

# **Dr Stephen Mncube's Address To The Media Freedom Day Seminar**

**Reflections On Broadcasting**

**18 October 2013, Cape Town**

# **In Commemoration of the Black Wednesday, 19 Oct 1977...**

ICASA dips its banner in honour of the 1976/77 Class of Journalists:

- the courage, commitment and bravery they displayed, and
- the price they paid for telling the story of our people during those days.

# **In Commemoration of the Black Wednesday, 19 Oct 1977...**

I am referring here to:

- the late Percy Qoboza and Aggrey Klaaste
- Thami Mazwai
- Joe Tlholoe
- Don Materra

The icons of the South African media have retraced the steps of other great journalists such as Nat Nakas and Lewis Nkosi by taking up the Nieman Fellowship at Harvard University.

South Africa should count its blessings that we still have some of the veterans of Black Wednesday in our midst.

# **In Commemoration of the Black Wednesday, 19 Oct 1977...**

Reflections on broadcasting for this Media freedom Seminar, 36 years after the Black Wednesday, draws from the development of policy and regulation under a democratic, constitutional dispensation from the early 1990's.

# Reflections On Broadcasting...

The quest for a pluralist and diversified broadcasting industry in South Africa is linked to the constitutional negotiations of the early 1990's to hammer out a new democratic order for the country.

As part of the negotiations, the IBA Act was promulgated in 1993 to allow for the licensing of new community and private broadcasting services to introduce new voices, content and diversity of opinions on the airwaves.

# Reflections On Broadcasting...

The 1993 Act also provided for the appointment of an inclusive and representative SABC Board, and for partial and non-partisan role of all broadcasters during the country's first General Elections of April 1994.

This train of events illustrates that one cannot separate Media Freedom and Diversity from the conception and realization of freedom and democracy for our country.

It appears that the destiny of the media and that of our people are intertwined.

# Reflections On Broadcasting...

ICASA role in this regard is to ensure that its broadcasting licensing and regulation-making process:

- Promote a diversified broadcasting industry in terms of ownership and content that provides for:
  - communities, both urban and rural, to have a voice to articulate their needs and aspirations, and address their developmental needs in terms of health, education and other public amenities and services
  - Community ownership of broadcasting services anchored on non-commercial and non-profit basis, and enhance access to broadcasting services to all members and sectors of the community without discrimination
  - Community broadcasting services that enables members of the community to become producers of content, and thereby tell their own stories instead of a ‘filtering system’ that comes with other tiers of broadcasting services
  - 179 community radio stations, and 5 community television stations have been licensed to date

# Reflections On Broadcasting...

The Authority's regulatory framework provides for the private broadcasting sector provides for:

- Local private investment in the broadcasting sector, to enhance ownership by previously disadvantaged groups and individuals
- Stimulate regional economic activity, cultural and linguistic empowerment in all the provinces of the country
- Stimulate competition and innovation in content production,
- Create job and economic opportunities for independent producers and artists and there now
- 15 commercial radio stations, 5 subscription television services and One free-to-air television station licensed
- Authority in the process of licensing additional commercial radio services for Gauteng, Western Cape KZN, Eastern cape and the Free State

# Reflections On Broadcasting...

Public broadcasting services are the custodian of the national heritage:

- The SABC's radio and television services seek to meet the country's cultural and linguistic diversity.
- 18 public radio stations and 3 television channels licensed
- Commercial arrangements between SABC and private broadcasters should not compromise its public service mandate

# Reflections On Broadcasting...

Authority monitors community, private and SABC compliance with broadcasting

- licence terms and conditions
- Regulations such as Local Content, Sports Rights and Election Broadcasting
- Regulations pertaining to services for Persons With Disabilities

# Reflections On Broadcasting...

Digital broadcasting is the next best thing for the industry and consumers in terms:

- the freeing-up of the frequency spectrum that can be used for broadband universal access and services
- Availability of additional frequency spectrum to license more and more broadcasting services at a local, regional and national coverage levels using all 11 official languages
- Enhanced picture quality for television signals and other multimedia applications

# Reflections On Broadcasting...

- The Authority has published the Digital Terrestrial Television Regulations to:
- regulate the digital migration of terrestrial television broadcasting services;
- prescribe the conditions for the allocation of channel capacity for purposes of digital migration and the creation of a platform for digital terrestrial television;
- prescribe the procedure for the authorization of digital incentive channels;
- set the time frames within which digital migration is to be achieved and

# Reflections On Broadcasting...

Emergence of Intelligent Networks and enhanced convergence of technologies and applications where broadcasting content can be provided through:

- Internet Protocol
- Mobile Communication
- New Generation Access Networks

# Regulatory Challenges For New Generation Network Technologies

All national regulators should prepare and brace themselves for the following challenges:

- Quality of Service
- Security for consumers, national and international concerns with regard to message integrity and signal interception
- Shortage of Internet Protocol Addresses (IP Version 4) to disadvantage of developing countries

# Parting shot...

From where I'm sitting, I have hope for the future that information and communications technologies are meant to improve the human condition in all respects be it job creation, health care, education and information...

I thank you.