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For Immediate Release**

Tremendous budget cut leads to one funding session

The Council of the NAC notes with concern the impact of the reduction on their budget allocation from DAC for the 2010/2011 financial year. These cuts, coming shortly as they do after DAC's termination of the Task Team established to advise on cultural programme for the World Cup celebrations, are a sad indictment of a lack of serious resource commitment to arts and culture.

The NAC is acutely aware of the effect of these limitations on the sectors, and at their first Council meeting of the year, have resolved to introduce short-term interventions to ease the difficulties on the sector.

Firstly, the NAC will continue to formally request the DAC to consider increasing the NAC allocation and to streamline the distribution of funds available from the national fiscus. It is intended that the cultural practitioners will be able to easily access funding from this source through various channels that will free any bottlenecks that have arisen.

Secondly, the NAC will make all funds available to artists in one funding call in 2010 instead of the normal two calls. Considering that the budget has been severely reduced to R14 million in 2010 [calculated at R2,000,000 across the seven art disciplines], only one funding call will be announced for specific projects and initiatives.

The Chairperson of the NAC, Adv. Brenda Madumise exclaimed that "We are of course disappointed at this reduction to the NAC and the sectors we support, and even more distressed by the painful consequences that this will automatically have for our artists."

She went on to say that "the NAC will continue to make a strong case to government on behalf of the creative industries during the Council's remaining term of office. However, given the political consensus already reached on the overall budget, we recognise that we must all prepare for difficult times ahead."

Annabell Lebethe, the Chief Executive Officer of the NAC added that "We will endeavour to serve the sector through a concerted drive to form strategic partnerships with the private sector and international donors in realising the joint industry vision for the South African creative community."

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