

SABC to tell truth 'with balanced perspective' - CEO

By [Thinus Ferreira](#)

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New SABC chief executive officer Frans Matlala said the public broadcaster going forward will tell the truth but will also be "balancing the perspective".

He further said that he will be spending the next three months talking to various people to find out what happened at the SABC in the past and what issues there are.

Frans Matlala was announced as the new permanent SABC CEO on Wednesday at the broadcaster's Auckland Park headquarters, a year and five months after Lulama Mokhobo quit just a few months into her five-year contract.

Matlala is a supporter and ally of the SABC's controversial and famously matric-less chief operating officer (COO) Hlaudi Motsoeneng.

Matlala was also an advisory consultant for the SABC for a year and he said there is room for improvement at the beleaguered SABC.



The public broadcaster has been lurching constantly from crisis to crisis and scandal to scandal since 2009 when it came to the brink of financial collapse and got a R1bn bailout in the form of a government guaranteed loan from Nedbank.

The SABC - fraught with ongoing insider politics, executive and SABC board room power struggles and growing perception

concerns about news bias, maladministration and undue political interference - faces big internal challenges.

There's also the looming and expensive switch from analogue to digital terrestrial television (DTT) which the SABC will now only start with five channels, one of which will be the rerun channel SABC Encore (DStv 156).

"Over the next 100 days I'm going to spend time with the SABC executive team, and of course I'll spend time with the SABC board and different people outside the organisation, including the minister of communications Faith Muthambi, parliament's portfolio committee of communications and different stakeholders so that I can appraise myself of things that have happened in the past, current realities, as well as future issues that I need to be aware of," said Matlala.

"I think it's important that we take advantage of the role and the opportunity we have to be able to serve the nation and Africa as a continent and lead that narrative. And it's a narrative of telling the truth but at the same time balancing the perspective that we put on the table," said Matlala.

Political reaction: Another 'flower pot'?

Political parties in South Africa have reacted to the appointment of Frans Matlala.

The ANC congratulated Frans Matlala. "The appointment of a CEO for the SABC is long overdue and therefore we congratulate him on his appointment and wish him well in his position particularly in terms of continuing to deepen the mandate of the SABC as a public broadcaster," said the ANC.

The Congress of the People (COPE) said it doesn't support Frans Matlala's appointment as SABC CEO.

"He is a close ally of Hlaudi Motsoeneng. We don't think that there will be any changes because Hlaudi Motsoeneng will still be in control. This man will only be a flower pot and Hlaudi Motsoeneng will still run the show," said COPE.

The Democratic Alliance (DA) said it tentatively welcomes the appointment of Frans Matlala, but cautioned that he will have to "put Hlaudi Motsoeneng in his place".

"The new SABC CEO is not Hlaudi Motsoeneng. This, in itself, is a positive development," said Gavin Davis, DA MP.

"Frans Matlala has an opportunity to learn from the experiences of his predecessor, Lulama Mokhobo, who resigned as CEO after just 11 months. The Public Protector found that her position was made untenable by Hlaudi Motsoeneng's campaign to bully and undermine her."

"The key to Frans Matlala's success in this new role is for him to quickly stamp his authority as the top administrator at the SABC. Already the signs are good that he will put Hlaudi Motsoeneng in his place."

"There are some question marks around the process to appoint Frans Matlala. With only members, the SABC board is three short of the quorum it requires to make legally binding decisions such as the appointment of a new CEO," said Gavin Davis.

Source: [Fin24](#) via News24Wire.