

8 July 2020

Dear author/freelancer

You have no doubt heard that Media24 intends restructuring its newspaper and magazine portfolios, closing titles and retrenching staff, due to Covid-19. The pandemic has decimated circulation and advertising since April, accelerating the long-running decline of print media as well as the transition to an increasingly digital media landscape not only locally but globally. Although the process of retrenchment is by its very nature painful, it has allowed Media24 as a whole to remain financially viable with strong prospects for the future.

NB Publishers is not affected by the restructuring, and will continue as before, part of a leaner, stronger Media24. When the pandemic reached our shores, we immediately took steps to save costs in order to ensure our continued viability and success. These included operational adjustments, a freeze on all but the most essential hires, not awarding salary increases this year and revising our business plan against the forecasted effect of the pandemic on the economy. I'm happy to report that we're also off to a solid start on the business front for the first quarter of our new financial year, which ended 30 June.

Our priority remains the safety and health of our staff, authors, freelance workers and fellow citizens. Our staff will continue to work from home for the foreseeable future, and we will continue using social media and other digital marketing methods to replace traditional book launches and other events.

The NB team remains positive and committed, and we strive to be solution driven and to provide a happy and safe home for all our authors in these unsettling times.

In other news, I'm pleased to report that President Ramaphosa has referred the flawed Copyright Amendment Bill back to parliament for reconsideration. This is thanks to the continued efforts of the Coalition for Effective Copyright (CEC) of which NB Publishers has been an active founding member. The CEC, a grouping of authors, publishers, musicians, composers, recording companies, artists, etc., has been campaigning for the creative industries to be heard, and has been petitioning the President not to sign the Bill. We'll continue to do everything in our power to ensure that the Copyright Bill that is eventually passed into law protects our industry and our authors.

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We wish you much health and strength in navigating these uncertain times. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact either myself, our Publishing Manager, Marga Stoffer or your publisher.

With warm wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Eloise Wessels', written in a cursive style.

Eloise Wessels

Managing Director: Media24 Boeke