

MISA tells 'Times' editor to resign

The Media Institute for Southern Africa has called on the managing editor of Swaziland's only independent newspaper group to resign because he is too close to King Mswati III. MISA, the foremost media freedom group in the region, said Martin Dlamini's position was 'untenable'.

In a scathing attack on the Times of Swaziland, one of only two newspaper groups in the kingdom, MISA Swaziland chapter said Dlamini could not discharge, 'his unbiased editorial duty when he would appear to be beholden to the authorities'.

MISA made the call in its annual report on media freedom in Swaziland called 'So This is Democracy?' just published.

In an unprecedented attack on a newspaper manager, MISA said Martin Dlamini had been a former managing editor at the Times, but he then went to work at the Swazi Prime Minister's Office, where he served as head of Secretariat for the SMART Partnership Office.

MISA reported the Times of Swaziland recalled Dlamini last year to resume his position of managing editor after a vacancy became available.

The Times of Swaziland group consists of the Swazi News, Times Sunday and the Times, which is published Monday to Friday.

MISA reported, 'The recall of Times of Swaziland managing editor, Martin Dlamini, from government, has raised eyebrows within the discerning civil society and media fraternity.

'As someone now allegedly beholden to higher authorities, there is fear that the newspaper's editorial independence is at stake. This fear has been exacerbated by his unprecedented coverage of King Mswati III's trip to the United Nations in New York, later in the United Arab Emirates in October 2012, where he not only reported for his own publication, but also for the competing Swazi Observer!

'Dlamini undertook this trip as part of the king's delegation. The mere fact that the Times of Swaziland managing editor, a leading private publication, is found writing stories for the Swazi Observer, a royalist publication, is the cause for serious reflection.

'His position is untenable. How can he discharge his unbiased editorial duty when he would appear to be beholden to the authorities?'

MISA called the Observer, a 'pure propaganda machine for the royal family'.

The Swazi Observer is in effect owned by King Mswati, who rules Swaziland as sub-Saharan Africa's last absolute monarch.

Source: [allAfrica](#)

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>