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## STATEMENT BY THE KENYA EDITORS GUILD

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: — On the Denial of Access to State House for Standard Group Journalists: Nairobi, May 31, 2025**

The Kenya Editors' Guild strongly condemns the unacceptable action by State House officials in denying access to two accredited journalists from the Standard Group—Rashid Idi and Okumu Modachi—who were scheduled to cover a joint press briefing between President William Ruto and the visiting President of Slovenia, Natasa Pirc Musar, at State House, Nairobi, today.

The journalists' details had been duly submitted in advance, upon request, as is standard procedure for such high-level coverage. The denial of access, without explanation, is not only an affront to the affected journalists but also a violation of media freedom and the constitutional right to access information. Moreover, the action is both discriminatory and unacceptable.

Article 34 of the Constitution of Kenya guarantees freedom of the media, stating that “the State shall not interfere with any person engaged in broadcasting, the production or circulation of any publication or the dissemination of information by any medium.” Furthermore, Article 33 upholds the right to freedom of expression, including the freedom to seek, receive, or impart information or ideas.

These constitutional provisions are reinforced by the Access to Information Act, 2016, which grants every citizen the right to access information held by the state and requires public entities to facilitate such access. Denying duly accredited journalists the opportunity to cover official public proceedings amounts to an unjustified restriction of this right.

The media plays a vital role in ensuring transparency, public accountability, and an informed citizenry. Blocking journalists from carrying out their duties at State House sets an extremely dangerous precedent and undermines Kenya's democratic ideals and international obligations on press freedom.

We urge all government offices to uphold the constitutional rights of journalists and to treat all media houses equitably, in line with the principles of fairness, transparency, and professionalism.

The media industry has established procedures for lodging complaints for those who feel aggrieved by media actions. KEG, therefore, encourages government officials and other institutions to follow these procedures to avoid unnecessary conflict. KEG stands in solidarity with Rashid Idi, Okumu Modachi, and the Standard Group over this matter.

*Issued in NAIROBI on MAY 31, 2025*

#### **About the Kenya Editors' Guild**

The Kenya Editors' Guild (KEG) is a not-for-profit professional organisation that brings together senior print, broadcast, digital and other electronic media editors. It seeks to: defend and promote media freedom and independence in Kenya; promote quality and ethical journalism; provide a forum for the discussion of the challenges facing the media and editors; and to network with other professional organisation, among other imperatives.

#### **For more details and clarifications, please contact:**

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