

**SIGNAL 8 SECURITY**

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The Clerk to the Special Meeting, Panel on Administration of Justice and Legal Services.

Dear Sirs, Madam

I am the National Director ( Hong Kong, China and Macau) of the International Bodyguard Association. ("IBA")

On behalf of the IBA I wish to add my voice to concerns expressed in the media and legislative Council of Hong Kong, about the decision not to prosecute the bodyguards of Ms Bona Mugabe who it is alleged, assaulted two journalists outside the home of Ms Mugabe on February 13, 2009.

I note with concern, the justification for the decision given by the Department of Justice, being that the 2 bodyguards were afraid for the 'safety' of Ms Mugabe. I also note that there is no dispute that Ms Mugabe was not in the immediate vicinity of the alleged events and that the two persons assaulted were members of the press.

The IBA wishes to express its concern that the Department of Justice should take such a stance in the circumstances of Ms Mugabe not being present and the only apparent concern of the bodyguards being that the press were taking photos of the home of Ms Mugabe.

We as an organization focus on the maintenance of standards in the bodyguard industry. We strive to promote professionalism and adherence to the law amongst our members.

The actions of the bodyguards concerned were not only in breach of industry standards but appear to have been without legal justification. The fact that these bodyguards did not have visas to work in Hong Kong further brings into doubt their professionalism.

Decisions such as the present one, not to prosecute when the evidence appears to justify such prosecution, only serve to make our efforts to maintain standards in our industry, more difficult. It also serves to undermine the credibility of those bodyguards employed by our members who may, at times, need to take legitimate action to protect their principals if they are under real threat of immediate danger.

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This decision also threatens to place members of our association in an invidious position, if instructed by principals to use excessive force with members of the press and told to justify such actions by claiming 'fear for safety' of the principal after the event. Given that trust is an important factor in our industry, such potential for conflict of interest between professional standards and the wishes of principals could have far reaching consequences.

The IBA therefore calls upon the Department of Justice to review it's decision and take steps to prosecute these individuals and send a message that excessive force by bodyguards is not acceptable in society and not tolerated within the industry.

Yours faithfully



Bruce McLaren  
National Director ( Hong Kong, China and Macau)  
The International Bodyguard Association.

C.c Editor South China Morning Post