

Sanef pickets with Karyn Maughan as she challenges private prosecution

The South African National Editors' Forum (Sanef) and various civil society organisations will on Wednesday picket in support of journalist Karyn Maughan as she seeks to have the private prosecution brought by former president Jacob Zuma, struck off the roll.



Source: www.pixabay.com

Zuma has been accused of 16 counts of corruption for allegedly taking a monthly payment of \$34,000 from French arms firm Thales. The company was involved in South Africa's massive arms purchase deal during that period.

Media freedom

Originally the former president had laid charges against Billy Downer who was the prosecutor in his corruption case. This was because Downer gave Maughan the medical certificate from the investigation. When the police declined to prosecute Downer, Zuma initiated a case against both him and Maughan for disclosing the information.

“ Advocate Steven Budlender SC will now argue my case for why the private prosecution launched against me by former President Zuma is an abuse of process. [@News24 pic.twitter.com/WmD981KP4](https://twitter.com/WmD981KP4)— Karyn Maughan (@karynmaughan) [March 20, 2023](#) ”

Maughan seeks to stop the private prosecution against her, a move Sanef says it supports.

“Maughan is a journalist, who was doing her job, something that Zuma and his legal team refuse to accept. Maughan’s constitutional rights have been abused by this private prosecution. Media freedom is paramount in our constitutional democracy, hence there is a need to defend it all the time. Sanef will be outside the court on Wednesday to show solidarity with Maughan,” said Sanef in a statement.

An attack on women

“Sanef will always speak out against anyone seeking to silence journalists. Sanef believes in the ability of our judiciary to spot any abuses of the courts, which we believe is what this private prosecution is doing.”

The organisation said women journalists, such as Maughan, face vicious attacks online where they are harassed and bullied. “Sanef notes the social media charter that was recently launched by the SA Human Rights Commission, which we hope would assist in deterring bullies that use social media for their nefarious agendas.”



South Africa's Jacob Zuma is taking a top reporter to court. The verdict could affect journalists' rights

Anton Harber 9 Sep 2022



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