

**MEDIA COUNCIL OF UGANDA**  
**PRESS STATEMENT/ANNOUNCEMENT**

ON the 10<sup>th</sup> December 2020, the Media Council issued a notice to all media houses and practitioners re-emphasising the requirement for their registration to, among others, enable safe access to all coverage of the elections.

FOLLOWING the issuing of the notice the media fraternity through their representatives, the Editors Guild of Uganda, engaged the Council raising certain concerns about the notice, to wit:

- (a) The deadline for registration was too short to allow most media practitioners to be able to register in time to cover the elections;
- (b) The Council was not clothed with the relevant mandate to issue such notice.
- (c) The timing of the notice was perceived to be an attempt to curtail media freedom.

AFTER a thorough discussion it was agreed that it is indeed a good and welcome action to have the industry well regulated and registration is one of the good measures for such regulation. That many benefits accrue from such an exercise.

THE COUNCIL assured the media fraternity that the registration exercise was *bona fide* and well intentioned and that the Council is indeed well clothed with legal mandate under the Press and Journalists Act and other laws to regulate and exercise disciplinary control over media practitioners.

THAT the practice of journalism has exponentially morphed to cover many facets of the media industry and the law deems all persons who gather, process and disseminate information to the public to be practicing journalism.

THE Media Houses & Practitioners are informed that the registration exercise has been on going since the year 2017 and re-emphasis was made at this time as a measure to ensure the safe and smooth coverage of the events during these elections.

THEREFORE in light of the above and with due regard to the concerns raised by the Editors Guild and other parties, the Council has decided as follows:

1. The registration deadline for coverage of the elections is extended to the **30<sup>th</sup> December 2020;**
2. Media Houses and Practitioners are advised to ensure that they are duly registered and cleared by the Council by that time. Registration certificates and press cards shall be issued respectively.
3. The relevant Government Agencies are hereby informed of the extension of the deadline and requested to act accordingly.

THE COUNCIL further cautions all Mass Media organisations that have commenced business and have not registered their Editors/Producers and relevant staff with the Council, that pursuant to section 5 of the Press & Journalist Act such omission is a criminal offence and appropriate action will be taken.

For: **MEDIA COUNCIL OF UGANDA**

---

Paulo Ekochu  
Chairman