



MEDIA STATEMENT

SABC WELCOMES MEDIA MONITORING AFRICA ELECTION COVERAGE REPORT AND DIGITAL NEWS REPORT 2019 BY THE REUTERS INSTITUTE

Johannesburg – Wednesday, 12 June 2019 – The South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) welcomes the report by Media Monitoring Africa (MMA), on the analysis of coverage by media institutions for the 2019 national and provincial elections. The period of analysis was between 1 March and 15 May 2019.

With regard to the SABC, the research examined 3137 election items, across television, radio and online news platforms. The programmes covered were SABC 2's *Morning Live*, the *Democracy Gauge* on SABC 3, two news bulletins a day on all our radio stations, and one prime time news bulletin a day on free-to-air television channels. According to MMA, out of the 3137 items analysed, 99% were found to be "balanced and fair".

The report commended the SABC for the manner in which it carried out its mandate, ensuring the reflection of views and challenges faced by all South Africans. In this regard, MMA found that on average the number of sources used for the election items reviewed, was two sources per item. This is slightly above the South African media industry average.

When compared with other South African media institutions in terms of overall elections rating, the SABC dominated the top 10, with five of its platforms/and or programmes being featured. These were namely *Democracy Gauge* (SABC 3) taking the first position, *SABC 1's Siswati/Ndebele News*, *Thobela FM*, *Lesedi FM* and *Motsweding FM*.

The report also points out areas where the SABC can improve in terms of coverage and these matters have been noted by the organisation.

For the SABC, the report reflects our determination to provide untrammelled news content that is fair and balanced. It also demonstrates that the SABC remained true to its editorial principles, and in providing equitable coverage of political parties in line with ICASA regulations.

This year's election coverage has also served as an important barometer to gauge the strength of the public broadcaster's pledge of being *Independent* and *Impartial*.

Regarding the Reuters Institute digital news report, which focused on English speaking news consumers on television, radio and online platforms, SABC radio and television had a total reach of 60% in terms of access to its content. From an online news perspective, the SABC is pleased that it ranked 2nd out of 29 news services, with a total weekly reach of 45%. The report also looked at brand trust, and out of 13 media institutions, SABC News was ranked number 4.

The SABC remains committed to delivering news in an unrestrained manner, in all official languages to the citizens of South Africa.

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