



## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

### **SABC WILL KEEP THE NATION INFORMED DURING LOCKDOWN**

**Johannesburg – Wednesday, 25 March 2020** - The South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) would like to announce some of its stringent measures in place to ensure that the Corporation continues to serve its public service of keeping the nation informed during the national shutdown announced by President Cyril Ramaphosa.

As part of the ongoing efforts to mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 outbreak, the public service broadcaster has developed comprehensive business continuity and disaster recovery plans for this period. These plans are aimed at safeguarding SABC employees and ensuring that the Corporation continues to provide an essential service of broadcasting to the millions of South Africans, who rely solely on the SABC for information, education and entertainment.

Given the essential service that the SABC provides, staff performing critical business continuity services during this lockdown period will be required to be onsite at respective SABC offices. Some staff members performing critical business continuity services will be allowed to perform these work functions remotely. All other staff will be released from work during this period, these include staff members whose work primarily depend on meeting with the public, particularly conducting tours and dealing with public enquiries regarding SABC services.

In ensuring broadcast capability outside of the SABC's headquarters, a Disaster Recovery (DR) site has been established. This site is capacitated with numerous Outside Broadcast vehicles which will cater for television and radio broadcasts starting on Tuesday, 24 March 2020.

Furthermore, two studios at Auckland Park have been reserved for utilisation by the Department of Education, for educational programming during this period.

Our logistical services department will continue to sanitise radio studios between programs, as the crew switches over to reduce the risk of any contamination. During the switch-over, mechanisms have been put in place to allow cleaning teams enough time to do a thorough sanitation process.

The SABC is working tirelessly to ensure that its core business of delivering on news and current affairs programmes as well as TV and radio programming will continue under stringent conditions, with alternative broadcast plans in place. In terms of studio interviews, the Corporation has taken a decision to not allow any studio interviews during this period but use various alternative ways to communicate with newsmakers.

Regarding soaps and long running dramas, the SABC has advised production houses to take a break as per the lockdown announced by the President. Currently the SABC has enough broadcast stock during the lockdown and will continue to entertain millions of South Africans with their favorite soaps.

SABC 1 will bring viewers fresh new pre-recorded episodes of Daily Thetha until 9 April 2020 followed by replacement content. YOTV will have a mix of new pre-recorded programming and replacement content. SABC 2 and SABC 3 encourages all young people to stay tuned into to *Hectic Nine 9* and *Hectic on 3* to enjoy fresh pre-recorded programming.

Radio drama productions are halted at this stage. More focus will be on increasing curriculum based educational programmes to support learners during this time, and creating more captivating programmes to keep listeners entertained.

All of the SABC Sport TV productions have also halted for this period and will be replaced with licensed international sporting content with midday programming being replaced with educational content. Radio Sport talk shows will continue with all safety precautions in place.

South Africans will have a choice of content available to them across the three channels, we ensuring news, current affairs and general entertainment.

SABC Group Chief Executive Officer, Mr Madoda Mxakwe stated “As a public service broadcaster, it is important that the SABC meets both its public mandate and organisational objectives. This means that we need to balance our obligation to ensure the health and wellbeing of our employees and service providers, as well as maintaining business continuity, as our services are critical to the South African public.”

