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Special edition: SADC Media Awards

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OUTCOME I2: AN EFFICIENT, EFFECTIVE AND DEVELOPMENT ORIENTED PUBLIC SERVICE AND AN EMPOWERED, FAIR AND INCLUSIVE CITIZENSHIP

SADC Media Awards celebrate greatness

By More Matshediso and Mndeni Ndwandwe: GCIS



Minister Ayanda Dlodlo addressing attendees at the 2017 SADC Media Awards.



Minister Ayanda Dlodlo handing over the winning prize to Sydney Phiri.



Minister Ayanda Dlodlo handing over winning prizes to Dennis Tshetlhane and Nokosini Msibi.

At the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Media Awards Thank You Gala Dinner at Freedom Park in Tshwane on 20 August 2017, Communications Minister Ayanda Dlodlo encouraged South African media to extend their coverage of the Southern African Development Community SADC regional stories.

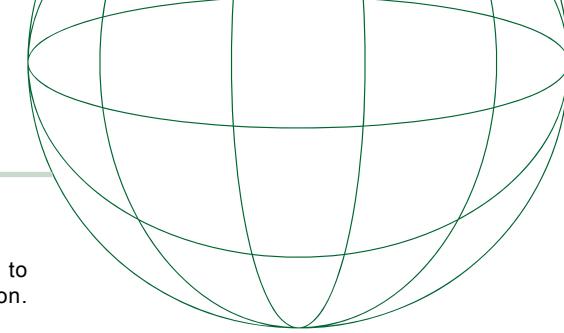
"Africa must tell its own stories and in order for that to happen, media houses must genuinely work to transform the landscape to ensure that it is truly inclusive of more voices from the diverse nation. We need to work together with SADC countries to popularise the projects that are underway in the SADC region, especially those that link and integrate our nations into the region," said Minister Dlodlo, addressing the SADC media, stakeholders and entities of the Department of Communications.



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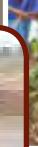
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The SADC Council of Ministers established the annual SADC Media Awards in 1996, with the view to promote regional integration through information dissemination, and journalism excellence in the region.

The South African Chapter Media Awards competition was launched in November 2003.

Minister Dlodlo said the media that is transformed will actively tell South African and SADC stories to build bridges between the citizens of sister SADC countries.

"We must also access the opportunities brought about through the prevailing fourth industrial revolution. Digital and social media have the potential to make stronger connections between citizens of the region. The media in South Africa should start to show an interest in matters of the region and to take SADC issues seriously," she said.

The Minister also encouraged the media to inform citizens about the outcomes of the 37th SADC Summit, which was held under the theme: "Partnering with the Private Sector in Developing Industry and Regional Value Chains".

She said the media must inform citizens, especially the youth about what the outcomes mean for them in practical terms.

Minister Dlodlo said the good story represented by the emergence of a strong SADC industrial region as witnessed in the discussions at the event, requires a media that is active in raising awareness and educating the public, both domestically and across the region, about the massive opportunities facing the nearly 230 million people living in the SADC region.

About 60% of this group is below the age of 35, and the Minister made a clarion call to the media and communication sector to start thinking about how these demographics could shape Africa and its narrative.



Livhuwani Mutshatshi from the National Adjudicating Committee speaking at the event.



A Freedom Park official delivering his address.



GCIS Acting Deputy Director-General: Intergovernmental Coordination and Stakeholder Management Michael Currin during his opening remarks.



Attendees of the 2017 SADC Media Awards listening to the National Adjudicating Committee giving a report on behalf of the committee.



Dennis Tshetlhane:

"I feel very honoured to have received this award, winning both national and regional awards for television. To young people, study hard, listen to your lecturers, do a lot of facts checking and do not take for granted the people who introduce you into their lives to tell their stories, and do not let injustice to happen in your presence."

"Let us therefore make sure that we use the media and communication as tools and make a difference to the citizens of the SADC region," continued Minister Dlodlo.

Community media, especially radio and various genres, are platforms where young SADC residents consume their news and share their stories.

Communication has been identified as a critical growth area in the SADC industrialisation plan at the event. The Minister said it is up to professionals in the industry to see how practically they can seize these emerging new horizons.

The socio-economic development of SADC is inextricably linked to the future of that of the continent.

Minister Dlodlo said the programmes of SADC and its member countries support the "Africa we want – our Africa rising", which uses the African Union Agenda 2063 as a collective roadmap for Africa's socio-economic transformation.

Reiterating the Minister's words, the Acting Deputy Director-General at Government Communication and Information System (GCIS), Michael Currin, said African stories need to be told by Africans.

He said SADC has moved from institutionalisation and building its mechanism, to delivering a programme to radically unlock the potential for employment and growth.

"As we strengthen the partnership with media, it is our conviction that media have a huge role with government communicators to popularise the work that all SADC states are implementing," he said.

Currin also said that the South African Government has always advocated for free media in the country.

He said South Africa's system of democracy, openness and accountability strengthens the media's contribution towards moving the country forward by shaping public narrative, creating an informed citizenry and strengthening democracy.



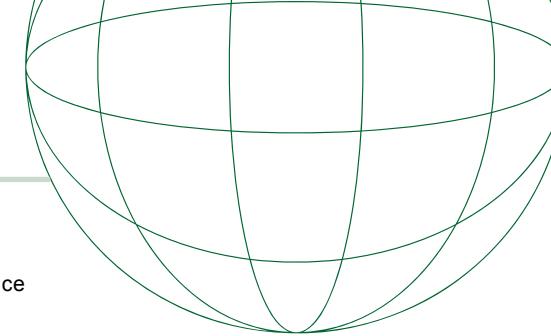
Livhuwani Mutshatshi introducing the National Adjudicating Committee.



Minister Ayanda Dlodlo handing over an award to Kopano Tlape.



Naledi Brown performing at the event.





Livhuwani Mutshatshi introducing the National Adjudicating Committee.



Geseitswe Moruakgomo:

"I feel honoured to have won this award in the photography category because I worked hard. I appeal for other media houses to participate in these awards."

"We have always encouraged our media to tell positive African stories whenever they find them. The industrialisation programme is a massive positive SADC story that is boosting the economic and regional development and has much potential to better the lives of regional citizens. As member states, we have the daunting task of affording the people of the SADC region the opportunity to become architects of their destiny through communication and information flow," said Currin.

He also encouraged all journalists in the SADC region to continue to cover stories that promote regional integration.

Livhuwani Mutshatshi read a report by the National Adjudication Committee, and encouraged more journalists to enter the competition in the coming years.

She said entries submitted in any native African language are welcome, but they should be accompanied by transcripts translated to either English or French.



Sydney Phiri:

"It is very exciting that I became one of the winners in the journal category. My message to the youth is that you should work hard, be creative and showcase your creativity all the time."



Patson Phiri:

"I am happy to have received this award. I wrote a story in the Times of Zambia unpacking energy in the ram of regional integration. My message to the youth is that they should take interest in the integration and explore the economic opportunities across the region."



Nkosini Msibi:

"I work for the SABC as a camera person. My advice to young people is that they must try and cover stories that unite Africa. We need to promote ourselves. We have won this twice, we have won it in 2015 and again in 2017. This proves that anything is possible."

