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## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **nbc Dismisses Mismanagement of Funds Accusations by DTA**

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#### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

11 July 2017, Windhoek; Namibia -

In an interview on 10 July 2017 at the head office of the Namibian Broadcasting Corporation (nbc) in Windhoek, nbc Board Chairman Sven Thieme and nbc Director General, Stanley B. Similo put the record straight concerning the accusations levelled against the nbc by the DTA of Namibia. During a press conference on Monday, the official opposition in Parliament had accused the nbc of mismanagement of funds and had demanded an urgent official investigation.

Thieme stated that as much as the public had a right to share information, a balanced picture and unity were required during this time of economic crisis. The Board Chairman as well as the Director General welcomed the public to review the nbc's books as the institution maintained an open door policy.

"nbc Management has been working around the clock and has been doing its utmost best to develop people and manage funds the right way at the national broadcaster. The operational and capital expenditure budget was cut by over N\$200 million over the last two years and despite that, the nbc was able to increase its own revenue from N\$84 million to N\$102 million under the current economic situation," said Thieme.

The nbc's Board Chairman added that there was no need to launch an investigation as the Board continued to wholly and fully fulfil its duties. He further noted that nbc management had done a splendid job in ensuring that employees remained insured despite the fact that NMC had suspended the broadcaster's members. "Management has the full support of the board," Thieme noted and confirmed that nbc employees did indeed have medical aid coverage since 1 July 2017.

On his part, Similo emphasized that the broadcaster was not looking for a "bail-out". He explained that the corporation had merely disclosed the cost of doing business at any given time of the year. Linked to that, the nbc had also committed to bringing to the table N\$126 million in own revenue during the current financial year; the remaining funding would have to come from the shareholder.

Similo added that the Board had highlighted the fact that the allocated subsidy was insufficient to cover the cost of operations and that the Board had informed its shareholder accordingly. He further pointed out that the current state of affairs at the nbc was not a matter of funds that were depleted due to mismanagement; but rather that the corporation's appeal to the shareholder had been a cry for help, which had been highlighted as matters had reached a level of criticality.

"If the nbc was given funds from a subsidy perspective, and that amount was depleted before the end of the financial year, we as management would have taken full responsibility and accepted the accusations from DTA MP Nico Smith," the nbc's Director General noted. "However, making statements without the full

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Director

Company Secretary  
**Steven Yarukeekuro Ndorokaze**

information is defamatory and extremely dangerous. These statements are touching on the personal integrity of the individuals accused. Smith could have called me - and the invite stands - to view the broadcaster's books," Similo said.

"The current funding model does not work for the nbc, hence we are very sure to say that where we are now, we are still on the right track. In terms of the medical aid, we had guns to our heads to say, 'pay the full amount now'. Already last Friday, when the NMC medical aid cover ended, we had a new service provider on board, the Renaissance Health medical aid fund. This demonstrates that management is taking care of its employees and will never leave them destitute," he elaborated.

Similo underscored that the corporation was determined to further grow its own income by 24% - a clear testament to the broadcaster's current resolve. He underlined that initially the corporation had calculated that the cost of doing business during the current financial year would amount to N\$369 million. However, when the nbc had become aware of government's financial challenges in terms of fully subsidizing the corporation, nbc management had done its own exercises and had cut operational costs from N\$369 to N\$345 million: "That cut indicates that we are also serious about making the business work," Similo emphasized.

Thieme reiterated that the nbc's doors would remain open and stated that the right to information was a constitutional right for the public: "It costs money to have towers in place and get information out to the masses."

The leadership team concluded by reassuring the Namibian nation that the nbc was ready to tackle any future challenge with the full support of the Board and in an effort to moving the corporation forward.

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nbc's Purpose is to become a leading Multimedia Public Broadcaster of Choice in the world. It is the only Namibian broadcasting house that runs radio broadcasting in ten (10) Namibian languages and three (3) Public Service TV channels. nbc offers local, SADC and international news, current affairs and entertainment programming and covers more than 74.5% of the Namibian population. It further broadcasts beyond the Namibian borders on the DSTV audio bouquet and online at [www.nbc.na](http://www.nbc.na)

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Digital television is a new way of broadcasting television. Although digital terrestrial television changes the way pictures are sent to your TV, it won't change the way you watch television.

Since the beginning of television, we've been watching what is known as 'analogue television': TV signals are broadcast using radio waves, which are picked up by an aerial and sent down a wire to your TV, the analogue television receiver. Your set then changes the analogue signal into pictures and sound. nbc boasts altogether with Eight (8) channels on its DTT bouquet – nbc1, nbc2, nbc3, One Africa, TBN and EduTV (nbc4), Music on 5 (nbc5) and Kwese Free Sport on 6 (nbc6).