

# Polytechnic declares its premises a "no-go" area for journalists covering student events

The Namibian Chapter of the Media Institute of Southern Africa, MISA-Namibia, has come out strongly against the decision by the Polytechnic of Namibia issuing a decree that its premises are a "no-go" area for journalists covering student events.

According to the article in the "New Era" of 23 July 2008, titled, "Journalists Barred from Polytechnic", journalists cannot enter the Polytechnic premises unless authorised by the Rector or the Vice Rector."

The national director of MISA-Namibia, Mathew Haikali, expressed disappointment at the decision taken by the Polytechnic.

"I am disappointed at the decision because they are training student journalists and if these students cannot become investigative journalists then all that training is in vain. As a public institution, Polytechnic is supposed to be transparent in everything they do and not put restrictions on journalists, especially if they are training journalists."

In agreement with Haikali is former MISA Namibia chairperson in an Ex-officio capacity, Christof Maletsky, who expressed shock on the Polytechnic's decision. "For an institution that prides itself in offering top class quality education, especially to journalists, we did not expect such drastic measures. The Polytechnic, and all of us, know that the decision is unacceptable. We look forward to another statement from Polytechnic withdrawing the first one. As media trainers, they need to know better," Maletsky said.

"New Era" journalist and author of the story in question, Desie Heita, says he experienced difficulties when he tried to gain access to the Polytechnic premises to write a story on student matters. Heita explains he was ordered not to enter the premises at all because of the nature of his profession.

Meanwhile, MISA-Namibia's attempts to get comment from both the Polytechnic Rector, Tjama Tjivikua, and Dean of Students, Frieda Shimbuli, proved futile as they were both unavailable for comment.

Courtesy of [IFEX](#)