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PRINTING SA AND SATU DISAPPOINTED WITH THE CLOSURE OF THE SA BOOK DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

Printing SA and The South African Typographical Union, would like to express their disappointment at an avoidable debacle that has resulted in the closing of the South African Book Development Council (SABDC) which has been suffocated by a lack of consistent funding from a Government department.

The Department of Sports, Arts and Culture was unable to oversee and support the very same institutions that have been created to safeguard, develop, and empower South African arts and culture. We implore the department to critically relook at ways in which they will be able to resuscitate this institution, as it plays a vital role in promoting literacy from grassroots through to the burgeoning of professional authors and publishers in the country.

It is with regret that we note that on the entire continent we are now left with one surviving Book Development Council in Ghana.

The National Book Week was implemented and recognised by the South African Government as a national occasion to promote reading and literacy in the country, an initiative that was created and successfully run for many years by the SABDC. Let us not be fooled by the notion that technology will be taking over books in the short or long-term, especially in a country plagued by so many socio-economic disparities. These mediums need to work in tandem and not at the expense of either one. Let us not forget that the printing and publishing sector is one of the largest employers and contributors to the country's GDP and the SABDC was a vital stakeholder in the entire value chain that aimed to ensure the sustainability of this sector.

This closure is indeed a sad day in the history of South Africa.