

## Minister's address at the Commonwealth Broadcasting Association Conference, Sandton, 19 April 2010

Minister of Communications, General (Ret.) Sipiwe Nyanda address to the Commonwealth Broadcasting Association Conference, Sandton, 19 April 2010

The President of the Commonwealth Broadcasting Association (CBA), Mr Abubakar Jijiwa  
The Vice-President of the CBA, Mr Ken Clark  
The Chairperson of the SABC Board, Dr. Ben Ngubane, other board members present here  
The Group CEO of the SABC, Mr Solly Mokoetle  
The Executives of the various Broadcasting Organisations present here today  
Representatives of the Communications Regulator, ICASA  
Our international guests from the CBA member states and neighbouring countries  
Distinguished guests

Ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the Government and the people of the Republic South Africa, it is an honour for me to warmly welcome you to the Commonwealth Broadcasting Association (CBA) Conference being hosted by the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) and the Ministry of Communications.

I wish to take this opportunity to welcome our distinguished international guest speakers who will be sharing their experiences with us during this gathering. We look forward to fruitful and vibrant discussions during the various sessions. Let me extend my sincere gratitude to the regional broadcasters and commercial entities for your support. Your visit to South Africa will undoubtedly go a long way towards strengthening our bonds of friendship. We are looking forward to an even closer co-operation in the years ahead.

You have all come to South Africa at quite an interesting time with the eyes of the world turned on our young democracy. In just over two months time South Africa will play host to hundreds of thousands of football fans who will be attending the first FIFA World Cup to be hosted on African soil. We are quite excited but yet anxious as a country. But I can assure you that the excitement weighs over the anxiety because this nation has been hard at work for the past couple of years to ensure that this becomes the best World Cup ever.

The enthusiasm of South Africans about this event cannot be over emphasised. You may have learned through media reports about the overwhelming turnouts at the over-the-counter FIFA ticket sales outlets countrywide which opened last Thursday. At the close of business FIFA reported 53 thousand tickets were recorded as sold within the first 8 hours.

As the government of South Africa we see this as testimony of the significance of Africa hosting an event of this magnitude. I hope that we will see most of you at the various stadia that will be hosting the football games.

Our public broadcaster, the SABC, is the only official broadcaster of the 2010 FIFA World Cup. This places an enormous responsibility on the institution. Through its 3 main TV channels and 18 radio stations, the SABC will ensure that every South African broadcast media consumer has access to the football games and other World Cup related events.

It is also important to mention that the Public Broadcaster has entered into agreements with a number of countries to provide them with World Cup content. I was recently in Cuba on government business where I met with several government Ministers and other role players in the area of telecommunications. I was pleased to learn from my counterpart that the government of Cuba has bought the rights to link with the SABC to broadcast all the 2010 FIFA World Cup games.

FIFA expects more than 3 billion households around the world to follow the World Cup on television.

Delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

The power and central role of broadcasting in our lives cannot therefore be over-emphasised.

I am encouraged to learn that climate change and media was among key areas of focus during the workshops. We must ensure that our technology systems do not have a negative effect on the environment. National broadcasters across the globe must contribute to raise public awareness about the use of comprehensible scientific data.

Broadcasting has a crucial role to play in ensuring that every country meets its developmental objectives. It is important that this gathering engage in intense debates on how broadcasting can contribute to the fight against poverty and many other social ills that continue to ravage society today such as HIV and AIDS.

The government of South Africa will continue to promote the creation of a sustainable environment that encourages the participation of the creative industries in the work of the ICT sector.

We have already started doing this in several ways. In 2009 we introduced the draft Public Service Broadcasting (PBS) Bill. The aim of this process is to have the public and organised industry alike make inputs on this initiative that will without doubt usher in a whole new era of broadcasting in our country.

The envisaged end product will reflect a public broadcasting service that is built around the interests of the public, and caters for the needs of the public.

We have already commenced with the construction of a digital television transmission infrastructure through SENTECH, our signal distributor. Several operational tests have been conducted by the SABC and I am told that the process has gone smoothly. The rollout of the digital terrestrial infrastructure provides us with an opportunity to meet our digital migration coverage timelines of November 2011.

This, ladies and gentlemen, is a reflection of our vision to build an inclusive information society and promote a participatory democracy. This is among several initiatives that we will be implementing in the current year. I am looking forward to vibrant and constructive discussions during the course of this week. I am sure that our local creative industry including the professionals will interact, share and exchange their experience with all of our international friends. In building our respective developmental states, integration and harmonisation of programs becomes crucial. We cannot afford to build our future broadcasting plans in isolation; we must work together and contribute as a collective to the growth of the global economy.

Distinguished delegates, ladies and gentleman,

I believe that the only way to resolve whatever challenges we may be facing in our respective countries and areas of work is a common determination and a genuine desire to co-operate closely. I have no doubt that in the course of your meeting you will have an opportunity to share knowledge on how we can develop innovative ideas.

I hope that this gathering will provide you with opportunities to establish professional and other networks that are essential to the promotion of broadcasting. I wish you great success in your deliberations and I will follow up on your activities during the next few days when i receive the conference report. Broadcasting must indeed Score! Ke Nako. Celebrate Africa's Humanity.

I thank you!

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