

**STATEMENT BY HON. (MR.) WILLIAM OKETCH, ESQ CHAIRPERSON OF THE
MEDIA COMPLAINTS COMMISSION, KENYA DURING THE OFFICIAL SWEARING-
IN OF THE
COMPLAINTS COMMISSIONERS AT THE SUPREME COURT OF KENYA ON 3RD
NOVEMBER, 2020.**

Journalism and journalists play a multifaceted role in promoting knowledge society objectives. They not only monitor the key stakeholders' performance against the stated objectives but acts as a channel to entertain, educate, inform, open forum and society's public watchdog. A sensible pursuit for human advancement therefore must anchor on a vision for 'a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented Information Society, where everyone can create, access, utilize and share information, as an enabler for individuals and communities to achieve their full potential.

However, while the Media Council is a chaperone in this vision, pointing out the footprints for journalists to follow in their professional journey, the Complaints Commission is a handmaiden of justice, guiding erring journalists back towards the stepping stones of professionalism as well as thwarting unwarranted attack on the profession. They do this by ensuring that both duty bearers and stakeholders craft an information society through 'responsible use and treatment of information by the media in accordance with the highest ethical and professional standards.'

A transparent, supportive and predictable system of media and journalistic accountability are germane to achieving this goal but only through a robust, fair and efficient complaints processing mechanism. A greater public engagement in media accountability will provide an opportunity for members of the public to participate in media accountability and offer an opportunity for parties to learn from the complaint process. In addition, they help redress power imbalances between the self-regulatory bodies and the complainants. We commit to do this but only with your support can we succeed:

- I. Judiciary: Support through ADR complaints referral protocol;
- II. Ministry of ICT: Support through legislation and budget;
- III. Media Council: Support through facilitation of activities;
- IV. Journalists fraternity: Support through awareness and campaigns;

-Thank You-