

DTT state of readiness update

The Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT) team will present a progress report on digital migration to the Portfolio Committee on Communications as well as Telecommunications and Postal Services in Parliament.



The team, which will be led by Communications Minister Faith Muthambi, will table the report which will reflect the progress and state of readiness of the country to roll-out the digital migration project.

"We are moving with necessary speed to migrating from analogue to digital broadcasting system and it is our view that the committee will be happy with the progress we've made so far and we are also happy to inform the nation that even the SABC is ready to migrate from analogue to digital broadcasting," said Minister Muthambi.

When Minister Muthambi was delegated the responsibility of driving the digital migration process by a Presidential proclamation, she immediately initiated the process of reviving the migration project.

However, Minister Muthambi had two challenges - the first was to develop a policy aimed at creating a conducive environment for smooth migration from analogue to digital. The second challenge was whether to adopt a Control Access System or not on the Set Top Boxes (STBs).

This matter has been a major source of contention in the country which has even led to court challenges. However, the North Gauteng High Court dismissed the case with costs.

The need for a DTT programme derives from the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) resolution where countries in region one, consisting of Europe, Russia, Africa and the Middle East, including the Islamic Republic of Iran had to migrate their broadcasting services from analogue to digital by 17 June 2015.

The main reason for the migration was to release valuable spectrum which can be used for other services. Spectrum is scarce, and it is necessary to make efficient use of the spectrum available for more telecommunications and broadcasting services.

Shortly after the country missed the ITU deadline, Minister Muthambi immediately initiated a process of signing bilateral engagements with five neighbouring countries (Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland, Mozambique and Namibia) to mitigate cross border radio frequency spectrum interference.

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