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Kwese TV

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Kwese TV was a subscription-based Zimbabwean satellite and broadcasting network owned by [Econet Wireless Zimbabwe](#), under Econet Media. The service was shut down formally on 1 November 2018. Customers that had bought the satellite could still watch Free to air content on their Kwese equipment but could no longer watch subscription content, which was pulled immediately.^[1]

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Kwese Free Sports, Kwese Play (a subscription Video On Demand for TV) and [Kwese iflix](#) (Subscription Video On Demand for mobile phones).^[1]

Background

In December 2015, [Strive Masiyiwa](#) announced on his blog that Econet Global was about to launch a Pay TV service known as Kwesé TV. According to Masiyiwa, the TV would only focus on sports and entertainment programming to African markets.

The name Kwese is derived from a [Shona](#) word “Kwesé” which means “everywhere” and “anywhere”.^[2]

In March 2016, a local publication announced that Econet Wireless International had hired top African television media executive, [Joseph Hundah](#), to head its newly formed Kwese TV across the continent.^[3]

Subscriptions

Unlike, other broadcasters, Kwese TV has one type of bouquet only, the premium. However, subscribers can choose to subscribe for different amounts of time, ranging from as little as 3 days to the standard 1 month.

- Monthly subs \$29
- Weekly subs \$9
- Three Days \$5

Buying Dish, Decoder & Installation of Kwese TV

Kwese is currently offering 2 options for buying Kwese for the first time: \$49 Cash and \$105 Steward Bank Loan.

- Satellite Dish (dish, LNB, 20 meter cable, LNB pole)
- Decoder
- Installation
- 1-month subscription

Econet Wireless announces that Kwese is here

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Econet Wireless @econetzimbabwe · 18h



Kwese TV is here! Sign up today & get dish, decoder, installation & 1 month free subscription for \$49! Visit your nearest Econet shop today!



'KWESE' TV IS HERE!

Kwese TV Launch Legal Battles

[Broadcasting Authority of Zimbabwe](#) says Kwese has no licence

Hours after Econet Wireless posted a message on Facebook saying that Kwese was finally here, the government through the [Broadcasting Authority of Zimbabwe](#) dismissed claims Kwese TV had been licenced. BAZ CEO, Mr Obert Muganyura said the content distribution licence issued to Dr Dish, which was specific to the provision of the My TV Africa Service and was cancelled by the authority for failure by Dr Dish to provide service. Muganyura said:

BAZ therefore wishes to advise the public not to invest in a service that cannot be provided without a licence and warns anyone who may contemplate providing an unlicensed broadcasting service to acquaint themselves with the course of action that the authority is bound to take in



terms of the law^[4]

Dr Dish urgent application at the [High Court](#) and Justice [Charles Hungwe](#)'s judgement

After the revoking of Dr Dish's licence, Dr Dish through their lawyers Nyambirai and Mtetwa filed an urgent application at the High Court seeking the reversal of the decision to cancel their broadcasting licence. In the application BAZ and their CEO, Obert Muganyura were cited as the respondents. In their urgent application, Dr Dish argued that the decision undertaken by BAZ was "irrational." Part of their urgent application read

I contend that these terms and conditions never came into effect and thus could not be the basis on which applicant's licence could be terminated. Even if the terms and conditions attached to the licence were valid, I contend that MY TV Africa was merely a provider of content and not the service applicant was licensed to provide.

Applicant was entitled to replace the content provider or to have more than one content provider, provided that the content providers were listed in the particulars or information furnished to first respondent when applicant applied for a licence.

Applicant gave notice to first respondent on October 21, 2016 (as required by section 17 of the Act) and this notice was accepted and that acceptance was never revoked.^[5]

After initially reserving judgement on the urgency of the matter, [High Court](#) judge Justice [Charles Hungwe](#) issued a provisional judgement in favour of Dr. Dish and Kwese TV. He ruled that the matter was urgent and said that Dr. Dish and Kwese TV were free to operate as if the letter from BAZ which cancelled the licence, had never existed at all. Part of his judgement said:

The applicant seeks interim relief couched in the following terms: "TERMS OF INTERIM RELIEF SOUGHT Pending the final determination of this matter it is ordered that:

- 1. The operation of the purported termination of • Applicant's Content Distribution Service License Number CD 0004 through a letter dated 22 August 2017 signed by Second Respondent on First Respondent's letterhead be and is hereby suspended.*
- 2. Applicant shall be entitled to enjoy the full rights and benefits of its license as if the said letter of 22 August 2017 does not exist.*
- 3. Applicant shall be entitled to distribute the Econet Media Limited (Mauritius) content based on the technical standards notified by the Applicant to the First Respondent and accepted by First Respondent on 21 October 2016.*

BAZ challenges Justice Hungwe's ruling to allow Kwese TV to continue broadcasting

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The Broadcasting Authority of Zimbabwe (BAZ) was not satisfied with Justice Charles Hungwe's ruling and filed an appeal at the [Supreme Court](#) challenging the decision to allow Kwese TV and its broadcasting partner Dr Dish to continue operating until the matter is concluded. BAZ argued that Justice Hungwe had erred in allowing Dr Dish and Kwese TV to continue operating because the High Court did not have jurisdiction over the matter. Part of BAZ's challenge was as follows:

GROUNDS OF APPEAL

FURTHER TAKE NOTICE THAT the grounds upon which this appeal is based are the following:

- 1. The High Court erred in not finding that its jurisdiction to deal with the application arising from the suspension or cancellation of a licence was ousted by section 43 (1) (e) of the Broadcasting Act (Chapter 12 06) (-the Act”)*
- 2. The High Court further grossly erred in not finding that the application before it was not urgent. the licence in issue having been lawfully cancelled by the Appellants on the 22nd of August 2017.*
- 3. The High Court further erred in granting an order authorising the Respondent to distribute content from Econet Media Ltd (Mauritius) in the absence of an amendment to its licence in terms of section 15 of the Act and therefore holding that the notification sent by the Respondent to the Appellants in terms of section 17 of the Act had the effect of amending the licence.*

Dr Dish files urgent application seeking permission to continue operating

A day after BAZ filed an appeal at the Supreme Court, Kwese TV's distributor Dr Dish, filed another urgent application at the High Court seeking leave to execute the court's judgement in order to continue operating until the matter is resolved by the Supreme Court.

Acquiring Broadcasting Rights

In March 2016, Econet Media, a subsidiary of Econet Wireless Group, secured the rights to screen the English Premier Soccer League for three seasons (2016/17 up to 2018/19). Under the arrangement, Econet will be able to flight one Saturday afternoon Premier League match live on its Kwese Sports platform, on a free-to-air basis each weekend of the season. The rights also came with the weekly preview and review shows and are going to be available in 50 countries across the region.^[6]



Kwese signed a multi-year content deal with the United States' National Basketball Association (NBA) in April 2016, . Under this partnership, the NBA will show live games and other NBA programs on Econet's pay TV service Kwesé TV as well as on the Internet and its mobile platforms. As a result Kwese becomes the NBA's sub-Saharan Africa official broadcaster. It will be able to offer viewers over 500 games which will also include the WNBA games, the NBA playoffs, and the finals. The arrangement between the NBA and Econet also marked the end of NBA's relationship with SuperSport which is part of Naspers' MultiChoice.^[7]

Countries Kwese TV Operated In

- Botswana
- Cameroon
- Democratic Republic of Congo
- Ethiopia
- Gambia
- Ghana
- Kenya
- Lesotho
- Liberia
- Malawi
- Namibia
- Nigeria
- Rwanda
- Sierra Leone
- South Africa
- South Sudan
- Swaziland
- Tanzania
- Uganda
- Zambia
- Zimbabwe

Kwese TV Shut Down

On 1 November, news broke out that Kwese TV was closing its pay-television sports and entertainment channels "after a torrid 18 months littered with missed payments and cancelled deals."^[8]

Said a report:

Since April 2017, Kwesé has either missed or been late on payments to: Fifa, Uefa, the English Premier League, Formula One, the NBA, ESPN and the beIN Media Group. The company has almost solely relied on funding rounds to pay rights-holders this year.

Kwesé will now focus on its Kwesé Free Sports business – which distributes blocks of branded free-to-air sports programming to broadcasters across sub-Saharan Africa – and its Kwesé iFlix

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and Kwesé Play digital services from 2019 onward.^[8]

About Pindula

Pindula is a place to find information about local things on the internet. We do it a lot like Wikipedia, except everything is hyper-local. We started work on Pindula because we needed something like it. There's so little useful information about local things online and we're working to change that

To join the Pindula community of editors, please go to <https://contribute.pindula.co.zw?> or just get in touch with us on **WhatsApp: +263 77 770 7852**.

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