



## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

### **SABC NEWS ANNOUNCES A CONTINUOUS GROWTH OF AUDIENCES**

**Johannesburg, Wednesday, 09 October 2019** – The South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) is pleased to announce consistent and significant audience share growth of SABC News on different platforms in the first two quarters of the current financial year. The SABC News' Independent and Impartial brand pledge has been very well received by audiences through the multiplatform coverage of news of national importance.

According to the Broadcast Research Council's latest television audience measurements, the SABC News Channel (DSTV 404) has performed well, increasing its market share from 34% in September 2018 to 38% during September 2019 on the DSTV platform. This means that SABC News is now neck and neck with its competitor in the 24-hour TV news channel category. In the national market, which includes the Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT) news consumption, the SABC News channel retained its 1<sup>st</sup> position with 39% market share, up from 36% in August 2019.

To provide context on how credible, impartial news builds trust and increases audiences, it is noteworthy that in March 2016 SABC News audience share was 14.7% with the main competitor at 54%.

SABC News now occupies 7 of the top 10 news items on free-to-air television channels, with news properties on SABC1 and SABC 2 contributing up to 70% of the top 10 news broadcasts. The SABC is also pleased that the IsiXhosa/IsiZulu bulletins have shown strong growth, breaking through the 4 million audience mark, while the SiSwati/SiNdebele bulletins performed well with above 2 million viewers. "Expressions" - our news talk show that provides a dialogue platform for youth – has remained the most popular actuality programme.

According to data from Google Analytics, the public news service's digital platforms recorded impressive performance with the website SABCNews.com reaching over 2 million page views in September 2019, an increase of 22% since 2016.

With regard to YouTube Analytics, the SABC New channel recorded the largest number of views ever, with 26 million views in September 2019, beating the previous best of 22 million views in July 2018. Twitter followers increased by 1.2 %, Facebook went up 3.1%, while

podcast service Iono audio downloads increased by 9% on the SABC News and Current Affairs page.

SABC News continues to provide high quality content across the public broadcaster's 18 radio stations in 13 languages, reflecting a balanced point of view, while delivering programming that contributes to the national discourse and enhancing the country's democracy.

The Group Executive of News and Current Affairs, Ms. Phathiswa Magopeni describes the continuous growth of SABC News audiences as a sign that the public news service is responding to the needs of the citizens. "SABC News is very determined and successfully transforming into a citizen-centric news service, with a responsive temperament to the news and information needs of the South African public", she said.

Magopeni further stated that "the performance of the news operation is wholly attributed to the unwavering determination and commitment of SABC News' journalists and support staff, who work under trying and sometimes dangerous circumstances to ensure that the voices of the citizens, across the board, are acknowledged and amplified".

All these positive indicators are a reflection of SABC News' commitment to provide unlimited and inclusive news content, governed by sound editorial principles, making it the premium news source South Africa can trust.

**END**

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