

Prospective SABC member accused of corruption

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Prospective SABC board member, Nomvuyiso Batyi, has been accused of "corruption" for not reporting former communications minister Faith Muthambi to the police for trying to "unduly influence" her.

The accusation was leveled against Batyi during interviews for the SABC board in Parliament on Thursday.

"I put it to you that you believe in corruption. Unless you prove to me, you give me the antithesis, I will remain in that kind of belief," said Congress of the People MP Willie Madisha, referring to a *Sunday Times* report which alleged that Muthambi "attempted to unduly influence," Batyi by offering her the position of chairperson of Independent Communications Authority of SA (Icasa) "in return for you giving a TV broadcasting licence to a Gupta-owned broadcasting company".



Nomvuso Batyi. Image source [SABC](#)

"Is this correct? It was put that you threatened the minister when that whole thing [the chairperson's appointment] was not implemented. Why didn't you go to the police to report that whole thing? For you not having done both, then that is corruption. The fact that you did not act, that to me is a major problem," said Madisha.

DA MP Gavin Davis asked how Batyi expects to be trusted to report matters of political interference should she be appointed to the SABC board. "Given your track record, how can we expect you as an SABC board member to stand up to political interference and corruption?"

Rebuttal

Batyi rebutted the claims saying she took legal steps against Muthambi but had to abandon them because it was too costly. "Not at any point did I threaten the minister. However, I had instituted legal proceedings against the minister, which I abandoned. There was no need for me to go to the police because there was no fraud that had happened. And lastly, at the end of it all, no one was licensed during that round [of applications]. I've never been corrupt and will never be corrupt. I hold myself very highly."

Batyi said there were certain changes that made her decide to abandon the matter. "If that is a measure of what makes a person corrupt, the definition that is used by this committee, so be it I am corrupt. Thank you," said a clearly annoyed Batyi.

MPs also heard how former SABC executive Hlaudi Motsoeneng's appointment saw former board member Rachel Kalidass falling out of favour with Muthambi, leading to her "illegal" removal. "I'm one of the former SABC board members that was unlawfully removed using the Companies Act," said Kalidass adding that her removal was as a result of objecting to certain decisions, such as Motsoeneng's appointment.

"These strategic decisions saw us come out of favour with number of board members and the minister. I was dissenting continuously on those decisions," said Kalidass.

MPs interviewed another 12 candidates on Thursday during the second day of interviews.

Source: *BDpro*

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