

Defiant one-member board of SABC faces inquiry by MPs

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17 Nov 2016

Parliament is forging ahead with its plan to hold an inquiry into the crisis at the SABC including investigating the board's ability to discharge its fiduciary duties, despite it now only having one nonexecutive director.



Parliament's ad-hoc committee tasked with holding the inquiry met for the first time on Tuesday to finalise the programme and witness list.

Two more board members, Vuyo Mhlakaza and Aaron Tshidzumba, have resigned, leaving the board with only its chairman, Mbulaheni Maguvhe.

Committee chairman Vincent Smith said the inquiry would continue as planned unless Maguvhe resigned, in which case their mandate to determine their fitness would end.

Maguvhe did not respond to requests for comment on Tuesday. He was defiant in October, saying he would not resign.

"They realised that it will be better to resign than face a litany of issues that Parliament will be bringing for the chairman [Maguvhe] it's only a matter of time," Media Monitoring Africa director William Bird said. He said the board crisis could also signal the end for Hlaudi Motsoeneng, the SABC's former chief operating officer.

The committee agreed on Tuesday that the two board members who had just resigned should also be called to testify.

Thirty witnesses will be called to give evidence, including the so-called SABC 8, former board members, Communications Minister Faith Muthambi and former public protector Thuli Madonsela.

The SABC 8 are journalists who brought a Constitutional Court case against the SABC after being suspended for

challenging the editorial policy of the public broadcaster. They were reinstated a few weeks later.

The inquiry is set to begin on November 29, and the committee hopes to conclude its work by 9 December. Witnesses called to testify could be given the option to request witness protection and to provide evidence in camera.

This after reports of incidents of intimidation and death threats targeted at the SABC 8 emerged at the weekend.

Source: Business Day

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