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5 July 1993

Melody Emmett
Coordinator of technical committees
Multi-Party Forum
World Trade Centre

492-1177

Dear Ms Emmett

I am writing on behalf of the Black Sash with regard to the draft bill on the proposed Independent Broadcasting Authority.

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

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 is 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 hearing on the draft bill, or instruct the technical committee responsible to do so.

We are concerned that the inadequate time set aside and mechanisms established for public submission will result in only a token and wholly inadequate contribution by the public on the issue of the I.B.A.

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

We would appreciate your making known our concerns and our request to the appropriate MPF structure as soon as possible and to all participating parties.

Yours sincerely,

Cille du Vlieg

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