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Congress of South African Trade Unions

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30 June 1993

Melody Emmett
Co-ordinator of Technical Committees
Multi-Party Forum
World Trade Centre

Ms Emmett

I am writing on behalf of of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) with regard to the draft bill on the proposed Independent Broadcasting Authority.

As you are aware, the draft bill was tabled and made available for public comment on June 22. The deadline set by the MPF for such comment was July 5, next Monday.

As the bill envisages substantial and highly contentious changes to South Africa's broadcasting dispensation, we believe it is essential that those drafting it do only so after taking account of as wide a range of opinion as possible.

This has not been the case: the MPF has given the public just two weeks to get a copy of the draft bill (no mean task in itself), study it, and formulate a meaningful and considered response.

We believe this is impractical. The draft bill is 84 pages long and incomplete.

We therefore request that the MPF extend the period allowed for public comment by at least three weeks - that is, to July 26.

We also request that, once written submissions have been received, the MPF hold public hearings on the draft bill, or instruct the technical committee responsible to do so.

We are very concerned that the inadequate time set aside and the mechanism established for public submissions will result in only a token and wholly inadequate contribution by the public on the issue of the IBA.

We believe this is not in keeping with the commitment by the MPF to an open process on all issues, and to substantial public role on the issue of broadcasting in particular.

We would appreciate your making known our comments and our requests to the appropriate MPF structures as soon as possible, and to all participating parties.

Your sincerely



Bheki Nkosi
Information Officer

