

Concluding Remarks

The Parliamentary Print Media Transformation Indaba held on the 18th June 2012 at ICASA premises in Johannesburg, attended by industry associations, lobby groups, small commercial and community media representatives, (like Association of Independent Publisher, AIP; Print Media SA, PMSA; South African National Editors' Forum, SANEF; organs of state Government Communication and Information System (GCIS), Media Development and Diversity Agency (MDDA), MICTSETA, Competition Commission, FP&M SETA and Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA) discussed under the theme 'Transformation and Diversity of Print Media' and received report back from stakeholders as a follow up from the first Indaba held in the on 22nd and 23rd of September 2011 in Parliament.

The Indaba through presentations done by GCIS, MDDA, Competition Commission, Right to Know Campaign, I do magazine, MMA, SANEF, PMSA, etc. focused amongst other issues on:

- Agreement between MDDA and PMSA on the definition of community media and small commercial media as defined in the terms of the MDDA Act,
- Research work being conducted by GCIS and MDDA, etc.
- Understanding the value chain from writing, publishing, printing, distribution, advertising challenges,
- Barriers to entry (mainly; market structure, printing and distribution costs, etc),
- Measurement of media diversity,
- Concentration of ownership and control and possible legitimate interventions needed including setting up of ownership cap and minimum concentration thresholds,
- Lack of diversity in the entire value chain including ownership and control, race, language, gender, content, etc
- Need for a commitment to transformation agenda and targets set up through a tool like a media charter
- Underfunding of the MDDA in respect of its print media mandate;
- Employment equity,
- Conditions of employment,
- Skills development and capacity building.

The Indaba notes that the print media sector is still dominated by four big players, namely Naspers, Avusa, Caxton and the Independent Group. These companies also dominate the entire value chain of the market especially printing, distribution and advertising. This integration and the very market structure is perhaps the biggest barrier to market entry and potentially show possible anti-competitive behaviour. Other mainstream media players include the M&G Media and TNA Media. Then, exist a number of small commercial print and community print media, who all face the challenge of long term self sustainability.

Having regard to all the fundamental issues and the challenges that still plague the industry, particularly the challenges faced by Community and Small Commercial Print sector which range from;

- Barriers to entry
- Anti-competitive behaviour in the value chain from writing, publishing, printing, distribution, advertising, etc.
- Lack of diversity in the ownership and control, language, race, gender, content, sources of news, employment equity etc.,

the committee notes that print media transformation need to be fast tracked to ensure the print media industry is a mirror of the present democratic dispensation. Whereas the media has changed since its pre1994, the market structure remains a barrier for new entrants. The Constitutionally guaranteed media freedom is for all citizens and a fundamental imperative to our democracy. Only a diverse media, critical for our democracy, is key to the enjoyment of media freedom by all.

The Indaba notes the Press Freedom Commission Report (April 2012) call for consideration to be given to the development of a media charter to address the specificities of the industry, including setting deadlines and targets to meet transformation objectives, and investments in the up-skilling of journalists.

The Committee will engage with the Portfolio Committee on Education regarding the relevant SETA to assist skills development in the print media sector.

The committee calls upon GCIS and MDDA to work with the industry on the roadmap towards the establishment of the Print Media Charter. This economic empowerment print media charter is to promote BBEE in the sector. Amongst others, the Charter should address the availability of print media in languages South Africans speak.

The Print Media Charter will address the specificities of the industry, including setting deadlines and targets to meet transformation objectives, set as commitment by the industry into a diverse and transformed print media in the entire value chain (newsroom, publishing, news sources, printing, distribution and advertising). These will include areas of ownership & control, language, race, gender, employment equity, conditions of employment, skills development, contributions to promoting media diversity (through MDDA), accord on access to printing & distribution, etc. The MDDA and GCIS must provide Parliament with a progress report in three months on this matter.

The committee notes and commends the MDDA and PMSA for having reached an agreement on the definitions of Community and Small Commercial Print Media as defined in the MDDA Act 14 of 2002,

The committee would also like to commend the Competition Commission's work prioritising the Community and Small Commercial Media sector and in investigating complaints against the mainstream media, including its commitment to prioritise further pro-active investigations into the possible anti-competitive behaviour in the value chain of the print media industry (from publishing, printing, distribution, advertising, etc.).

The committee further acknowledges the role of Government in driving the transformation program of the print media sector.

I thank all the participants, presenters, print media industry commitment to transformation and fast track thereof. We will call GCIS, MDDA and Competition Commission to comeback and report back to Parliament on the progress.