

Muthambi vs Davis... Shock, horror, race

Minister Faith Muthambi has responded to an article on 19 January in *Politicsweb* by Gavin Davis, DA Shadow Minister of Communications...



Faith Muthambi, shocked.
(Image: GCIS)

The Minister noted with shock and horror what can only be described as undermining utterances in the public domain attributed to Honourable Gavin Davis, who parades as a so-called DA shadow Minister of Communications. Honourable Davis makes a litany of spurious accusations involving the SABC, which have never been tested in any objective and fair process. The Minister will not grace those allegations with any dignity by repeating them, save to point out the following:

- Honourable Davis is violating his oath of office by disrespecting and disregarding parliamentary rules and processes that guide members of parliament on how to ask questions from the Executive as part of the duties of members of parliament in carrying out their duty of oversight.
- The level of detail, however spurious and inaccurate, provides a [sic] *prima facie* evidence that Honourable Davis is behind the scenes, illegally colluding with some of the individuals whose

interests he purports to be protecting.

- Actions of Honourable Davis also undermine the Labour Relations regime of the country, which affords any aggrieved employees in any institution proper legal recourse.
- Honourable Davis is strongly advised not to act like an irresponsible shop steward with a clandestine mandate.
- It is indeed questionable that Honourable Davis' level of activism coincides with the appointment, albeit on an acting capacity, of a black person at the helm of a public institution. In addition, the Minister will not allow a perception to be created that if you are a black woman Minister, you need a white male babysitter.

The Minister is calling upon Honourable Davis to act with restraint and with responsibility as required by the oath that he took rather than dragging a public institution into disrepute.

The Minister would welcome any questions that are brought through via the official and legal channels as provided by Parliament.

DA stands by accusations against Muthambi



Gavin Davis: Wants Muthambi to explain her unlawful interference.

In a rather hysterical press statement released earlier, Minister Faith Muthambi says that I have falsely accused her of unlawfully interfering in the SABC Board.

I stand by this accusation for the simple reason that I have seen the letter that she sent to certain SABC Board Members.

In the letter, the Minister threatens to recommend Board Members' removal unless they give her good reasons for not doing so. One Board Member, Professor Bongani Khumalo, has already reportedly resigned as a result of the letter.

This ministerial interference in the SABC Board is unlawful because the Minister has no power in law to remove Board Members or recommend their removal. According to section 15A of the Broadcasting Act, it is up to Parliament to recommend the removal of Board Members after due inquiry into their conduct, not the Minister.

This is precisely why Parliament dealt with the allegations against former SABC Board Chair Ellen Tshabalala. When asked about the Tshabalala matter at the time, Minister Muthambi correctly replied that it was "in Parliament's hands."



Haudi Motsoeneng, accused of bullying staff. (Image: SABC)

So, if Minister Muthambi has evidence of misconduct by SABC Board Members, she must forward it to the parliamentary Portfolio Committee so that we can conduct an official inquiry as we did with the Tshabalala matter.

I have asked the Chairperson of the Communications Portfolio Committee to call Minister Muthambi before us to explain her unlawful interference in the Board.

In her press release, the Minister also denies that there is an investigation at the SABC into the alleged 'leaking' of documents. Perhaps she should talk to SABC spokesperson Kaizer Kganyago. Yesterday Kganyago said that a decision to investigate the source of the leaks had been taken at the "highest level" and that its purpose was to "find the culprits and deal with them accordingly."

The DA stands by its accusations against the Minister for her interference in the Board, and against Hlaudi Motsoeneng for his bullying of SABC staff members. We look forward to taking these matters further in Parliament at the first available opportunity.



Disgraced Ellen Tshabalala:
Her fate was in Parliament's
hands, according to Muthambi.
(Image: SABC)

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