

Government mulls Green Paper on media diversity

Government is considering developing a Green Paper on media development and diversity, says the Deputy Minister of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation, Obed Bapela.



(Image: Daniel R Blume, via Wikimedia Commons)

"We are considering developing a Green Paper Discussion Paper on media development and diversity as part of the [Media Development and Diversity] Agency review," said the deputy minister in Johannesburg on Friday.

Bapela said the Green Paper would be informed by research conducted by the MDDA and its 10 years of experience, among other things.

"This process will inform the proposals, including possible amendments to the MDDA Act of 2002. As we celebrate 20 years (of democracy), we need to review the mandate."

The deputy minister was speaking at an event to thank outgoing MDDA board members, whose term expired in December, as well as welcome new board members, who started their term in January.

Government would continue to support and uplift the work of the MDDA in order to make a meaningful impact on creating an enabling environment for media development and diversity.

"This will be done with an end game in mind that allows public discourse to flourish and where a diverse, vibrant and creative media flourishes and reflects the needs and aspirations of all South Africans," he said.

"In line with MDDA's initial vision, which said 'each and every SA citizen should have access to a choice of a diverse media', in most district municipalities, there is some form of media for consumers to choose from. There are community and small commercial newspapers and/or magazines in languages spoken at the localities, in addition to community radio," said the deputy minister.

Acting chairperson Thato Mahapa said he was grateful to the board members whose term had ended. "I have learnt a lot from them and they have left the MDDA better than the way they found it. We are grateful to them."

Nadia Bulbulia, outgoing board member and Executive Director at the National Association of Broadcasters, thanked the board for a robust term.

"This is an opportunity to celebrate diversity in the country - we are in the 20th year of our vibrant democracy. I will continue to learn and grow if I have colleagues such as yourselves," said Bulbulia.

She said she and the other board members were honoured to serve the country, as it was a public service.

Bapela thanked Gugu Msibi, who completed her five-year tenure as a chairperson of the agency in January 2013, Phelisa Nkomo, the current chairperson of the board from 2013, and Nadia Bulbulia and Nothando Migogo, whose terms expired in December 2013.

"The MDDA will continue to draw from your skills from time to time. You have not retired, I can see your continued desire to serve. Your hearts will remain at MDDA and the edge to continue working is most appreciated."

He further announced Roland Aloysius Williams, who currently serves as the Head of Communications of the Nelson Mandela Bay Metropolitan Municipality, as the new board member.

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