



EFF STATEMENT WELCOMING THE SANCTION BY THE SOUTH AFRICAN PRESS COUNCIL AGAINST NEWS24, FOR FALSELY CLAIMING THAT THE EFF AND CIC JULIUS MALEMA ARE FUNDED BY CARNILINX AND ADRIANO MAZZOTI

Thursday, 18 April 2024.

The Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) welcomes the damning ruling by the South African Press Council (Press Council), against the racist and fake news peddling publication News24, which has for years peddled the narrative that the EFF and EFF President Julius Malema, are funded by the company Carnilinx and one Mr Adriano Mazzoti.

In two articles authored by the renowned racist and anti-EFF “editor” Adriaan Basson and journalist Cebelihle Mthethwa, and subsequently published by News24, the two insinuated and stated as fact that cigarette company Carnilinx and businessman Adriano Mazzoti are major funders of both the EFF and the Commander in Chief Julius Malema.

These insinuations and allegations have for years been presented as fact by many within the media fraternity, particularly those who have adopted an agenda to portray the EFF and its leadership in a negative light without any shred of evidence. At the lead of this crusade has been Adriaan Basson, who has frequently turned News24 into an anti-EFF pamphlet in particular, and an anti-African publication in general.

In its adjudication of a complaint raised by Mr. Mazzoti, regarding these two articles and the allegations contained in them, the Press Council found that News24 was in breach of the following clauses of the South African Press Code:

- a) Clause 1.1 of the Press Code, as the statement that either Carnilinx or Adriano Mazzoti are major funders of the EFF and CIC Julius Malema was not truthful or accurate.
- b) Clause 1.2 of the Press Code, as the article and allegations that Carnilinx and Adriano Mazzoti are major funders of the EFF and CIC Julius Malema were presented negligently, with distortion, exaggeration and misrepresentation.
- c) Clause 1.3 of the Press Code, which states that media may only present what may be reasonably true as fact, and opinions, allegations, rumours or suppositions shall be presented as such. Evidently, Adriaan Basson and his band of fake news peddlers presented their opinions regarding the funding of the EFF and CIC Julius Malema as fact, to fulfil their nefarious agendas.
- d) Clause 1.7 of the Press Code, as they did not verify the accuracy of their statements in the article that stated as fact the Carnilinx and Adriano Mazzoti are major funders of the EFF and CIC Julius Malema.
- e) Clause 1.8 of the Press Code, as they did not seek the views of the subject of critical reporting in advance of publication.

The Press Council ordered that News24 correct the aspects of the texts in their articles that suggest that Carnilinx and Adriano Mazzoti are funders of the EFF and CIC Julius Malema and issue an apology on the top of both of these articles.

It must be noted that News24 has made no effort to republish these articles with the corrections and apologies, at the time of releasing this statement, on any of their digital platforms. While the sanction from the Press Council against News24 is publicly available on their website, it is yet to be acknowledged by News24.

This shows the lack of remorse or repentance by News24 and this arrogance can be traced to the verifiable hatred of the EFF by the editor of News24 Adrian Basson, who has no business leading a newsroom when he has a vested and intentional interest in damaging the reputation of a political party.

The EFF calls on all media houses to refrain from spreading fake and unverified information, and resist the urge to enter the political arena if they want to avoid the shame and exposure that has been suffered by News24. We all bear the responsibility to scrutinise the media fairly to ensure that they do not become weapons of the ruling elite, and racists who use media houses to fight political battles.

ISSUED BY THE ECONOMIC FREEDOM FIGHTERS

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