-5322  
160 REGENT ROAD & SHIV. CHANDERPAUL DRIVE  
P.O. BOX 10774, GEORGETOWN, GUYANA  
E-MAIL: [gpsu1923@yahoo.com](mailto:gpsu1923@yahoo.com)  
WEBSITE: [www.gpsu.gy](http://www.gpsu.gy)

Established 8<sup>th</sup> June, 1923.

IN REPLYING PLEASE QUOTE DATE  
HEREOF AND No. PSU: 135/5

DATE: July 7th, 2021.

Ms. Soyinka Grogan  
Permanent Secretary,  
Ministry of Public Service,  
Waterloo Street,  
Georgetown.

Dear Permanent Secretary,

## BREACH OF LEGALLY BINDING AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF GUYANA AND THE GUYANA PUBLIC SERVICE UNION.

The Guyana Public Service Union (GPSU), in several letters during the period September 1, 2020 and the most recent being April 27, 2021, requested urgent meetings to commence outstanding negotiations for wages, salaries and allowances for the years 2020 and 2021. This request was made in keeping with Clause 6 of the "Agreement for the Avoidance and Settlement of Disputes" between the Government of Guyana (GOG) and the Guyana Public Service Union (GPSU). In this regard, those letters were neither acknowledged nor were efforts made to set a meeting date to commence negotiations, even though reminders were sent. The failure to take action to convene the requested meeting and the blatant disregard of both the requests and subsequent reminders constitute a breach of the legally binding agreement between the parties and is in conflict with Section 23 (1) of the Trade Union Recognition Act 1997 which requires the employer to bargain in good faith and enter into negotiations with each other for the purpose of collective bargaining.

It should be noted that there is an astronomically increase in the cost of living and the last salary increase was granted in 2019, and allowances were reviewed more than two decades ago. The purchasing power of workers has decreased significantly. Just a few days ago there was an increase of five dollars for every liter of gasoline which resulted in excess burden on the pockets of workers, tasked with executing Government's policies and collecting its revenues.

As the employer, Government has shown disdain and disregard for both the workers in the Public Service and their representative, which has sullied its much lofted claim as being a caring working class Government and a respecter of the 'Laws of Guyana'.

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Ms. Soyinka Grogan  
Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Public Service.

July 7, 2021.


The flouting of the aforementioned agreement and the ignoring of the plight of Public Service Workers and pensioners is evidence enough of the lack of care and/or consideration for persons who are giving and have given yeoman service to this nation. Memory lane also provides a sterling example of the shabby treatment of the healthcare sector, which has mainly been besieged since 2020 by the need to protect the populace and themselves from the ravages of COVID-19. This is especially sad since there was an agreement that risk allowances are deserving and should be paid to all these workers during the deadly pandemic, but several months later there has been no payout nor any related announcement.

Permanent Secretary, the posturing of the Government of Guyana is unjustifiable, unwarranted, bias and discriminatory. As the Employer, the Government should honour and respect its obligations in the existing binding agreement.

The GPSU therefore takes this opportunity to remind you of your responsibility as the employer's representative and hereby request that an urgent meeting date be set during the week beginning July 12, 2021 to commence negotiations for wages, salaries and allowances for the years 2020 and 2021.

Please also note that the conduct of the Government has now forced the GPSU to bring this burning issue to the attention of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the Public Services International (PSI) by copies of this letter.

Yours sincerely,

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 Dawn Gardener  
 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President  
 f/Patrick Yarde  
 President/CEO, GPSU

Copy to: His Excellency Dr. Irfaan Ali  
 President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana

Hon. Brig. (Ret'd) Mark Phillips - Prime Minister

Hon. Anil Nandalall, MP -Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs

Hon. Sonia Parag, MP -Minister of Public Service

Mr. Guy Ryder -Secretary General, ILO

Ms Rosa Pavaneli - General Secretary, PSI

Ms Sandra Massiah -Sub-Regional Secretary, PSI