

Sanef welcomes Lamola's promise to protect whistleblowers

The South African National Editors' Forum (Sanef) says it has welcomed the Department of Justice's promised plan to close loopholes in the protection of whistle-blowers, a move that is believed will enhance the fundamental principles of protecting sources of journalists.



Minister Ronald Lamola. Source: Supplied.

Ronald Lamola, the minister of justice and correctional services, while addressing the Sanef Council meeting in Cape Town last Saturday 11 February 2023, pointed out how the government is amending the relevant legislation to ensure that all government departments, institutions, and agencies understand their obligations to protect whistleblowing in line with the Protected Disclosures Act.

Protecting whistleblowers

“We are working hard to tighten laws to protect whistleblowers, we are confident that the media will be important partners in this process. We need to work together to ensure that the government and companies implicated by whistle-blowers are held accountable. The media can also continue exposing those who victimise good citizens who blow the whistle on corrupt and unethical practices,” said Lamola.



Whose responsibility is journalists' safety - media houses, civil society, government, or society as a whole?

Danette Breitenbach 8 Feb 2023



The forum said it believes that in order to defend the media from attacks on their independence, the amendments will benefit journalists whose sources include whistleblowers wanting to reveal the truth.

Access to courts

Sanef added that the minister's concerns including what he called “the political weaponisation” of newsrooms where journalists volunteered their “professional skills and platforms to do the bidding of politicians, captains of industry and lobby

groups”.

Sanef plans to host several debates and the state of the media summit to thoroughly discuss challenging and sensitive topics on the credibility of the media ahead of the 2024 elections.

Sanef said it welcomes the undertaking by Lamola that he will engage those in charge of managing our courts as there has been an increase in denying journalists access, or entry into court buildings. This has become an increasing problem across lower and high courts.

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