

Malema shows no remorse over media briefing incident

Written by Sapa

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ANC Youth League president Julius Malema said on Thursday night that he was not "remorseful" over chasing BBC journalist, Jonah Fisher, from a media briefing. "We are not remorseful on our stance (sic) and will never be remorseful about disrespectful journalists; particularly [those] from countries whose media always undermine the credibility and integrity of African leaders," Malema said in a statement.

Malema said he had been provoked by Fisher's comments. "In the process answering to questions, a white guy, whom we later discovered is a reporter from the British Broadcasting Corporation, interjected when we were expressing the disgust over the fact that [Zimbabwe's] Movement for Democratic Change is throwing insults at the ANC Youth League leadership from air-conditioned offices in Sandton, whilst the masses are on the ground in Zimbabwe."

"He, in a very scornful way responded saying 'but you stay in Sandton'."

Malema said he became "agitated" when Fisher did not back down.

He said, though, that the youth league would be willing to talk to Fisher if he wanted to apologise.

"Our doors are however open for engagement with the journalist if he intends to render an apology and we will from there decide what will happen."

Malema also lashed out at the way the media reported on the incident.

"We are disturbed on how most media houses have portrayed a distorted picture on what

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exactly happened. They presented a picture that we just responded to the journalists without provocation and that is mischievous."

He said the youth league would defend free speech and media freedom but that it "should be expressed within certain confines".

"We respect the rights of journalists to openly engage on whatever issue they deem suitable, but they should not be disrespectful."

The National Press Club will, meanwhile, host a summit in Sandton on Friday to discuss the incident at the media briefing.

"The National Press Club will on Friday host a summit to discuss a way forward following Malema's handling of the media," chairman Yusuf Abramjee said in a media advisory.

Malema has been causing controversy for months in South Africa with his anti-white remarks and singing of the song, "Shoot the Boers", despite a court order prohibiting him from doing so.