

MY HUNGER PROTEST STATEMENT

by Zamamba Tshabalala

Why have I just gone 30 days without food?

There are many reasons.

First, I want to create dramas, shows for SABC. Since SABC is taking this path, my dream is a bit shattered. Taking this hunger protest, it is a way of me speaking out that there is a mistake being made that will ruin what I want to do in future.

I grew up in Soweto. Houses don't have DSTV. I want personally everyone to watch my work, people in Soweto, people who don't have a privilege for DSTV and all that. People to have a possibility to view my passion, my work.

With SABC, there's now a lack of local material, more international material that we watch lately. Youth programs also hurt me a lot – they don't interact with youth such as *Take 5*, used to, covering topics such as sex, teenage pregnancy, and things like that. It's now mostly American, local stuff is few – most local shows are being repeated now.

Watching the SABC has actually given me the the courage to keep on going for the 30 days. Where is the creativity of today? I feel there is, but what is SABC doing to promote that? There are still students studying today – each and every day they are graduated. What is going to happen if the SABC is going to be taking this path? We are not all gifted in the same thing. Some people want to be doctors, some people want to be nurses. That's not me. My passion is to write dramas for people to watch, for people to learn from my creativity. That's my passion.

This hunger protest has given me a strength to see things in other ways. If you want something, push for it. If you see something wrong, speak about it, rather than watching at home and doing nothing about it.

Will this protest actually change anything? Well, I wouldn't say for sure. But if this is the path of taking the step and taking a stand. Well, if they don't change then it shows that people from SABC don't care about us, they are only interested about themselves, they don't care about me, about the people. That's what I see from them.

Can we tell stories without the SABC? Of course, but SABC is the only station that broadcasts for the nation – I grew up watching them, that is what I want to do. Why should I be writing for DSTV? I want, I deserve to have a national broadcaster. Even DVDs, why should I be making DVDs and selling them to people? Why should our country not have a public broadcaster, that everyone can share?

Many times along the way, I have felt dizzy. But I did not let that stop me. I just took a nap and went on. I just said to myself no matter what, people are watching, I am not going to disappoint them, I will keep pushing. I even had to cook for my family and there were times when nobody was around, I wanted to cheat. But I had an inner conscience and it would not let me cheat.

I thank Michael for taking a step with saying something about the SABC and taking a stand. I thank Gwen as well for all the support, and most of all, Sello for taking over for me.

I would like to keep going, I could keep going, and I know the SABC is not responding. But I've been told to stop, and I've lost so much weight – I can't afford to lose more weight. So now I will stop fasting. But I am not stopping protesting.

FOR FURTHER INFO CONTACT

hungerprotest@gmail.com

www.hungerprotest.wordpress.com