

PRESS STATEMENT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MCK CONDEMNS ARBITRARY ARRESTS AND ATTACKS ON JOURNALISTS BY THE POLICE

NAIROBI- The Media Council of Kenya condemns the arbitrary arrests and attacks on journalists covering today's protests in Nairobi's Central Business district by armed police officers.

The Council is dismayed that while journalists were relying on police to provide them with security in the line of duty, the security officers resorted to manhandling, harassing, arresting and assaulting them. This is despite the fact that the journalists were well identified with MCK press badges and press jackets.

Among those who were targeted included Joe Muhia and Iddi Ali Juma of AP who were arrested and later released after being assaulted. In an incident captured on video, Standard Group video editor Justice Mwangi Macharia was arrested and violently hauled out of a moving police motor vehicle, sustaining physical injuries. Nation Media Group's *Taiifa Leo* reporter Sammy Kimatu was also thrown out of a moving police Land Rover, sustained injuries and is currently receiving treatment. Maureen Murethi (NTV) has also been hospitalised after police aimed a canister at her as she covered the protests.

Today's unfortunate events remind us that members of the National Police Service remain the weak link in Kenya's quest for freedom of expression and freedom of the media as espoused in our Constitution.

We call on the Inspector General of Police to rein in on his officers by ensuring that journalists are protected and not targeted for harassment while performing their duties in any working environment.

Issued in Nairobi on 18 June 2024
For and on behalf of the Media Council of Kenya

DAVID OMWOYO OMWOYO, MBS
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER & SECRETARY TO THE COUNCIL