



**L E S O T H O
C O M M U N I C A T I O N S
A U T H O R I T Y**

**STATEMENT BY THE LESOTHO COMMUNICATIONS AUTHORITY
CLARIFYING ISSUES RELATING TO THE SUSPENSION OF HARVEST FM
SOUND BROADCASTING LICENCE**

1. Lesotho Communications Authority (LCA) is a statutory body, established in June 2000, with a mandate of regulating the communications sector in Lesotho. This mandate entails: issuing licences to operators; promoting fair competition; approving tariffs; managing the radio spectrum; empowering and protecting consumers; type approving terminal equipment and other related matters. Inclusive in its mandate, is the regulation of broadcasting content.
2. The Enforcement Order issued by the Authority on the 21st July 2008 and dated the 18th July 2008 suspends the sound broadcasting licence issued to Harvest FM by the Authority for twelve months. The licensee shall be off-air for a period of three months from 22nd July 2008 to 21st October 2008. During the remaining nine months, after the licensee resumes broadcast, the penalty remains suspended. The enforcement order does not make any reference to licence revocation or cancellation or any similar action.
3. The reasons advanced by the Authority for the suspension of Harvest FM licence are that Harvest FM's actions of failing to comply with the Authority's directives constituted an infringement of Condition 15 of its sound

broadcasting licence as well as Rule 20 of the Lesotho Communications Authority (Broadcasting) Rules 2004. The failure of the licensee to co-operate with the LCA frustrated the efforts of the Authority to address the complaints lodged with the Authority on their merits. Allegations that the licence was suspended as a result of a complaint by the Commissioner of Police and/or Principal Secretary for Communications, Science and Technology or for being “critical to government” or any other allegation are therefore inaccurate.

4. It should be noted that Harvest FM was granted ample opportunity to respond to complaints levelled against it. It was also given an opportunity to advance reasons opposing the suspension of its sound broadcasting licence. All these were not addressed by Harvest FM. According to the LCA (Administrative, Procedural and Service Provision) Rules 2000, Harvest FM still has an opportunity to seek reconsideration of the Authority’s final decision.
5. Allegations of malicious intent on the part of the Authority are therefore unfortunate and misleading.

ISSUED BY:

Lesotho Communications Authority

04th August 2008