

# Minister in the Presidency introduces new MDDA board members

Issued by [Media Development and Diversity Agency](#)

11 Feb 2009

The address by the Minister in the Presidency Dr Manto Tshabalala-Msimang at a breakfast briefing to introduce new board members of the Media Development and Diversity Agency (MDDA).

29 January 2009

Media Development and Diversity Agency (MDDA) Board Members

MDDA CEO Mr Mtimde

Government officials

Media executives

Ladies and gentlemen

I would like to welcome you all to this momentous occasion, to officially introduce new board members to the Media Development and Diversity Agency (MDDA), as well as celebrate the achievement of the agency in its five years of issuing grants to facilitate the media development and diversity in South Africa.

This comes a year after the ANC 52nd National Conference 2007 noted the increasing concentration of ownership and control of the media, especially print media. It was of the view that the initiatives that are in place to diversify the ownership and control, views and opinions should be strengthened. And in accordance with this, reaffirmed the need to accelerate the roll-out of community radio stations, and similarly, that the MDDA should pay equal attention to the development of community television and community print media across the country, as well as facilitate the development of media aimed at youth, women, children and people with disability. Access to information and a diverse choice of media which is a fundamental right of all citizens especially the poor.

Having said that, perhaps I should give a brief background on the MDDA, the Agency which was established in 2003, in terms of the MDDA Act, No 14 of 2002, to provide grant funding to community media projects, which effectively commenced on 29 January 2004. The Constitution Act No. 108 of 1996 of South Africa provides for the freedom of expression and access to information, in its Section 16 and 32. The Media Development and Diversity Agency was established by legislation (the MDDA Act No 14 of 2002) to create an enabling environment for the development of media diversity in South Africa (radio, television, newspapers, magazines and new media).

When the agency, was established through the MDDA Act No 14 of 2002, government was responding to the call by media activists through the Comtask report and the need to ensure every citizen has a right to information and a right to communication. Government then set up this agency to create an enabling environment for media development and diversity in South Africa, through, amongst other things, providing financial support to community (non profit) and small commercial media projects. The vision of the MDDA is that "each and every South African Citizen should have access to a diverse range of media."

The agency was set up as a partnership between the South African Government and major print and broadcasting companies to assist in amongst others developing community and small commercial media in South Africa. It receives funding from the government through the Government Communication and Information System (GCIS), as well as from major commercial entities such as Caxton (Pty) Ltd Independent Newspaper Group, Avusa, Kagiso Media, Media24, Midi Pty Ltd (etv), M-Net, Primedia Pty Ltd and the SABC.

The agency came into existence in the South African media landscape at the right time. As a young democracy, only a decade into its democracy, South Africa was auditing itself and grappling with delivery on its policies. At the heart of this audit was looking at the Constitutional principles of freedom of expression, equality, language equity, cultural diversity and non-racialism.

From July 2006, through the Electronic Communications Act of 2005 (ECA), government has again strengthened this intervention (at least on the broadcasting industry side) through providing for the contribution of up to one percent by the broadcasting service licensee to the universal service and access objectives as outlined in both the MDDA Act and the Electronic Communications Act. Section 89 of ECA provides for Broadcast Service Licensees to contribute a percentage of their annual turnover to USAF in terms of a regulation prescribed by the Authority (Icasa). Broadcast Service Licensees who contribute funds to the MDDA will have their annual MDDA contribution set off against the prescribed annual contribution. The Independent Communications Authority of South Africa has accordingly acted and published a regulation on 10 October 2008, which prescribe that broadcast service licensees contribute 0,2% to either MDDA or USAF.

I understand that broadcasters are in discussion with the MDDA regarding renewing the current funding agreements, aligning them to this ICASA regulation and therefore continuing the five-year old relationship which has been to the benefit of the MDDA Act and the industry at large. It is hoped that this new legislative framework will ensure more growth, development and diversity of the media industry.

I hope that the MDDA will grow to be a strong entity in order to make meaningful impact to benefit the historically disadvantaged communities. The need has been demonstrated by the record of applications received by the Agency, going back since Jan 2004. These applications amounts to more than R150 million and the Agency has not been able to respond to all the need this far. We are hoping that the Agency's financial capacity will grow in order to be able to respond to the need adequately.

This new dispensation will enable the Agency to respond to the need in terms of the applications received and to the development and diversity of the broadcasting industry. In particular, this will result to the growth of the broadcasting industry, more skills developed through the training and mentorship programmes run through your support. These skills in turn will be to the benefit of the entire broadcasting industry, job creation and economic growth.

Further, we hope that the print media sector will follow suite and renew their funding agreements with the Agency, reasonably increase their contributions in support of the noble work of the Agency, thereby growing the print media sector as well. We are cognisant of the challenges faced by the sector and hope that within the constraints the sector have, they will still be able to continue the relationship with MDDA. The government had increased its contributions to the agency from initial R3 million to R16 million, with further increase envisaged in the coming years.

I would first like to thank the founding contributors to the realisation of this Agency, including Mr Joel Netshitenzhe (the former GCIS CEO), Mr Tony Trew (the former GCIS Deputy CEO and MDDA Board member, whose term ended in December 2007), Ms Kanyi Mkonza, the former MDDA Chairperson and now SABC Board Chairperson, whose term also ended in December 2007, former Board members (Mr Connie Molusi, Ms Nunu Ntshingila, Ms Kerry Cullinan, Mr Govin Reddy, Dr Mashilo Boloka, Ms Felleng Sekha and Ms Nomhle Canca), Ms Libby Lloyd (the former MDDA CEO) and the support (without which there would have been no MDDA) of the former President of the Republic, Mr Thabo Mbeki.

In 2006, MDDA ushered in a new management team to take over the day to day running of the Agency. Under the leadership of Mr Lumko Mtimde, Chief Executive Officer, the team has brought in a more pragmatic approach to the agency and is managing the strategy that ensures that there is some form of media access for communities in every district municipality by the end of three years.

In January 2008, the President of the Republic of South Africa then Mr Thabo Mbeki appointed the agency's new Chairperson; Ms Gugu Msibi for a period of five years as well as four new members to the Board: Ms Baby Tyawa, Ms Nomonde Gongxeka, Professor Guy Berger and Mr Siviwe Minyi. Ms Ingrid Louw was seconded by Print Media South Africa to replace Mr Connie Molusi in June 2008.

The term of office of Mr Chris Moerdyk (who is one of the oldest serving members of the Board) and Mr Mazibuko Jara have come to an end. It is against this background that I extend my gratitude to these servants of the people, whose leadership has ensured that the agency is what it is today. MDDA is a body that is undoubtedly appreciated by all South Africans. Parliament is impressed by its work, as witnessed at the last presentation the agency made in September 2008 and a number of communities in underserved areas have enjoyed the support of the MDDA. Mr Moerdyk and Mr Jara, I hope that you will join other ambassadors of the Agency and continue to support its work. Siyabonga.

This year the President, in terms of Section 4 (1) (b) of the MDDA Act, has formally appointed five new Board members to serve on the MDDA Board for a term of office of three years, who I now introduce to you:

- Ms Phumelele Ntombela-Nzimande (who works for SABC)
- Dr Tanja Bosch (who works for the University of Cape Town)
- Mr Dan Moyane (who works for Mazole Investments), as the broadcast media representative)
- Ms Ingrid Louw (who works for Print Media SA, as a print media representative,
- Ms Baby Tyawa (who works for GCIS).

I welcome you all and assure you that you are joining a strong, hard working and collective team. You are also inheriting a well managed organ of state with a history of unqualified audit reports. The continuous record of clean unqualified Annual Reports is an indication of the great leadership this Agency has had.

The transition from Ms Libby Lloyd (the former and founding CEO) to Mr Mtimde (the current CEO) has been smooth and Mr Mtimde has taken the agency to even greater heights.

Since the inception of the MDDA, the board has approved more than 229 different projects, with approximately more than R73 million in grants. This is applauded by government and surely by all beneficiaries. It should be comforting to all those who support this intervention financially and call for more support.

All these achievements feed right into the MDDA's mandate, as it was established through an act of Parliament to create an enabling environment for media development and diversity in South Africa, where a diverse, vibrant and creative media flourishes and reflects the needs of all South Africans. The interventions of the Agency are meant to bring continuous communication and information amongst all citizens of South Africa at their different levels, which is the cornerstone of empowerment, transformation and development for all citizens.

In conclusion, I would like to thank all present for your commitment into developing and diversifying the South African media landscape. I also leave you with this thought; a number of disadvantaged communities still do not have the same access to media as the other communities in the "first economy". Acceptably, there is a notable range of media products in the market but there remains a limited choice for the majority of South Africans given the language limitations. In particular, indigenous languages still do not feature significantly in the print media and television sector.

Further, the MDDA support will remain needed on an ongoing basis in poverty-stricken areas, due to economic realities in those areas. Going forward, the government support the Agency's continued focus on ensuring that all citizens can access information in a language of their choice and contributing to the transformation of media access, ownership and control patterns in South Africa.

On behalf of Government, I would like to thank the commitment by major commercial media entities: Caxton Pty Ltd, Independent Newspaper Group, Johncom, Kagiso Media, Media24, Midi Pty Ltd (etv), M-Net, PRIMEDIA Pty Ltd and the SABC through their support in pursuit of the objects of the MDDA Act.

Finally, I would like to also take this opportunity to thank the board led by Ms Msibi and CEO Mr Mtimde, the out gone CFO Mr Mbuyiseni Jafta and the new CFO Mr Mshiyeni Gungqisa for their hard work and commitment. Again, the MDDA has received a clean audit report from the Auditor-General.

I thank you.

*Issued by: The Presidency*

*29 January 2009*

*Source: SAPA*

- **Deadline looms for MDDA-Sanlam Local Media Awards entries for 2014** 23 Jan 2015
- **MDDA-Sanlam Local Media Awards entries for 2014 now open** 26 Nov 2014
- **Entries open for MDDA-Sanlam Local Media Awards** 25 Nov 2014
- **Mandla Langa acknowledges 20 years of media freedom and diversity** 28 May 2014
- **MDDA-Sanlam Local Media Awards winners announced** 27 May 2014

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