
MEDIA RELEASE

nbc welcomes call for Ombudsman to investigate its finances

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

28 July 2017, Windhoek; Namibia -

On 21 July 2017, DTA Member of Parliament Nico Smit sent a letter to Ombudsman John Walters, calling for a full-scale investigation into the management of the Namibian Broadcasting Corporation (nbc). In this letter, Smit accuses nbc of maladministration and misuse of public funds. He bases these accusations on deductions (for e.g. medical aid, pension fund and income tax) which were indicated on nbc employees' pay slips.

On 10 July 2017, Smit had shared similar concerns with the Namibian public during a media conference. On the very same day, in an interview with the nbc, the broadcaster's Board Chairman Sven Thieme and the corporation's Director General Stanley B Similo had responded to these allegations of mismanagement, dismissing them as incorrect and borderline-defamatory.

In that interview, Similo had furthermore extended an invitation to Smit to visit the nbc and study its financials. So far, the DTA MP has not taken the nbc Director General up on that offer.

"Our invitation to Honourable Nico Smit still stands," Similo emphasized today in response to the latest development. "In the same vein, we invite Advocate Walters to scrutinize our books and finances. In fact, we welcome such an inspection as we are confident that after examining our books and actions, the Ombudsman will attest to the fact that nbc management and Board did all they could to keep the national broadcaster operational despite severe budget cuts."

Thieme added that nbc was a public entity and as a result, it was an established fact that the corporation's finances could be inspected and dissected at any given point in time. "We look forward to such a scrutiny as it will confirm that we have moved heaven and earth to ensure that nbc staff keep their jobs in spite of a massive reduction in government subsidy."

The nbc's operational and capital expenditure budget was decreased by more than N\$200 million over the last two years. Whereas the corporation had significantly intensified its efforts to reduce costs and generate own income, these measures had been insufficient to offset the steep drop in State funding, resulting in the broadcaster not being able to honour some of its financial obligations. To avert a crisis, the nbc had approached its main shareholder for relief.

"Suffice it to say that nbc management and Board place a very high value on transparency and good governance and therefore we have no issue with Honourable Smit or any other member of the public demanding independent assurances of accountability and honesty. However, we would also call on the very same people to place similarly high standards of integrity on their own person by verifying facts before making accusations and by allowing us to present evidence and state our case; else the impression might

It's Ours

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Directors

Stanley B Similo
Director General

Sven Thieme
Chairperson

Andrew Kanime
Director

Inonge Mainga
Director

Moses Matyayi
Director

Wilhencia Uiras
Director

Company Secretary
Steven Yarukeekuro Ndorokaze

be created that the publicly proclaimed concern about the national broadcaster's current state of affairs is merely a ruse aimed at scoring political points with the Namibian people."

END...../

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ABOUT nbc (www.nbc.na)

nbc's Purpose is to become a leading Multimedia Public Broadcaster of Choice in the world. It is the only Namibian broadcasting house that runs radio broadcasting in ten (10) Namibian languages and three (3) Public Service TV channels. nbc offers local, SADC and international news, current affairs and entertainment programming and covers more than 74.5% of the Namibian population. It further broadcasts beyond the Namibian borders on the DSTV audio bouquet and online at www.nbc.na

ABOUT Digital Terrestrial TV (www.nbc.na)

Digital television is a new way of broadcasting television. Although digital terrestrial television changes the way pictures are sent to your TV, it won't change the way you watch television.

Since the beginning of television, we've been watching what is known as 'analogue television': TV signals are broadcast using radio waves, which are picked up by an aerial and sent down a wire to your TV, the analogue television receiver. Your set then changes the analogue signal into pictures and sound. nbc boasts altogether with Eight (8) channels on its DTT bouquet – nbc1, nbc2, nbc3, One Africa, TBN and EduTV (nbc4), Music on 5 (nbc5) and Kwese Free Sport on 6 (nbc6).