

MEDIA STATEMENT

SABC REJECTS MISLEADING SUNDAY TIMES ARTICLE

Johannesburg-Sunday, 24 November 2019-The South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) rejects the misrepresentations published by the Sunday Times '***SABC to get spooks to spy on its staff***'.

It is totally false that the SABC Board took a decision "to spy on its staff members". No such decision has been taken. The SABC is further concerned that the newspaper used confidential board minutes to sensationalise and deliberately distort information, thereby causing panic and a trust deficit between the SABC Board and employees.

The SABC as a public service broadcaster fully champions the right to freedom of expression and the right to privacy for all its employees. There are no efforts by SABC leadership to compromise these two important rights meant for all South African citizens. In fact the Board has in the past taken a decision that no journalist should be subject to SSA processes of any kind in order to protect the constitutional rights of the media.

The SABC has been witness to several disclosures of confidential company information in the past year and the Board is duty bound to ensure that confidential information relating to the organisation is protected. In this regard, we are no different from any other company in South Africa which would seek to protect the confidentiality of its lawful discussions and activities. In protecting the public broadcaster, the SABC will always act within ambit of the law.

Further It is completely unfair and misleading for the Sunday Times to attribute a board discussion to only one board member, Ms. Mary Papayya and have no regard to the final resolutions taken by the full board.

The SABC engages with the SSA on a number of key issues relating to the public broadcaster and one of them was to deal with the disclosure of confidential company information to third parties and the media. The mere fact that the Sunday Times newspaper is in possession of confidential Board minutes and quotes its contents is indicative that there is a problem that needs to be dealt with. Whether the SABC engages with the SSA or private security experts, it remains entitled to investigate breaches of confidentiality and to protect its information.

The SABC reiterates that the Sunday Times has misled the public and the SABC reserves its rights in this regard.

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