

PRESS STATEMENT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CALL FOR RISK ANALYSIS AND PREPAREDNESS WHEN REPORTING FROM THE FRONTLINE

NAIROBI – The Media Council of Kenya (MCK) strongly objects to the violent assault and use of tear gas on journalists by police officers at Kirobon High School, Rongai Sub-county, Nakuru County, on the evening of 8 April 2025. The journalists were there to cover a matter of public interest—the attempted arrest of former Kakamega Senator Cleophas Malala during rehearsals for the play *Echoes of War*, scheduled for performance at the 63rd National Drama Festival in Nakuru.

MCK urges journalists and assignment managers in media outlets to embed a culture of prioritising staff safety on assignments, given the alarming trend of attacks on journalists, particularly by police. The Council deems such reckless conduct and misdirected actions by the police abhorrent, as they endangered the safety of journalists, including Maryanne Nyambura (Citizen TV), Peter Kimani (KTN), Robert Maina (Inooro TV and Radio), Joseph Kipsang (whose camera was damaged), Kennedy Gachuhi (Standard Group) and Evans Asiba (Citizen TV), amongst others. This assault on media professionals represents a violation of their constitutional rights, including the right to life, security, and freedom of expression, as enshrined in Articles 26, 29, 33, 34, and 35 of the Kenyan Constitution.

The Council demands an immediate investigation into this incident and calls upon the Independent Policing Oversight Authority (IPOA) and the Ministry of Interior and National Administration to take swift action against the officers involved. Such incidents highlight a troubling pattern of aggression towards journalists in the course of their duties, posing a significant threat to press freedom and undermining the media's ability to report without fear or intimidation.

Media organisations are encouraged to conduct thorough risk assessments and coordinate with local authorities, event organisers and law enforcement in advance to establish robust safety protocols.

The Media Council of Kenya remains unwavering in its commitment to fostering an environment where journalists can carry out their roles securely and free from harassment.

Issued in Nairobi on 10th April 2025

For and on behalf of the Media Council of Kenya

HILLARY KORIR

DIRECTOR, CORPORATE SERVICES

For

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER & SECRETARY TO THE COUNCIL