The 2017 Nairobi Declaration of Kenyan Community Radios

"Engagement for Truth, Fairness, Ethics and Integrity"

We the participants of the World Press Freedom Day 2017 Convention of Kenyan Community Radios, held in Nairobi, Kenya, on May, 2nd and 3rd 2017, under the auspices of Kenya Community Media Network (KCOMNET), Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAS) and the GIZ/Civil Peace Service 'UMOJA-Radio for Peace' Project,

Having considered the impact of elections-based-hate-speech, violence and post-election violence in Kenya 2007/2008 and having paid solemn tribute to those who lost their lives,

Believing that it is important to combat attempts to use media as instruments of propaganda, hatred and violence, especially in times of election campaigns,

Considering that free media and ethical journalism are cornerstones of democracy and vital to the creation of unified, peaceful and tolerant societies,

Considering again that the latest figures about decreasing press freedom in the world, published these days by "REPORTERS WITHOUT BORDERS", are highlighting a dangerous tendency,

Insisting that hate speech, which incites violence and intense hatred between communities, must be exposed, isolated and eliminated without undermining ethical journalism and press freedom,

Noting that women, children, youth, physically challenged and people from minority communities whose portrayal in media is often demeaning and full of stereotypes are the primary victims of intolerance and discrimination,

Welcoming the rapid expansion of internet in Kenya as information and communication tool but recognising that there is an urgent need for media organizations to promote responsible use of information online and to counter or, where appropriate, to block fake news, hate speech and ethnicity in social networks,

Further recognising the growing significance of online information in the media economy and strongly insisting that media do not sacrifice standards and ethical credibility for commercial gain,

Noting the tendency of media on all platforms to sensationalise information and to use stereotypes and clichés which reinforce the conditions, in which hate speech and violence can flourish,

Calling on the government of Kenya, media agencies and the International community to commit themselves to the highest standards of press freedom, free expression, protection of journalists and to support efforts to reinforce responsible election coverage and highest reporting standards,

We as journalists and community broadcasters declare our public engagement for highest professional journalistic standards, with the aim of promoting ethical, tolerant, inclusive and accountable journalism, good media governance and responsible communications to do no harm in the exercise of our profession.

We declare our support to the Media Council of Kenya (MCK) and the Ethical Journalism Network (EJN) in the efforts to establish guidelines to expose and identify Hate Speech and to elaborate a model for auditing Transparency, Good Governance and Ethics of Journalism.

We urge all media professional groups at community, regional and national level and across all platforms of journalism in Kenya and elsewhere to raise awareness of the ethical challenges and to strengthen responsible editorial work in line with the objectives of this declaration.

Nairobi, May 3rd, 2017

PRESS RELEASE

On Tuesday, May 2nd 2017, Journalists from 30 Kenyan COMMUNITY RADIO STATIONS converged at a meeting in Nairobi to deliberate on a public engagement for Truth, Fairness, Ethics and Integrity. (see above declaration). The convention was organized by Kenya Community Media Network and GIZ/Civil Peace Service with the support of the German Konrad Adenauer Foundation.

The 2017 Nairobi Declaration of Kenyan Community Radios was one of the important steps of the UMOJA-Radio for Peace Project, which aims to build the capacities of Community Radio Journalists in conflict sensitive reporting, balanced election coverage and accountable journalism.

The Nairobi Declaration was also supported by the London based Ethical Journalism Network.

It is the first public engagement which got a united voice of the Kenyan Community Radios.

For further information please contact

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