

Motsoeneng lawyer claims client didn't fire the SABC 8

SABC former COO Hlaudi Motsoeneng is not responsible for the costs incurred by the corporation in firing of eight of its journalists last year, according to his lawyer.

Advocate Thabani Masuku has contended in the Labour Court that Motsoeneng was not the decision-maker. He said former acting group CEO Jimi Matthews had ordered former acting group executive for news and current affairs Simon Tebele to fire the journalists.

Trade union Solidarity had argued that Motsoeneng made the decision that led to the journalists being fired.

Solidarity wants Motsoeneng to be held liable for the legal costs because he introduced the 90% local-content policy and banned the airing of violent protests on the public broadcaster's television channels.



[SABC.co.za](https://www.sabc.co.za)

The respondents are the SABC, Motsoeneng and Tebele.

"The court had not identified Mr Motsoeneng as the decision-maker responsible for terminating the employment contracts of the applicants. [The] SABC itself had not identified Mr Motsoeneng as the decision-maker [and] the applicants themselves did not identify Mr Motsoeneng as the decision-maker," he said.

Earlier on Wednesday Hans van der Riet SC, representing the Broadcast Electronic Media and Allied Workers' Union, told Judge David Gush that all three respondents should be held personally liable for the costs.

"It's clear [Motsoeneng] took the decision," he said, adding that the SABC was guilty of "unacceptable conduct".

Ntuli, Calata, Gqubule, Vuyo Mvoko, Jacques Steenkamp, Foeta Krige, Krivani Pillay and Suna Venter, who has since died, were fired by the public broadcaster in July 2016 for speaking out against Motsoeneng's policy of stopping the airing of footage of violent protests.

Source: The Times

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