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**MEDIA STATEMENT
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
31 January 2025**

**SIU RECEIVES ORDER TO INTERDICT PENSION BENEFITS OF FORMER DDG OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF WATER AND SANITATION**

On 13 January 2025, the Special Tribunal granted the Special Investigating Unit (SIU) authority to interdict the pension benefits of Zandile Yvone Mathe, the former Deputy Director-General (DDG) of the Department of Water Affairs (now known as the Department of Water and Sanitation).

According to the order, Mathe is prohibited from withdrawing or diminishing the value of funds held or managed by her pension fund, specifically the Government Employees Pension Fund (GEPF) and the Government Pensions Administration Agency. The SIU approached the Special Tribunal to interdict pension benefits after Mathe was dismissed following disciplinary proceedings based on SIU referral and took steps to claim her pension benefits.

The order is part of the implementation of SIU's investigation outcomes and consequence management to recover financial losses suffered by the State because of corruption, maladministration or negligence.

This investigation stems from a Proclamation issued by the President of the Republic of South Africa, specifically Proclamation No. R. 54 of 2012. The concerns relate to contract W0497 for the construction of a water pipeline in the Vuwani area of Limpopo.

Based on the investigation's findings, particularly the evidence obtained, the SIU, issued a summons in the High Court of South Africa (Gauteng Division, Pretoria). This lawsuit is against the contractor (Ascul Construction CC), its director, Dan Lucas Sikhosana, Mathe and the Department's Chief Financial Officer Mpho Joseph Mofokeng. The SIU is seeking a declaration for the lawful cancellation of contracts valued at approximately R170,335,859.60 due to alleged procurement and other irregularities. Additionally, it claims damages amounting to approximately R55 676 184.39.

The SIU aims to hold both Mathe and Mofokeng jointly and severally liable alongside the contractor, based on their alleged acts of maladministration, statutory non-compliance, and negligence in fulfilling their official duties. These actions are believed to contravene various regulations, including

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the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA), Treasury Regulations, Department Supply Chain Management Policy, and the Construction Industry Development Board (CIDB) Act in relation to the contested contract. The main claim is currently being defended, and the litigation is ongoing.

Furthermore, it is ordered that within 60 days of the order, GEPF and GPAA assess the value of Mathe's pension benefit and notify the relevant parties whether the claimed amount instituted in the High Court exceeds the SIU's claim.

The SIU is empowered to initiate civil action in the High Court or a Special Tribunal to address any wrongdoing uncovered during investigations, particularly those resulting from corruption, fraud, or maladministration. In accordance with the Special Investigating Units and Special Tribunals Act 74 of 1996, the SIU refers any evidence of criminal conduct that it uncovers to the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) for further action.

END.

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