



Press Release

29-May-2026

SBC Board Expresses Concerns over proposed Seychelles Broadcasting Corporation Bill 2026

The Board of Directors of the SBC has expressed serious reservations regarding the proposed Seychelles Broadcasting Corporation Bill, 2026, currently gazetted.

While acknowledging the stated objective of creating a modern, independent and financially sustainable public broadcaster, the Board has raised concerns that several provisions of the Bill may have the opposite effect and could weaken the institutional independence of the Seychelles Broadcasting Corporation.

A detailed analysis of the Bill indicates that many of the provisions being presented as reforms, including editorial policies, complaints mechanisms, cultural programming, accessibility measures and digital transformation requirements, either already exist in the current legislative framework or are already part of SBC's day-to-day operations.

At the same time, important safeguards that have historically protected the Corporation from political and executive influence appear to have been weakened or removed.

1. Concerns over Governance and Appointments

Particular concern has been expressed regarding the proposed changes to the appointment of Board members.

The Bill removes the Constitutional Appointments Authority (CAA) from the appointment process and replaces it with a Select Committee appointed by the President. The President would then appoint the majority of Board members from candidates proposed by that Committee.

The Board has questioned how such changes can be considered an enhancement of independence when they place greater influence over appointments in the hands of the Executive.

Questions have also been raised regarding the Bill's provision allowing the President to appoint Board members directly should the Select Committee fail to submit the required number of candidates.

The Board is of the view that an independent public broadcaster should be governed through appointment mechanisms that are transparent, merit-based and insulated from political influence.



2. Financial Independence under Threat

Equally significant are concerns regarding the Corporation's financial autonomy.

The current legal framework contains safeguards requiring funds approved by the National Assembly for SBC to be transferred to the Corporation. The proposed Bill does not contain an equivalent guarantee.

It is feared that this omission may expose SBC to increased dependence on executive decision-making regarding the release and management of public funds.

The Board stated that financial autonomy is one of the most important protections available to a public broadcaster and that editorial independence cannot be fully realised where funding arrangements are vulnerable to political influence.

3. Removal of Existing Protections

The Board has also noted that provisions contained in the current Act relating to SBC's authority to utilise funds in the discharge of its statutory functions appear to have been curtailed.

There is concern that these changes may reduce the Corporation's operational independence and increase external influence over management decisions.

In addition, the Bill no longer contains an explicit reference to the Corporation's role in upholding the values and principles embodied in the Constitution of Seychelles.

The Board believes that a national public broadcaster should have a clear constitutional mandate reflecting its role in supporting democracy, freedom of expression, informed citizenship and national cohesion.

4. Support for Modernisation, Not Political Influence

In making these observations, the Board has emphasised that it fully supports efforts to modernise the SBC and strengthen public service broadcasting.

It has welcomed provisions relating to:

- editorial standards;
- protection against misinformation;
- accessibility for persons with disabilities;
- digital transformation;
- media literacy;
- cultural programming; and
- preservation of the national broadcasting archive.



However, it argues that modernisation should not come at the expense of institutional independence.

Whilst the Bill contains numerous references to editorial independence, stakeholders must closely examine whether the structures governing appointments, funding and management genuinely protect SBC from political influence.

5. Call for Amendments

The Board is therefore calling upon the Bills Committee and Members of the National Assembly to carefully review the proposed legislation and consider amendments that would:

- restore independent appointment mechanisms;
- provide for open and transparent public applications for Board positions;
- reduce executive influence over governance and management appointments;
- guarantee direct transfer of funds approved by the National Assembly;
- restore financial and operational autonomy protections; and
- reinforce SBC's constitutional public service mandate.

The Board maintains that an independent public broadcaster is a cornerstone of democratic governance and public accountability and should remain accountable to the people of Seychelles rather than to any government of the day.