
Press Statement

06 January 2016

Statement on Racial Comments by Ms Penny Sparrow

The National African Federated Chamber of Commerce and Industry (NAFCOC) is appalled by the racist comments made by Ms Penny Sparrow in which she recently likened black people to monkeys.

As a federation of black business organisations in South Africa representing thousands of business people, we wish to categorically state that such comments are a mockery of our hard won constitutional democracy and the spirit of reconciliation that South Africa has steadfastly sought to embrace. Ms Penny Sparrow's comments are unfortunate, racist and homophobic and have no place in the new South Africa that seeks to promote the dignity of all those who live in it.

It is unfortunate that our members and black South Africans in general across the breadth and length of our great republic are still subjected to racism on a daily basis and Ms Sparrow's matter is only but a tip of the iceberg.

This cannot be allowed to go on lest we open the gates to the hell of racial strife. The time to act is now. We call upon Ms Sparrow to offer an unreserved apology for her comments. We further call upon our lawmakers from the different political divides to urgently embark on a process of introducing legislation that criminalises all forms of racism and lastly for government to put the agenda of anti-racism firmly on its programme of social cohesion. We further call upon our corporate organisations to lead by example by introducing and effectively superintending anti-racism policies.

We congratulate Standard Bank taking a lead in this quest by suspending an employee who recently made racist remarks as reported in the media today.

End

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