MEDIA STATEMENT

Monday, 14th June 2021.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

THREAT TO ROYAL MEDIA SERVICES JOURNALIST BY BUNGOMA GOVERNOR

The Media Council of Kenya condemns threats by Bungoma Governor Hon Wycliffe Wangamati directed at Royal Media Services reporter Jimmy Simiyu over a story he has been pursuing.

The Council is also aware of allegations that the Governor called the reporter to threaten him after an editor from the media house tipped him off about a story that the reporter had filed over an event held in Bungoma County on Saturday 12th June 2021.

As a first intervention, the reporter was advised by the Council to report the matter to police which was recorded as *OB 16/13/6/21* at the Bungoma Police Station.

Pursuant to the aforementioned, the Council states as follows:

- That the Governor henceforth desists from threats and respects the independence and freedom of all journalists.
- That the Inspector General of Police intervenes by ensuring that the matter is expeditiously investigated with the view of bringing all those involved in the alleged violations to account. In the meantime, the police must guarantee the reporter's safety and security.
- That Royal Media Services takes measures to establish the truth behind allegations that one of its editors was involved in the transgression and if confirmed, takes disciplinary action against the said editor for interfering with the independence and freedom of the affected journalist and jeopardising his safety.

The Media Council of Kenya calls upon the public and various public governance levels, including County Governments, to refrain from threatening and obstructing journalists from undertaking their lawful roles. We remain committed to advocating for a safe working environment for Kenyan journalists.

David Omwoyo Omwoyo
Chief Executive Officer & Secretary to the Council

Promoting Media Freedom and Responsible Journalism