



Press Statement

SBC Board responds to State House Press Release regarding the Lopinyon Programme

After a meeting of the Board of Directors of the SBC and scrutiny of a complaint lodged in regard to the Lopinyon programme of Tuesday 08th November 2022, the SBC Board has made the following statements:

Recent events surrounding an episode of the Lopinyon talk show on SBC TV, which discussed the handling by the Police of a traffic accident involving a cabinet minister, have made it necessary for the media in general, and SBC in particular, to defend their independence.

Article 22 of the Constitution and the SBC Act in particular are the legal provisions that ensure freedom of the media and the SBC.

To further this cause, the Media Commission is mandated to be the leading body, championing the cause of press freedom, responsible journalism in Seychelles and upholding the citizens' right to accurate and truthful information.

Despite these legal provisions, the Executive found it appropriate to summon the SBC to State House and issue a press statement to express its disappointment.

Such treatment of the media and SBC by the Government of the day has led to private and public intimidating threats to journalists and a public that is becoming reluctant to participate in public discussions and debates for fear of reprisals.

Threats, intimidation and attempts to exercise control can all help to suppress media freedom, when the media is weak.

The media community in Seychelles, fortunately, works in solidarity as has been seen by the reaction of the Association of Media Practitioners to this recent regrettable episode.

Whilst there are occasions when journalists do cross certain boundaries, there are avenues and structures in place where redress can be sought without having to resort to intimidation.

In May 2022, Seychelles was applauded by being the top African country and the 13th in the world on the press freedom index. Actions as have been witnessed recently will erode such ratings and will reflect negatively on our democracy.

SBC will continue to safeguard its independence and continue to strive to deliver on its mandates, whilst maintaining its commitment to working collaboratively with the Government and all stakeholders.

SBC stands in solidarity with all media houses and practitioners in defending the rights of citizens to be informed freely, truthfully and objectively on all matters of public interest and condemns all actions that attempt to suppress such rights.