

Appeals panel rules Huffington Post blog post did not amount to hate speech

NEWSWATCH: Former Huffington Post SA editor-in-chief Verashni Pillay has been successful in her appeal against a hate speech ruling by the press ombudsman.

The Press Council's appeals panel has overturned a hate speech ruling made by press ombudsman, Johan Retief on a blog post published by The Huffington Post SA on 13 April 2017, entitled, "*Could it be time to deny white men the franchise?.*" The post argued that white men should be denied to vote in South Africa.

Pillay shared the news herself on social media with the following intro: "Breaking: My appeal against the HuffPost hate speech matter has succeeded. A full panel of the appeals panel set the highly problematic ruling aside. Massive thank you to my lawyer Ben Winks for arguing this pro bono (for free!) given his passion and commitment to justice and freedom of speech."



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“ Breaking: My appeal in the hate speech ruling around the [#HuffPost](#) blog matter has succeeded. The appeals committee has set it aside. [pic.twitter.com/dC3XTWfKSb](#)— Verashni Pillay (@verashni) [August 22, 2017](#) ”

Judge Bernard Ngoepe, who heads the appeals panel says, "It could well be that the piece irritated or annoyed some people; but to classify it as a hate speech would be too huge a jump."

The Huffington Post removed the blog post in April after coming under fire for publishing it. Pillay resigned shortly thereafter when the press ombudsman found that the blog post published was discriminatory.



Verashni Pillay resigns from *The Huffington Post SA* with immediate effect

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