



CITY OF JOHANNESBURG
METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY



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STATEMENT BY THE EXECUTIVE MAYOR OF JOHANNESBURG, CLLR DADA MORERO, ON THE MISLEADING SUNDAY TIMES ARTICLE OF 16 NOVEMBER 2025

The City of Johannesburg rejects, in the strongest possible terms, the article authored by Ms Sisanda Mbolekwa and published by the Sunday Times on 16 November 2025, under the headline “*Workers’ R4bn G20 blackmail.*” The article is riddled with factual inaccuracies, contradictions, and unfounded claims that mislead the public and misrepresent the City’s actions.

The central allegation that the City or the Executive Mayor has “diverted R4 billion” from capital expenditure to avert disruptions to the G20 Summit is entirely false. No such diversion has taken place. The City has not yet budgeted for the agreement reached in principle with SAMWU on Friday, 14 November 2025, and no amount has been drawn from any capital budget for this purpose. The journalist cannot point to a single budget document or Council decision to support this falsehood because none exists.

Equally fabricated is the claim that the Mayoral Committee met in October to discuss diverting funds from Johannesburg Water, the Johannesburg Roads Agency, or any other municipal entity. No such meeting occurred, and no such discussion ever took place. The article further contradicts itself by alleging that money has already been diverted, while simultaneously stating that an agreement with SAMWU was only reached in principle on 14 November 2025.

Anyone with a basic understanding of municipal finance knows that expenditure can only occur once funds are appropriated through Council processes — typically in June (for the central budget) or February (for the adjustment budget). Neither method has taken place in relation to the PFA agreement. Therefore, the alleged “diversion” is not only inaccurate but also impossible.

The Sunday Times was provided with extensive background information explaining the origins of the PFA and the long-standing nature of the salary discrepancies affecting City employees. These issues date back to 2016 and were formally acknowledged by the Council in June 2024. Since December 2024, the City and SAMWU have been engaged in good-faith, CCMA-facilitated negotiations led by a senior advocate.

These processes, based on scientific benchmarking and a new remuneration philosophy, have absolutely nothing to do with the G20 Summit. While unions may tactically leverage significant global events such as the G20 to accelerate negotiations, the City’s motivation has remained consistent: to resolve legitimate, long-standing remuneration issues, improve labour stability, and enhance service delivery for the residents of Johannesburg.

The agreement reached in principle on 14 November 2025 introduces a fair and equitable remuneration framework, focusing on standard job grading, industry benchmarking, salary parity, performance-based progression, and financial sustainability. Salary adjustments will be phased in over three years and financed through internal savings, improved revenue management, structural efficiencies and strict expenditure controls — not through any diversion of capital funds.

The City of Johannesburg values responsible journalism and respects the media’s role in holding public institutions accountable. However, it is deeply concerning when a major publication chooses sensationalism

over accuracy. The Sunday Times article creates unnecessary alarm, misinforms residents, and undermines the integrity of both the City and its employees. We therefore call on the Sunday Times to correct the misleading information it has published and to uphold its duty to provide the public with factual, balanced and evidence-based reporting.

ISSUED BY THE OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE MAYOR

FOR MEDIA ENQUIRIES

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