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**To:**

- 1.Channel 9, Complaint Department, PO Box 100 Richmond, Vic 3121
- 2.Channel 10, Complaint Department, Private Bag 5000, South Yarra, Vic 3142
- 3.Channel 7, GPO Box 4477, MELBOURNE, VICTORIA 3001

**CC:**

Assistant Manager  
Investigation Section  
Australian Communication and media Authority  
PO BOX Q500, Queen Victoria Building  
Sydney, NSW 1230

**Date: 10 October 2007**

Dear Sir/Madam

**Re: Open Complaint Letter.**

We are writing to complain about the behaviour of your journalists and stations. The African Migrant Review Panel is appalled by the way Channel 7, 9 and 10 have portrayed African migrants, especially Sudanese Migrants. Following the Media Watch broadcast On ABC TV Mondays 8 October 2007 at 9:20pm, we agree that the conduct of channel 7, 9 and 10 is unprofessional.

As the Media Watch broadcast observed, while argument swirled around whether African migrants were fitting in, Seven was making false documentary evidence of Sudanese crime gangs on the rampage. Although each argument put forward by Seven was geared toward putting in context the Government's refugee decision to slam the door on African migration, the evidence of Sudanese crime gangs was refuted by the Victorian Police Commissioner. As Media Watch elaborated, none of those involved in the violence as portrayed by Seven surveillance video images shown on TV were black Africans. Seven also failed to interview locals to get their views on who are really committing the crimes. Especially, the report by Seven reporter Peter Morris was flawed, misleading and unrepresentative of modern Australian society.

Channel 9 and 10 had broadcast the same camera footage as that Channel 7 was brandishing as proof of Sudanese crime gangs. As it transpired, none of those shown troubling the shop keeper were black Africans. In one incident, an offender of a Pacific Islander background was described by Channel 7, 9 and 10 as an African migrant. Media Watch referred to all these allegations as bogus. The program noted that:

*Media Watch isn't saying there aren't gangs in Noble Park or that there aren't some Sudanese there who cause trouble. But the commercial networks' claims to have proof of African migrant violence were dishonest. You certainly didn't see Seven, Nine or Ten running this sort of opinion from locals. A bit more maturity and nuance there, than in commercial TV news land. It's a classic case of the commercial networks long held obsession with so-called ethnic gangs, fitting perfectly with the political interests of those supporting the freeze on African migrants. When they added dishonesty to that mix, the commercial networks did a serious disservice to African migrants as a whole.*

While these stations were pre-occupied in portraying African migrants as criminals, it is ironic that these same stations did not mention there that the two men charged with killing the Sudanese youth are white. Nor did they even cover that story. This week, two young Sudanese brothers were attacked by white men, and left unconscious. These white men stole their wallets and mobile phone and even used the mobile phone to send racist text messages to the brother of the youth who was left unconscious. Did these stations even bother to cover the story the way they did with the Sudanese crime gangs?

The behaviour of these stations was transparently racist. This type of rhetoric from the Government and these three stations only serve to fuel racism and further marginalize those in already fragile circumstances. Based on the evidence from Media Watch, The African Migrant Review Panel would request that:

1. Channel 7, 9 and 10 withdraw their claims that there are Sudanese crime gangs
2. Channel 7, 9 and 10 apologise to the African migrants for unfounded allegations and derogatory comments, and to the Australian public for providing inaccurate and misleading information and inciting violence
3. The commercial channels consider pro-active work in improving African representations on free to air television, perhaps with internships for African youth

Thank you for considering our complaint

Dr. Andre M.N. Renzaho