

Message from the Chairperson of the Network of Independent Media Councils of Africa (NIMCA)

As we commemorate World Press Freedom Day 2025, we pay tribute to the unwavering courage and resilience of journalists and media professionals across Africa who risk their safety to bring truth to light. In an era where press freedom faces mounting threats, we stand in steadfast solidarity with those who endure censorship, persecution, and imprisonment for their commitment to independent journalism.

This year's theme, "Reporting in the Brave New World – The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Press Freedom and the Media," underscores the transformative influence of AI on journalism. While AI offers tools that enhance investigative reporting and content creation, it also presents challenges, including the proliferation of misinformation and threats to journalistic integrity.

In alignment with our commitment to press freedom, NIMCA welcomes the release of the 2024 Digital Rights and Inclusion in Africa (Londa) report by Paradigm Initiative (PIN), coinciding with World Press Freedom Day. The report, covering 27 African countries, highlights critical issues such as crackdowns on freedom of expression, the criminalization of false news contrary to international standards, and the imperative for governments to proactively disclose information.

Notably, for the first time, the Londa report includes a ranking index evaluating countries' compliance with key human rights elements outlined in the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information. This Declaration serves as a cornerstone guiding NIMCA's work. According to the report, South Africa leads in compliance, followed by Ghana, Zambia, Namibia, and Rwanda.

In this spirit, NIMCA warmly invites the global media community to its inaugural conference, taking place from July 14 – 17 at the Arusha International Conference Centre in Tanzania during the Pan African Media Councils Summit 2025, under the **theme: Advancing media and communication regulations for journalism excellence in Africa**

This pivotal gathering will unite media executives, policymakers, and industry leaders to address key issues shaping the future of journalism in Africa and beyond. Among others, the thematic areas will include; **i) Inclusiveness and People with Disabilities in Topical Discussions, ii) Digital Media and Communications, Ethics and Responsibility and iii) Internet for Trust: Recognizing the internet's powerful influence on public discourse**

Through these discussions, we aim to refine policies, establish guidelines, and craft regulations that sustain a free, independent, and ethically responsible media environment across Africa. We firmly believe that by working together, we can shape a media landscape that authentically represents the diversity and richness of our continent.

Let us continue to champion the freedom of the press and stand with the courageous individuals who risk everything to bring truth to the forefront.

Long live press freedom in Africa!
Long live the integrity of journalism!
Sincerely,



Ernest Sungura
Chairperson, NIMCA



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