

PRESS STATEMENT

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Thursday, 6th March 2025

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

POLICE MUST CEASE HARASSMENT OF JOURNALISTS AND PROVIDE SECURITY DURING OPERATIONS

NAIROBI – The Media Council of Kenya (MCK) expresses deep concern over the actions of police against journalists covering a security operation in Majengo, Gikomba, and Pumwani areas of Nairobi County on Wednesday, 5th March 2025

The journalists were reporting on demonstrations sparked by the alleged shooting of two teenage boys, which reportedly occurred on the night of 4th March 2025 in Majengo.

The Council notes multiple incidents of harassment, temporary detention and assaults, with police accused of manhandling journalists, denying access to affected areas, damaging equipment and forcibly deleting recorded footage.

Among those affected was Justine Ondieki, a photojournalist with *Eastleigh Voice*, who was temporarily detained in a General Service Unit (GSU) vehicle stationed near Gikomba for several hours. He was reportedly rough-handled, resulting in damage to his equipment. Similarly, *NTV* journalists Fridah Okachi, Dennis Onsongo and Leah Wambui Kurema were denied access to the operation zone. Their cameraperson who reported being assaulted, had footage forcibly deleted from her camera.

These violations of press freedom contravene the constitutional rights guaranteed to journalists and goes against the journalists' rights and privileges protected by law under the 2010 Kenyan Constitution and the Media Council Act, 2013.

The public has a right to be informed about events affecting society, and such actions hinder that process.

The MCK calls on the Inspector General of Police to launch a thorough investigation into these incidents and ensure those responsible for the unlawful acts are held accountable.

The Council stands in solidarity with the affected journalists and reaffirms its unwavering commitment to defending media freedom and protecting the rights of journalists across Kenya.

Issued in Nairobi on 6 March 2025

For and on behalf of the Media Council of Kenya

DAVID OMWOYO OMWOYO, MBS

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER & SECRETARY TO THE COUNCIL

Promoting Press Freedom and Responsible Journalism