

JOINT STATEMENT CONDEMNING THE RAID OF THE MEDIA HOUSE IN TANZANIA

Kampala, 26 March 2017-We media stakeholders, human rights organizations, African Civil Society Forums on Democratic Governance meeting during the Pan African Conference on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information held in Kampala, Uganda from 25 to 26 March 2017; strongly condemn the illegal raid carried out by a Regional Commissioner into a media house with a view to influence their editorial content that subsequently led to the dismissal of the Minister of Information who intervened and ordered an inquiry into the questionable actions.

On 17 March 2017, the Dar-es-Salaam Regional Commissioner, Paul Makonda, invaded a private broadcaster, Clouds Media, with six armed police officers demanding that they should air a pre-recorded audio-visual material. The station declined to broadcast the audio-visual material. Information Minister, Nape Nnauye, visited the raided station and formed an inquiry committee to probe further the incident and make public its findings.

Surprisingly, immediately after issuing a report that implicates the Regional Commissioner the Minister was sacked.

President Magufuli threatened to shut down any newspaper, Television, radio that will not cover positively actions of the government. In the recent past, the government has banned opposition rallies and switched off live broadcasts of parliamentary sessions.

“Since the commencement of the new leadership, Tanzania witnessed a number of incidents undermining freedom of expression and safety of journalists. More than 40 incidents involving arrest, frivolous charges, and harassment of journalists by District Commissioners and police have been recorded for past two years” said the Tanzania Human Rights Defenders Coalition,

We laud the sacked Minister of Information for his steadfast position in defence of media freedom and freedom of expression. The African continent has strong continental mechanisms that protect the right to freedom of expression and access to information, including the African Union Constitutive Act, the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights (the African Charter) and the Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression in Africa.

The Acts by Regional Commissioner and dismissal of the Minister who defended the forceful entry into the media house violated the laws and the Constitution of Tanzania including regional and international instruments on freedom of expression.

We therefore urge the president of Tanzania to protect those who combat impunity and attack against media house and media practitioners as well as human rights defenders; to respect the Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression in Africa adopted in 2002, the Declaration, supplements Article 9 of the African Charter and all others regional and international instruments protecting freedom of expression and access to information. The President of Tanzania is also reminded that Principle XI (2) of the declaration obligates State Parties to ensure that effective measures are put in place to prevent such attacks and, when they do occur, to investigate them, punish the perpetrators and ensure that victims have access to effective remedies.

This statement has been Signed on 26th/03/2017 by the following 32 Civil Society organizations;

Organization	Country
1. Association for Media Development in South Sudan (AMDISS)	South Sudan
2. Media Rights Agenda	Nigeria
3. Tanzania Human Rights Defenders Coalition-THRDC	Tanzania
4. Africa Freedom of Information Centre	Uganda
5. African Centre for Democracy and Human Rights Studies	Gambia
6. Rwanda Journalists Association	Rwanda
7. Human Rights Network for Journalists	Uganda
8. National Union of Somali Journalists	Somalia
9. East & Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project	Uganda
10. International Federation of Journalists	Belgium
11. Union des syndicats des professionnels de la presse d'Afrique Centrale	Congo Brazzaville
12. Journaliste en danger	DRC
13. Sudan Journalists Union	Sudan
14. Syndicat du personnel de la presse et de l'audio-visuel djiboutien	Djibouti
15. Nigeria Labour Congress	Nigeria
16. Fédération Syndicale des Travailleurs de la Communication	Congo
17. ITUC-Africa	Togo
18. Syndicat National Des Journalistes Du Cameroun	Cameroun
19. Centre for Media Studies and Peace Building	Liberia
20. Association des Journalistes de Guinée	Guinée
21. Syndicat National Des Journalistes Tunisiens	Tunisia
22. Syndicat Des Professionnels De L'information Et De La Communication Du Sénégal	Senegal
23. Public and Private Development Centre (PPDC)	Nigeria
24. Media Institute for Southern Africa	Zimbabwe
25. Network Of National Human Rights Institutions	Kenya
26. South Africa History Archives	South Africa
27. Never Again Rwanda and Africa Democracy Forum	Rwanda
28. Media Foundation for West Africa	Ghana
29. Ghana Journalists Association	Ghana
30. ARTICLE 19 East & Horn of Africa	Kenya
31. B&S Europe	Belgium
32. Right 2 Know	South Africa