



STATEMENT ON DECLINING RULE OF LAW AND THREATS AGAINST JOURNALISTS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: MAY 3, 2025

RULE OF LAW IN GRAVE DANGER AS POLITICAL INTOLERANCE RISES

As the world marks World Press Freedom Day, Kenya Editors Guild joins colleagues across Kenya and around the globe in reflecting on the critical role of a free, independent, and safe press in upholding democracy, accountability, and human rights.

It is deeply troubling that even as we commemorate this day, we are witnessing an escalation in actions that threaten media freedom and the safety of journalists in Kenya. We strongly condemn the recent arrest of journalists, including a freelance team that worked with the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) and the arrest of a journalist in Kitui.

The four freelancers- Brian Adagala, Chris Wamae, Mark Karubui and Nick Wambugu- were arrested at their studios in Karen, shortly after the release of the documentary “Blood Parliament” by the BBC Africa Eye. A private screening of the film was also cancelled.

We have verified with the BBC that the filmmakers who were arrested were not involved in the production of the Blood Parliament documentary. However, we remain deeply concerned about the broader implications such actions have on press freedom and the safety of journalists in Kenya. These incidents reflect a chilling effect on investigative journalism and the right to free expression, which must be firmly protected.

Only yesterday, during a media event held in Nairobi to mark this important day, the Inspector General of Police, through the Police Spokesperson, gave assurances of the safety and security of journalists in the country. However, the continued harassment, arrests, and threats targeting journalists run contrary to that commitment and undermine public confidence in the state’s willingness to protect press freedom.

Further, the threats to withdraw broadcast licenses from media houses, the cancellation of government advertising, and other forms of economic and regulatory pressure are unacceptable and must be seen for what they are—attempts to stifle critical journalism and muzzle the press.

We must be unequivocal: journalism is not a crime. The media serves the public interest and must be allowed to operate without fear or favour. Any attempt to

intimidate, silence, or punish journalists for doing their work is an affront to democracy and the Constitution of Kenya, which guarantees freedom of expression and media independence.

Kenya Editors' Guild condemns the unwarranted arrest of the journalists and calls for their immediate release. The Guild further calls on the government to step up and protect Press Freedom, noting that campaigns ahead of the 2027 elections have pre-maturely begun. Freedom of the media and freedom of expression must be guarded at all costs, and journalists protected from rogue security apparatus.

We call upon the government to uphold its constitutional duty to protect journalists and respect the independence of the media. We also urge all media practitioners to remain steadfast in their duty to seek the truth and speak it boldly.

Let us recommit ourselves today to defending press freedom and ensuring that no journalist is harassed, threatened, or harmed for simply doing their job.

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For and on behalf of the Kenya Editors' Guild

ZUBEIDAH KANANU
PRESIDENT

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.

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