

## Malawi parliament challenges MACRA on licence delays

Malawi parliament on Friday, 4 February 2011, took to task the Malawi Communication Regulatory Authority (MACRA) for what it called "unwarranted" delays to issue television and radio licences. Several members of parliament went home describing how undemocratic the delays are.

 By [Gregory Gondwe](#) 9 Feb 2011

A Dowa East MP Bauleni Manna said if Malawi had more television stations, this aspect of media will improve quality on one side while on another side consumers will benefit.

"MACRA is taking too long to issue licences for radio and television stations while at the same time charging exorbitant fees in foreign currency when applicants start the processes that are never complete," he said.

### Disregard in delays deemed undemocratic

Another member of parliament, Jolly Kalelo, himself a former broadcaster, complained that MACRA's disregard to issuing licences in time is in itself undemocratic.

"This is denying Malawians opportunity to sample alternative media news so that they can make informed choices which is a prerequisite in a democracy," said Kalelo.

This was all prompted by a report that was presented in the August House by the Media and Communications Committee after visiting almost all media houses in the country between November 2009 and August 2010.

MACRA spokesperson Zadziko Mankhambo said he was not ready to make any comment on the matter yet.

### ABOUT GREGORY GONDWE

Gregory Gondwe is a Malawian journalist who started writing in 1993. He is also a media consultant assisting several international journalists pursuing assignments in Malawi. He holds a Diploma and an Intermediate Certificate in Journalism among other media-related certificates. He can be contacted on [gregorygondwe@gmail.com](mailto:gregorygondwe@gmail.com). Follow him on Twitter at [@Kalipochi](#). [View my profile and articles...](#)