

Mac Maharaj takes up new post with Clear Channel Independent

Mac Maharaj, a leading member of the government from 1994 to 1999, has been appointed Deputy Chairman of Clear Channel Independent, the South African outdoor advertising company jointly controlled by the two international media companies, Clear Channel and Independent News & Media.

Maharaj was one of the most notable figures in the struggle against apartheid, to which he devoted many years of his life. He spent 12 years in Robben Island, much of it in the next cell to Nelson Mandela, and later escaped from house arrest into exile from where he created and ran the underground ANC within South Africa. He occupied various senior posts in the ANC, as well as the South African Communist Party, before returning to South Africa in 1988 where he again spent two years underground. He became part of the ANC negotiating team in 1991, and was appointed Minister of Transport in the government led by President Mandela (1994-1999). He retired from Parliament in the 1999 election.

Since then, Mr Maharaj, 67, has taken up a number of appointments in business, most notably as a director of FirstRand Holding Group, FirstRand Bank, Discovery Health and Softline Limited. He is also a trustee of the Nelson Mandela Foundation.

Clear Channel Independent is the largest outdoor advertising company in South Africa, and also operates in 16 other African countries as well as Mauritius. Previously Corpcom, it was recently relaunched under its new name and ownership by Sir Anthony O'Reilly, Executive Chairman of Independent News & Media.

Maharaj, although non-executive, will occupy on a part-time basis an office next to the Chief Executive, Barry Sayer, who said yesterday:

"Mac Maharaj has a great deal to offer the media world, where he began his career nearly 50 years ago in Durban as a journalist. He has a brilliant, original mind and a keen business brain, and will advise and help Clear Channel Independent in a variety of critical areas, including the development of our empowerment strategy. We are delighted and privileged he has agreed to accept this post."

Mac Maharaj commented: "I am greatly looking forward to working with Barry and his team, and to contributing to the continued growth and success of an already significant company. It is backed by two major international companies who have big plans for it, and I will enjoy playing a role in helping them happen."

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