

**07<sup>th</sup> AUGUST 2023**

## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

### **UNJUSTIFIED AND UNWARRANTED MEDIA ATTACKS ON BSA**

#### **Context and Principle Statements**

1. The Board of Boxing South Africa (“BSA”) has noted with serious concern a concerted ill-informed and unwarranted media campaign by a grouping of few individuals who comprise of both licensees and as well as unlicensed persons. This grouping of white supremacists is using a Sunday newspaper journalist and an opposition political party. The Board while noting these attacks had opted not to give credence to the allegations because they are largely false, misleading and are based as well on poor or a serious misunderstanding of how the sport of boxing is run in the country. They are unsurprisingly perpetuated by individuals who suffer from gross intellectual laziness and incapacity to grasp the foundational documents that empowers the establishment of BSA and her associated powers and functions.
2. We must say ex ante that the Board supports media freedom and accountability – unlike some of these masked racists, with apartheid hangovers - but when the media fails to verify facts and simply regurgitates opinions of a grouping of individuals and which opinions are substantially the same as the individuals’ social media posts which sees nothing positive about the management of BSA and the Board, the Board deems it necessary to respond via this statement. Particularly as the Board is aware of the individuals behind the scenes whose purpose in this venture is to tarnish the image of the current Board leading up to the end of its term and to position other individuals for possible ascension to the Board so that they can acolytes within the Board who will do their bidding.

It is alarming for a large media house to publish stories and take sides without verifying facts – that are in the public domain like the powers and functions of the Board - and thus misleading the public. We believe that the media must verify facts and report objectively, which is not the case in the current reporting.

3. We are aware – that the undertones of this vitriol on the BSA and its board is masked by a strange cacophony of politics and racism. This negative narrative has been sustained by Right wingers from the early nineteen nighties until now. All kinds of charlatans and naysayers have joined hands in a vainglorious attempt to destroy all traces of non-racialism in the sport of boxing. In this regard all BSA initiated attempts to develop the sport are rubbished by this anti-transformation, anti-renewal and anti-shared development and prosperity cabal.
4. This Board is not apologetic but proud for placing the sport of professional boxing in this country on a visible and qualitative upward trajectory. Let us hasten to add that these achievements are in part an upshot of a nation-wide support from fellow country men and women across racial, class, gender lines.

#### **Materially and concretely, what has this Board Achieved?**

5. The first thing this Board has done, which has not been done before was the galvanization of the Boxing fraternity to diagnose and proffer solutions to the vexing challenges that led to the sport to loose its place and space in mobilizing, sharpening and activating the soul of the nation as one of the top sporting codes. The renewal, growth and transformation of the sport is a collective vision predicated on revitalizing and rekindling boxing as a unifying and inspiring sport.
6. This Board has strived with a limited budget and resources to revive the sport of boxing and to this end has taken particular deliberate actions to ensure the revival of the sport and its future sustainability. Amongst the major achievements of this Board are the following:
  - 6.1. The signing of an MOU with SABC which has resulted in the resumption of live broadcasting of tournaments on a scale better than before and this broadcasting arrangement will ensure that on an annual basis the number of boxing live broadcast tournaments is increased until the SABC will broadcast a live tournament (52) fifty



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tournaments in a year. This in fact mean that in the near future the SABC will broadcast live tournaments every week. This will not only ensure that members of the public are exposed to their role models but will have a dual benefit in that sponsors are likely to return in large numbers and boxing activities will therefore increase in the country.

- 6.2. The Board has for the first time ensured that Boxing South Africa develops training manuals for licensees and in this regard BSA has developed (3) three training manuals based on the Boxing Act and Regulations and international best practices. Training and assessments of licensees across (3) three categories namely, promoters, managers and trainers and ring officials took place between April and May this year. BSA and the Board has received positive feedback from licensees across the board and we sensed a yearning for more knowledge and the Board, as part of a developmental State, intends to upscale this training in the years to come.
- 6.3. The Board has overseen the process of amending the Regulations and a draft will be gazetted in the near future to ensure that there is public comment.
- 6.4. The Board has ensured that compliance with the Boxing Act and Regulations takes place particularly amongst licensees and in this regard the Board has amended the Disciplinary Code and Arbitration Tribunal and has also appointed the panel of qualified legal practitioners to deal with disciplinary matters. The Board issued various media statements regarding the disciplinary actions against some licensees and disciplinary actions are currently underway. Currently the Board has instituted disciplinary action against some licensees and the hearings will commence in the coming two weeks. It appears to the Board amongst others that some of the licensees who have been charged are at the forefront of colluding with the journalist who is not prepared to await due process but feels it necessary to abandon journalistic ethics and to pronounce of the innocence of the individuals without having had access to evidence at the disposal of BSA.
- 6.5. The Board has ensured that the Boxing Awards resume thus rewarding deserving licensees and reigniting interest in the sport particularly as the award are being broadcast live by the SABC.

- 6.6. The Board has overseen the drafting of the Constitution for the National Professional Boxing Promoters Association and has overseen the election of its office bearers which was successfully undertaken. BSA is currently in the process of assisting licensees to establish Provincial Structures.
  - 6.7. Established and strengthened relationships with the following organizations:
    - 3.7.1 All nine provinces: Department of Sport, Arts and Culture provincial departments.
    - 3.7.2 SABC.
    - 3.7.3 SANABO.
    - 3.7.4 Various municipalities and metros across the country.
    - 3.7.5 Various sport confederations and government entities across the country.
  - 3.8 Implementation of Women in Boxing Programs (Women in Boxing Weeks and Women in Boxing Series).
  - 3.9 Strengthening of the BSA Corporate Image by launching for the first time in the History of Boxing, Boxing Magazines and Boxing South Africa TV – Digital platform.
  - 3.10 Under the watch of this Board, the Annual Audit Outcomes have been qualitatively improving and thus pointing to credible financial governance and organisational performance.
- 4 The Board is grateful for the support and words of encouragement from many licensees and boxing stakeholders, particularly those who have invested their time and money to ensure that the sport of boxing is revived. The Board is determined to intensify the upward positive trajectory around the sport of boxing for the remainder of its term of office.

5 Finally, the Board is satisfied with the progress made in relation to the implementation of its Turnaround Strategy which is championed by the Acting CEO Mr Erick Nsikayezwe Sithole. The Turnaround strategy includes the following five pillars.

5.1 Pillar 1: Corporate Governance and Administration – covers the following programmes:

- (a) Board committees,
- (b) Federation of Associations and Associations,
- (c) Back to basics programs.
- (d) Stakeholder engagement management and partnerships,
- (e) Corporate image of BSA,
- (f) Corporate Sponsorships,
- (g) Organizational performance, and
- (h) Legal matters.

5.2 Pillar 2: Development of the Sport – covers the following programmes

- (a) Provision of Assessments and Accreditation,
- (b) Licensing,
- (c) Tournaments & Compliance,
- (d) Boxing Awards,
- (e) Boxing Conventions,
- (f) Baby Champs.

5.3 Pillar 3: Sport for Development

- (a) Boxing cares Programmes.
- (b) Women in Boxing Development,
- (c) Nation building and Social Cohesion
- (d) Inclusive and Shared Boxing Economy

#### 5.4 Pillar 4: Research and Innovation

- (a) Innovation hub and commercialization
- (b) E – Knowledge management
- (c) Revitalization of infrastructure
- (d) International partnerships

#### 5.5 Pillar 5: Boxing Heritage

- (a) Boxing Museum
- (b) Documentation of Boxing History
- (c) Boxing Hall of Fame
- (d) Boxing House

7. With the above, the Board believes that its vision, - the renewal, growth and transformation project is currently on track.
8. In conclusion, solid foundations for inspiring, imaginative, energizing, unifying and galvanizing futures of boxing have been laid. The complex and yet exciting journey to herald fundamental transformative change in the sport for the benefit of our pugilists is not just a national duty to us as a Board but it is an ethical and an indivisible commitment to social justice, nation building and social cohesion. Over the next few months, we will stay focused on the prize – reclaim and recentre the sport of boxing in the national project to build a winning nation and rekindling the soul of our glorious South Africa.

**Issued by Boxing South Africa**