

MEDIA STATEMENT

28 June 2022

BUSINESS UNITY SA (BUSAS) STATEMENT ON ESKOM IMPLEMENTATION OF STAGE 6 LOADSHEDDING.

Business Unity SA (BUSAS) notes with grave concern the announcement by Eskom that stage 6 loadshedding will be implemented from 16:00 to 22:00 today, followed by stage 4 loadshedding from 22:00 pm to midnight and stage 2 loadshedding from midnight onwards. The implementation of stage 6 loadshedding is a serious blow to an economy that is already struggling with low growth and a lack of decisive action on the part of government to make the necessary interventions to attract investment and put the country on a sustainable and inclusive growth path.

The implementation of stage 6 loadshedding will be a serious blow to all sectors of the economy and could lead to small and medium businesses buckling under the pressure of managing an untenable situation. We must stress that while this is a serious and negative impact on the economy, we are, unfortunately, not surprised that we have reached this crisis situation. We have been urging the government for numerous years to remove all barriers to private sector intervention in the generation of energy and power, but it is only recently that government has heeded these considerations. We welcome the number of embedded energy projects that have been authorised by NERSA and progress on the current bid window for renewables, but these now must be the norm rather than the exception!

We also are very concerned about the unprotected wage strike that is in progress. There are reports of intimidation of workers not participating in the strike. This must be condemned in the strongest terms if it is indeed the case. We call on unions to conduct wage negotiations through recognised channels and do so in a way that does not disrupt economic activity and cause hardship to citizens!

We now urge government to do whatever is necessary to enable Eskom to move away from high levels of loadshedding as a matter of urgency, to deal decisively with reported acts of sabotage at Eskom by enabling law and order agencies to act with urgency to bring those responsible for such sabotage to book and to remove any remaining barriers to private sector generation of power and getting renewables onto the grid as quickly as possible.

We remain committed to working with government in providing capacity and expertise to alleviate what is now a serious crisis for citizens and the economy

ENDS

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