



EFF STATEMENT ON THE SALE OF SUNDAY WORLD

Monday, 24 June, 2019

The EFF notes the sale of Sunday World by Tiso Blackstar to Fundudzi Media which is owned by an African businessman David Mabilu. This is a positive development in the diversification of media ownership in our country.

We congratulate Fundudzi Media and wish them great success. The task in diversification of voices within the media landscape in the country lies precisely in the children of the historically marginalized owning the means to produce and contribute to public discourse and public “truth”.

We call on big corporations, as well as government, to support Fundudzi Media by advertising in the Sunday World. Majority, if not all, black owned media houses suffer corporate advertisement neglect to a point of dissolution. The most recent example was the fall of Ndalo Media which owned esteemed publications like Destiny Magazine. Broadcasting houses like Power FM also suffer neglect and do not enjoy the kind of advertisement privilege enjoyed by the white owned media.

We hope Fundudzi Media will use Sunday World to reshape the continued degenerating idea of “truth”. Under current conditions, the truth is under threat each day, due to those in power who have twisted it for many years to suit their profit driven and white privilege agenda.

In essence, even with the advent of social media, public discourse is driven through false and fake news; opening a pathway towards being a post-truth society. This happens when appeal to emotions reigns above facts: it does not matter what the facts

are, the point is an appeal to emotions. This results in news driven by sensation as opposed to facts; since most times building and establishing stories on facts requires patience, rigor and honesty, which many profit driven publications no longer have. Sunday World has an entire week to produce stories; enough time to establish certain facts and write in favor of truth no matter what the fashionable, emotional point of view is. In the past 14 months, appeal to the emotional junk called Ramaphoria has resulted in many publications not holding Ramaphosa accountable and subjecting him to the necessary scrutiny required for the highest office in the land.

Rigorous journalistic ethic must put up a formidable fight against the abuse of media in general to promote fake news and sensationalism. It must also refuse to fall into the trap of reproducing the status-quo in terms of dominant voices and valuable lives being those of the rich, elite and privileged. All stories are human stories and deserve to be told.

Above all, we wish Sunday World can transcend the era of reputation bashing journalism used to settle personal vendettas and political squabbles. As a black owned paper, it must contribute to the representation of black lives as lives that matter, deserving of dignity, excellence and respect.

We wish them great success and hope for the rise of even more black and African owned media houses and publications. South Africa deserves a diversity of media ownership to truly claim a healthy public discourse.

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