

MBELDEF

Minority Business Enterprise Legal Defense and Education Fund, Inc.

*Parren J. Mitchell
Founder and Chairman*

*Anthony W. Robinson
President*

April 22, 1999

Ms. Marjorie Roman Salas
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
The Portals
445 Twelfth Street, Southwest
Washington, D.C. 20554

Re: In the Matter of Application of AfriSpace Inc., for Authority to Launch and Operate a Satellite Broadcasting Transmission System, File No. CSS-90-017 (IBFS File No. SAT-IOA-19900723-00002); Amendment File No. SAT-AMD-19990125-000016 (Call Sign 52367)

Dear Ms. Salas:

The Minority Business Enterprise Legal Defense and Education Fund, Inc. (MBELDEF) is a non profit public interest organization founded in 1980 by former Maryland Congressman Parren J. Mitchell. MBELDEF seeks to address the class interests of the minority businessperson.

We firmly believe that desegregation of the marketplace is the final frontier of the struggle for civil rights in this country. Accordingly, from time to time, MBELDEF has filed comments and has otherwise participated in a number of dockets under review by the Federal Communications Commission that directly or indirectly affect the interests of the minority businessperson. For example, prior to the initiation of the auctions for PCS spectrum licenses, MBELDEF filed comments, participated in FCC roundtable discussions and convened meetings addressing the best interests of the minority businessperson. On June 7, 1995, MBELDEF convened a historic convocation of twenty minority and women organizations to hear a presentation by then Chairman Reed E. Hundt concerning matters relating to competition, diversity of the FCC marketplace, and Adarand.

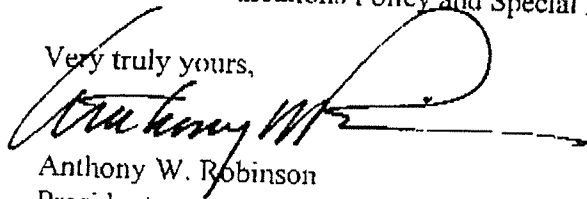
The purpose of this writing is to express MBELDEF's support for the above-noted application of AfriSpace which has recently been filed with the Commission. In our view, Commission approval of this application will contribute to diversity of ownership with reference to the new technology involved in satellite sound broadcasting systems. Furthermore, Commission approval not only will provide a greater level of competition in that communications arena but it will also provide access to information for previously underserved nations of the world.

We are pleased to join the many organizations and entities that have expressed their support for this application. They include the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Organization of African Unity, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, Africare, the African Development Bank, the Pan African News Agency, Volunteers in Technical Assistance, and the National Association of Minorities in Communications (NAMIC).

MBULDEF realizes that as a wholly owned subsidiary of WorldSpace, Inc., AfriSpace has made history by creating the first digital satellite radio service to cover Africa. In our view, Commission approval has the potential of benefitting a substantial number of minority entrepreneurs in this country who have an interest in becoming involved in aspects of the digital satellite radio business.

You or any members of the Commission may feel free to contact me at any time if you require further information concerning this application. If I am unavailable, please contact our Director of Telecommunications Policy and Special Projects, John A. Turner, Jr.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anthony W. Robinson", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Anthony W. Robinson
President