



LAW SOCIETY
OF SOUTH AFRICA
PRESS RELEASE

14 July 2016: For immediate release

**LAW SOCIETY URGES SABC TO OBEY ICASA ORDER TO WITHDRAW ITS
CENSORSHIP RESOLUTION**

The Law Society of South Africa (LSSA) welcomes the judgment by the Complaints and Compliance Committee of the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA) on the matter between the SABC and civil society organizations. The LSSA urges the SABC Board and Management to accept the ICASA order that it should withdraw its resolution not to broadcast footage of destruction of public property during protests, as a binding order from the statutory regulator and to implement it within the given time. 'Like the Office of the Public Protector, ICASA is a Chapter 9 institution, and as such, its orders must be implemented unless a court of law finds otherwise,' say LSSA Co-Chairpersons Mvuso Notyesi and Jan van Rensburg. They add: 'If the SABC does not implement the order within the stipulated seven days, ICASA is within its rights to suspend the SABC's broadcasting licence.'

The LSSA further commends the Complaints and Compliance Committee (CCC) and the ICASA Council on its well-reasoned and powerful judgment supporting the right of the public to be informed of all action – illegal as it may be – so that it may be part of an open society where good and bad is broadcast and so that informed choices may be made by the public. It has been stressed that the right to freedom of expression is meaningless if there is not also a right, and thus a duty, to be informed on matters of public interest.

The LSSA appreciates the fact that ICASA's CCC treated and dealt with the matter with the urgency that it warranted and echoes its view that the SABC's obligations under the Broadcasting Act and its licences must be interpreted in a manner that promotes freedom of expression, which includes freedom of the press and other media, and importantly, freedom to receive or impart information or ideas.

**ISSUED ON BEHALF OF THE CO-CHAIRPERSONS OF THE LAW SOCIETY OF SOUTH
AFRICA, MVUSO NOTYESI AND JAN VAN RENSBURG**

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Editor's note:

The Law Society of South Africa brings together its six constituent members – the Cape Law Society, the KwaZulu-Natal Law Society, the Law Society of the Free State, the Law Society of the Northern Provinces, the Black Lawyers Association and the National Association of Democratic Lawyers – in representing South Africa's 24 300 attorneys and 5 000 candidate attorneys.