# Sentebale charity faces leadership crisis amid royal patron resignations



The Sentebale charity, which focuses on supporting vulnerable young people in southern Africa, particularly in relation to health and climate resilience issues, has found itself in a significant organisational upheaval. Founded by Prince Harry and Prince Seeiso of Lesotho in 2006, the charity is now facing a leadership crisis that has resulted in severe changes at the board level.

On Wednesday afternoon, Sentebale issued a statement emphasising that while trustees and patrons are essential for governance, it is ultimately the frontline staff and local partners who contribute most significantly to the mission of the organisation. "Our commitment to supporting youth in southern Africa with better health, stronger livelihoods and climate resilience remains as strong as ever," the charity stated, affirming that their work would continue regardless of the surrounding circumstances.

Key developments transpired the night before when Prince Harry and Seeiso announced their resignation as patrons, a decision made in light of what they described as an "untenable" situation regarding the charity's leadership under Dr Sophie Chandauka, the chair of the board. Dr Chandauka, a corporate lawyer originally from Zimbabwe, did not shy away from expressing her disdain for the royal patron, accusing him of promoting a "victim narrative", while also levelling serious allegations against the charity's former trustees, including claims of bullying and harassment.

In her strong rebuttal, Dr Chandauka asserted, “There are people in this world who behave as though they are above the law and mistreat people, and then play the victim card and use the very press they disdain to harm people who have the courage to challenge their conduct.” Furthermore, she revealed that she had taken legal action to secure her position amid the tumult, including a report of the charity's trustees to the Charity Commission.

The discord within Sentebale reportedly stems from a strategic shift aimed at focusing fundraising efforts in Africa rather than relying on traditional platforms in the UK. A source indicated that while this strategy was met with enthusiasm initially, it did not yield the expected donations, leading to internal discord and the eventual resignation of several trustees.

Harry and Seeiso's resignations as patrons come as they express solidarity with the departing trustees who have also voiced their distress over the troubling developments within the charity. The pair noted in a statement that they are "heartbroken" about the necessity of such a decision, underscoring their longstanding commitment to the charity's beneficiaries. They expressed a desire to share their concerns with the Charity Commission regarding the circumstances that led to the current crisis.

The fallout from this leadership drama has led Sentebale to announce the resignation of multiple trustees, including Timothy Boucher and Mark Dyer. Alongside the royal patrons, they communicated their collective heartbreak and the difficult nature of their decision, stressing their efforts to act in the best interest of the charity.

In this evolving situation, the UK’s Charity Commission is closely monitoring the governance issues within Sentebale, indicating that it is assessing the concerns raised to determine appropriate regulatory actions moving forward.

The dramatic events mark a turbulent chapter in the history of Sentebale, as it grapples with maintaining its mission while navigating significant leadership challenges that have implications for its future operations and impact in southern Africa.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://people.com/why-prince-harry-resigned-sentebale-charity-11703864> - This article corroborates the resignation of Prince Harry and Prince Seeiso from Sentebale due to leadership issues with Dr. Sophie Chandauka, including financial and legal challenges within the charity.
* <https://www.gbnews.com/royal/prince-harry-resigns-sentebale-charity-new-statement> - This article outlines the boardroom battle at Sentebale, including Dr. Chandauka's legal actions against the charity and her allegations of poor governance and bullying by former trustees.
* <https://www.gbnews.com/royal/prince-harry-resigns-sentebale-charity-new-statement> - It provides additional details about Sentebale's statement following the departure of its patrons, emphasizing the charity's commitment to its mission despite the leadership crisis.
* <https://www.gbnews.com/royal/prince-harry-resigns-sentebale-charity-new-statement> - The article mentions the creation of Sentebale by Prince Harry and Prince Seeiso and the charity's focus on supporting youth in southern Africa.
* <https://people.com/why-prince-harry-resigned-sentebale-charity-11703864> - It explains that Prince Harry's resignation was made in solidarity with the departing trustees, who faced significant challenges under Dr. Chandauka's leadership.
* <https://www.gbnews.com/royal/prince-harry-resigns-sentebale-charity-new-statement> - The article highlights the UK Charity Commission's involvement in assessing governance concerns at Sentebale.