

Press Freedom Index Report 2010

HUMAN RIGHTS NETWORK FOR JOURNALISTS-Uganda
(HRNJ-Uganda)

With Support through Open Society Initiative for East
Africa (OSIEA)

Published by:

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Foreword

As the year draws to a close, we review the press freedom index in Uganda to measure the obtaining climate in which the media operates. One important thing stands out over the past ten months-violence against the media has increased.

Paradoxically, it is the Police, which should protect these freedoms enshrined in the Constitution, and the public-the primary consumers of media content, who are at the forefront of meting out terror on to media.

These threats reached their peak with the murder, by mob violence of two journalists, both working for Christian-based radio stations. The media was just recovering from the unprecedented crackdown by the state in 2009 following widespread riots, ending in the closure of five radio stations.

All these radios are now back on air but to a new order where media has been compelled by fear of antagonizing the State to institute a high level of self censorship that has to a large degree impacted on quality of the content thereby devaluing the essence of the media as a public sphere.

The role of State sanctions has also changed from direct intervention to subtle actions and threats from agents of the State, particularly the regulatory Broadcasting Council, and in some cases, by Resident District Commissioners (RDCs), who have turned into unappointed media monitors.

The combination of threats, overt and covert actions have made journalism a less enviable profession and a risky one too. As if this is not enough, the State maintained its resolve to put more controls on the media through a Bill now before Parliament to amend the media laws and introduce more strict measures and to provide for more offences against journalists and media.

These developments must be looked at within the broader context of the forthcoming general elections. A media system characterized by fear of the State, job insecurity, and insecurity of personal harassment by civilians cannot provide the space for critical examination of issues that are at the heart of the voters during this electoral period.

Indeed there have been major victories in Courts with the decriminalization of the offence of sedition. This ruling deprived the State of one of the most notorious instruments it used against media and consolidated the confidence of media in the Courts.

I appeal to the State, Parliament and all institutions of good governance to support the media by creating a more conducive environment to practice.

Given the deaths, bruises and abuses journalists have suffered, it is imperative that leaders in the industry support efforts by individual journalists and human rights activist to advocate for the protection of journalists against violence whether from state or private agents.

There are some important questions we must ask here; what is making civilians more violent towards media people? How come few people are willing to stand up and defend media freedom? What can the media as an institution got to do to win more friends and advocates in times of need? Are cannons of the Bill of Rights still enough on their own to guarantee the freedom of the press, given the ease, and readiness these freedoms are abused even by agents of the State?

It is my hope that the media picks lessons from these frequent but sad events to think of how to rebuild the image and confidence of our media system.

*John Baptist Wasswa
Makerere University,
Mass Communication Department.*

Acknowledgement

Human Rights Network for Journalists (HRNJ-Uganda) is deeply indebted to all journalists, individuals, lawyers, editors and media houses that contributed to the documentation of these cases and production of this mid-year Press Freedom Index, 2010.

We would like to thank our development partners DANIDA, Foundation for Open Society Initiative (FOSI), Open Society for East Africa (OSIEA) and Media Legal Defense Initiative for the financial support which has enabled HRNJ-Uganda to not only produce this report but their contributions towards defending journalists to promote human rights and change people's lives.

Preface

Human Rights Network for Journalists (HRNJ-Uganda) is an independent media advocacy network for human rights journalists in Uganda whose mission is to build a strong and credible human rights based media group that responds to critical aspects of human rights violations.

Under the strategic direction of Human Rights Network for Journalists -Uganda, efforts and resources are devoted to (i) Advocacy and Networking (ii), Documentation and Research (iii), Capacity building and Outreach and (IV) Institutional Development.

Mid-year Press Freedom Index 2010

The report covers a period of 10 months i.e.; from January to October 2010

Research Objective

The objective of this report is to investigate, document and analyze information on all cases that have occurred between January and October 2010 which undermine the enjoyment of the right to freedom of expression and press freedom in Uganda. The report gives an assessment on these rights and freedoms.

To use the findings towards formulating better policies that advance the fulfillment of human rights obligations, for “End Impunity” campaigns and human rights awareness in Uganda.

It is also the purpose of this report to include the voices of responsible persons from those institutions whose personnel have been accused of involvement in the abuse of and attacks on the media and its personnel.

Overview

The freedom to form opinions and express them without fear of repression is a fundamental tenet for the development of a pluralistic, tolerant, and democratic society. This right represents not only the right to privacy of individuals to hold opinions and formulate thoughts, but also to express them in a public forum, especially as part of exercising the right to political participation.

Additionally, the right to access information, that is the right to seek and receive information, which also forms an important component of this right and which has added significance in the current age of information technology, is intrinsic to the transparent functioning of a democratic government and the effective and well-informed participation of civil society.

In this context, freedom of opinion, expression and information is one of the core civil and political rights as it is essential for the exercise of all other human rights. These freedoms and associated rights are also provided for in the Uganda Constitution of 1995, and in the United Nations Bill of Rights conventions to which Uganda is signatory.

At a very basic level, the freedom to express ideas as well as to seek and receive information is essential for human rights defenders to obtain information about human rights violations, to inform the public and the State about their occurrence, and most importantly to demand accountability and to express their criticism of unjust laws, policies or practices.

It's against this background that Human Rights Network for Journalists-Uganda derives the interest and the devotion to assess the observance of these rights and remind those in power of their obligations to preserve and protect these freedoms and rights against abuse by the State, its agents or any other persons acting in private capacity.

General observation

The general assessment of HRNJ-Uganda is that the state of media freedom and practice in Uganda is of continuing and in some cases escalating threats to media personnel; increased fear by media owners, managers and practitioners especially in the electronic media, following the post-September riots crackdown. This fear has permeated all sections of the media leading to a dumbing down of important programs that touch on issues of governance and democracy. Other threats that have characterized this year are State interference in media matters, judicial sanctions, harassment by the Police in many parts of the country; the sophistication of police interventions in media work, following the creation of specialized desks on Media Offences. This desk has since its creation not focused on how to enable public enjoyment of media freedoms but on imagining potential offences the media might commit. The report makes important suggestions on this issue.

Other concerns over the year ending are increased attacks on individual journalists, threats of a new regime of laws under the proposed amendment to the Press and Journalists Statute of 1995, and hostile propaganda and against the media by senior people in government and security organisations.

The Report Outline

This report is structured according to the various themes that related to violence and threats against the media in Uganda in 2010. *Section One* builds on the general background given above to give context to anti-media actions, sanctions and threats that emanate from the government and officers of the government, particularly the Police acting on official orders. This section will provide the context of the forthcoming general elections which has created an increased sense of panic within Government, and subsequent intolerance to real and perceived criticism.

Section Two gives a chronology of abuses as reported to the HRNJ from January through to October 2010. *Section Three* provides statistics of the various actions against journalists of print, electronic media houses. *Section Four* makes an analysis of the chronology and the statistics, making important inferences and also the actions that HRNJ-Uganda took to follow up these incidents.

Section Five. Section Six gives some emotional testimonies from journalists who have been victims of violence and other sanctions by a cross-section of people. *Section Seven* gives some important comments from representatives of institutions that have been named in the reports as militating against free performance of the media

Section Eight. Raises some key concerns about the freedom of media and the general media environment as the country approaches the general elections slated for February 2011. This section also contains recommendations and suggestions on how media people and friends of the media can help eliminate violence against the press in order that the journalists can make meaningful contribution to democratization in a free atmosphere.

Section One:

2011 elections as context for anti-media activity

This year has witnessed more harassment of journalists by agents of the government, through summons, interrogations, raids to media houses, charges and outright threats by Police and Resident District Commissioners. The intimidation meted out on journalists follows the general crackdown last year on media seen as critical to the State. The five radio stations that had been closed were all reopened. These are Radio Two (Akaboozi ku Bbiri) Ssuubi FM, Radio Sapientia, owned by the Catholic Church and the CBS's two channels. The Central Broadcasting Service, whose main shareholder is the Buganda Kingdom, was finally reopened in October, 13 months since it was closed. All but CBS did not make apologies to the government even when it was reopened and resumed broadcasting.

The government harsh reaction to media in September 2009 that started as curbing pro-Buganda voices in the public sphere eventually created a general climate of fear in media across the country, as overzealous security officers and Resident District Commissioners attacked any media house or journalists they thought was criticizing government or giving voice to those in official opposition to government. The media has overall toned down criticism of government, many media houses have bowed to government pressure to dismiss or shuffle around presenters with political views. Others have just abandoned political talk shows or coverage of persons that government considers as its opponents.

This climate of fear has reinforced government monopoly of positive voices in the media, a position that will play to its advantage in the run up to elections next year. Testimonies from a cross-section of journalists interviewed by HRNJ-Uganda researchers indicate a general bowdlerization and trepidation in the media.

It is not likely that the media will witness another major crackdown soon, as the full extent of the previous one is still being felt across newsrooms. However, the government is keeping the media under check through frequent police interventions, threats of new anti-media laws, and occasional warnings to media by politicians, security personnel and even the President.

One observation stands out: the successive attacks on media by agents of the State have left media people very vulnerable to security agencies, politicians, RDCS, and even private people who are increasingly being socialized in the understanding that the media people are a punching bag or a nothing to do group, have no advocate or friends in government, and can never prosecute a case against their attackers successfully. It's a very dangerous level of vulnerability as the country moves towards elections. Already the incidents against media indexed in the next section explain the precarious media situation now prevailing.

Section Two:

Chronology of attacks on media personnel.

Jan. 8th, 2010: Photojournalist arrested and detained by Police.

Police arrested the Eddoboozi newspaper freelance photojournalist Luswa Anatoli. He was arrested in Kampala's Container village by police for taking photographs of patrolling police. His camera and other tools of trade were confiscated and his photos were deleted. He was detained for three hours and later released without charge.

Jan. 30th, 2010: Radio blocked from hosting Dr Besigye

Luo FM, in Pader district was ordered to cancel a program with leader of the FDC opposition party, Dr Kizza Besigye. The show earlier planned for two hours was cancelled reportedly on the orders of the Resident District Commissioner Santa Okot.

"We booked the two hour slot at Shs. 800,000 a fortnight ago but when we turned up to clear the bill prior to the planned show, the radio managers declined to receive the money" Aruu county MP Samuel Odong Otto said.

Feb.4th, 2010: Two Daily Monitor journalists charged.

Mr. Henry Ochieng, the Sunday Monitor editor and Mr. Angelo Izama, a staff writer, were charged with criminal libel at the Makindye Chief Magistrates Court over an article the State claims defamed President Museveni. They denied the charges and were released on bail. The two journalists were interrogated at Kabalagala Police Station before they were whisked away to Makindye Chief Magistrate's Court where the charges were preferred against them.

February 2010: Bill to control music content

Government introduced a bill attempting to control the production of music. The State sources claim that in the aftermath of September 2009 riots, several musicians had produced music critical of government and which the claimed was inciting the public to violence. The musicians mentioned (not in the Bill) included Ronald Mayinja, Joseph Mayanja a.k.a Jose Chameleon. In the proposed law on the intellectual property rights, the government now seeks to license musicians.

March 8th, 2010: The Daily Monitor photo Journalist Isaac Kasamani was roughed up by police, held for hours and his camera was confiscated by Police which accused him of taking photographs at Mulago hospital where women of the opposition Inter Party Cooperation (IPC) were donating drugs and other materials to patients

March 7th, 2010: Wavah Broadcasting Service (WBSTV) correspondent Paul Isabirye was arrested and his tools of trade were confiscated by officials of Agro Ways Warehouse in Jinja district. They were accused of interviewing farmers who store their maize in the warehouse. Farmers were protesting President Museveni's ban on the exportation of maize yet their produce was rotting in the store due to lack of local buyers.

March 16th 2010: Civilians attack journalists at Kasubi Tombs

Three photo journalists Benjamin Ssebagala, Moses Lemisa and Steven Musoke, all from the New Vision Group were assaulted by Baganda royalists while they took photos at the Kasubi Royal tombs gutted by fire. They were accused of working for a government media house, which they claimed was friendly to the Buganda Kingdom.

A Deutch Welle radio Uganda correspondent Leila Ndinda was also attacked and harassed by Buganda kingdom sympathizers at Kasubi, a Kampala suburb when the Kingdom was mourning the fire which destroyed the tombs. Leila, who is Kenyan, was accused of resembling people from the President's tribe.

March 17th, 2010: Soldiers shoot journalist

Mukiibi Sserunjogi, a reporter with the Luganda weekly Ggwanga newspaper, was shot at by the Presidential Guard and seriously injured at the same place at Kasubi. Three other civilians were killed by the soldiers who were clearing the way for the President to tour the burning tombs.

March 24th, 2010: Bukedde photo journalist Moses Lemisa who was admitted in the hospital assault by Presidential Guard Brigade (PGB) received intimidating calls from suspected soldiers. He had taken pictures of people killed by the Presidential Guard, just before the President visited the Kasubi tomb site.

March 22nd, 2010: Asuman Musobya, The Daily Monitor correspondent for Bugiri was reported to have been arrested the previous week for allegedly attempting to cover a case in court. He was locked up in the office of the district junior intelligence officer, Ben Tumugabirwe, for over six hours in solitary confinement, and was released without charge or recording a statement. Before his arrest, Mr Musobya had been alerted of a murder case due in that court involving a Bugiri businesswoman Nalongo Zulaika Nakaziba charged with murdering her husband the late Geoffrey Tenywa and burying the body inside the house.

March 26th, 2010: Three Red Pepper Publication journalists were arraigned in court over stories about the Kasubi fire. Ben Byabaraha-news editor, John Talemwa-a reporter and Dalton Kwesiga-a sub-editor were charged with sedition at Nakawa Chief Magistrate's court. They and denied the case.

March 29th, 2010: Police in Masaka detained Musa Matovu Kigongo, a reporter formerly working with the then closed Central Broadcasting Service (CBS) as correspondent in Lyantonde over statements regarding the burning of Kasubi Toombs. This followed an order by President Museveni against linking government to the Kasubi tombs fire. Kigongo's arrest orders came from the Masaka Resident District Commissioner Bamusedde Bwambaale. Police said that Kigongo had blamed government for the Kasubi fire. He was later charged with sedition.

April 13th, 2010: Police in Lira arrested Voice of Lira presenters for hosting opposition Uganda People's Congress (UPC) president Dr. Olara Otunu. Patrick Ronex Akena and Joe Orech were accused of hosting Dr. Otunnu who reportedly claimed on air that the National Resistance Movement (NRM) government was responsible for a 20 year war in Northern Uganda.

The Broadcasting Council later ordered the radio management to suspend the two journalists.

April 2010: Kamunye newspaper editor Moses Mugalula received numerous threats from Kyaddondo South MP, Issa Kikungwe over stories published by the paper regarding wrangles in the Democratic Party.

May 3rd, 2010: Vice President Prof. Gilbert Balibaseka Bukenya attacked the media for exposing his role in the controversial preparation for the hosting of Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) hosted in 2007. Parliament is investigating his involvement, as chairman of the cabinet sub-committee on CHOGM where he allegedly flouted public procurement regulations.

May 7th, 2010: Exiled Eritrean journalist, Yonas Embye, received deportation threats from the Eritrean consul to Uganda Mr Issaias over his continued exposure of gross human rights abuse in Eritrea through organized demonstrations in Uganda's capital Kampala. Mr. Embye fled to Uganda following the continued clampdown on media by the government of Eritrea.

May, 2010: Edward Bindhe, Uganda Radio Network (URN) reporter, received death threats over a story which exposed Kabuwoko Health center II and Kivumba Health Center III which were lacking drugs. But when he interviewed a clinical officer, she revealed that patients were abusing medical staff over shortage of drugs so they decided to close the health centers.

May 17th, 2010: Alex Lubwama, a photojournalist with Ggwanga newspaper was arrested by a security officer from State House for taking his photograph. Lubwama was covering a court case involving four fraud suspects.

May 2010: Bukoto East MP Alintuma Nsambu threatened Top Radio presenter Ssozi Ssekimpi Lwazi with violence over a radio programme. The show discussed the problem of child sacrifice which was rampant in the area and blamed the MP Nsambu for neglecting the constituency.

May 25th 2010: Basajja Mivule a presenter with Radio Two (Akaboozi ku Bbiri) received an intimidating phone text message from an unidentified person on the Mukono North constituency by-election day. The sender warned him against the contents of the programme. The mobile phone text in particular threatened the presenter that his show was being monitored by security agents and he risked his life for criticizing the government.

May 29th, 2010: Moses Kasibante of Ggwanga News Paper was arrested and tortured by suspected Kalangala Action Plan Operatives. He was bundled in car that had no registration number during the Mukono North by-election while at work at district headquarter polling station. The operatives confiscated his identity card and other valuable items. He was detained in a safe house in Mukono town.

June 7th, 2010: unidentified people attacked Ggwanga newspaper freelance journalist Dick Ssenyondo based in Masaka as he returned home. He sustained serious injuries. By-standers rescued and took him to hospital.”

June 9th, 2010: Police in Kampala arrested and beat up the Daily Monitor photo journalist Yusuf Muziransa for taking photographs of police's attacks on political opposition supporters at Kampala's Clock Tower Grounds.

Police also attacked FDC president Dr Kizza Besigye and other leaders of the Inter-Party Coalition who wanted to hold a rally to call for the disbandment of the Electoral Commission.

June 15th, 2010: Ssembabule Grade one magistrate Kule Moses arrested reporters Matridah Nabukalu (Buddu fm) and Hanifah Namuwonge (Bukedde) over entering in court without his permission. Their pens and note books were confiscated by Police.

July 12th, 2010: Anti riot police assaulted two television journalists while dispersing a rally by the Democratic Party (DP) supporters at Kamwokya, a Kampala suburb. The two are Kato Andrew a camera man and a reporter with Media Plus news agency and Hillary Ayesiga a visionary with NTV were assaulted by anti police.

July 6th, 2010: Deputy resident district commissioner (RDC) Kanungu district Kasiita Jjuuko assaults the New Vision photo journalist based in Masaka district Dismus Buregyeya for taking pictures of people welcoming the FDC leader Dr. Kiiza Besigye at the family funeral rites function. The RDC's brother, boxer Justin Jjuuko is member of the FDC. He had invited FDC leaders to the family function. The RDC hit Buegyeya with a stick on the back, the head and smashed his digital camera.

July 13th, 2010: Vision voice radio freelance presenter Steven Tinkamanyire has been confirmed dead in the bomb blasts that claimed 75 people and injured hundreds more in Kampala. The 24 -year old Steven Tinkamanyire joined the Vision Voice Radio in 2008.

July 19th, 2010: The Uganda Muslim Supreme Council (UMSC) Hajji Hassan Basajja balaba has assaulted a Radio One reporter Allan Kalanzi for asking annoying questions. Basajjabalaba and the Mufti, Sheikh Ramathan Mubajje are currently under investigations over the alleged abuse of office and selling off council's properties.

August 5th, 2010: Police in Kampala searched the home of Uganda Record journalist Timothy Kalyegira who is facing charges of sedition. Kalyegira has been in and out of police stations on allegations of publishing seditious materials on the Uganda Record website. Uganda Record is one of Uganda's online magazines. Police alleges that Kalyegira published seditious materials between 12th and 16th of July 2010 after the bomb blasts which claimed more than 70 lives.

August 16th, 2010: Wavah Broadcasting Service (WBS) television journalist Harrison Thembo has been arrested by police at Bwera (Uganda-DR Congo boarder) for filming activities at the immigration offices.

August 16th, 2010 Police secured a court order to block journalists from writing about details of the bomb blasts or police investigation relating to the July 11th terrorism case pending before the same court.

August 31, 2010: Two Resident District Commissioners (RDCs) have arrested the Red Pepper photo journalist Tony Kizito over alleged publication of a defamatory story by the sister Kamunye news paper. Kizito, 28 He was on his way to Mukono Town council when he was intercepted by the Buikwe RDC Betty Ssemakula who arrested and transferred him to another Mukono RDC Major David Matovu.

The newspaper had earlier ran a front page story naming top RDCs who have been behind interfering and blocking Buganda King Ronald Muwenda Mutebi II from touring his counties. The RDCs mentioned included the deputy for Nakawa division Fred Bamwine, Major David Matovu for Mukono district and Betty Ssemakula for Buikwe district among others.

October 1st, 2010: Police CID officers interrogated Radio Two (Akaboozi) journalist Richard Mivule for over five hours over incitement to violence. Mivule in his 50s hosts a mid-morning talk-show during the week. He was accused of having hosted Opposition MP for Kampala Central Erias Lukwago during September 2009 riots.

September 12th, 2010: Top TV and Radio correspondent for Masaka, Paul Kiggundu was killed by a mob of motorcycle taxi riders (bodaboda). He was filming the demolition, by mob action, of the home of one of the cyclists, Frank Kagayi, who the rest accused of having stolen a motorcycle from and killing its owner. The mob pounced on him and beat him to death. He had only worked for Top TV as Rakai correspondent for eight months. Top TV is owned by the Christian Life Church.

September 15th, 2010: A news anchor with Prime Radio Dickson Ssentongo was hit and killed with a metal bar as he walked to pick a taxi to work very early in the morning.

Ssentongo, 29, lived with his parents in Nantabulirirwa village, Ggoma subcounty, Mukono district. The attackers then dragged him about 100 meters away from the scene of crime where they left him lying unconscious in a pool of blood. Apart from being Luganda news anchor, Ssentongo was also a court assessor for the Mukono High Court circuit. Prime Radio is owned by the Seventh Day Adventist Church.

September 22nd, 2010: Tony Kizito, a photo journalist working with the Red pepper publication, has feared for the lives of his family following numerous direct threats from the District Resident commissioners (RDCs) in Mukono and Buikwe in Uganda's Central Region. He had earlier been arrested on the orders of the Buikwe RDC following a story in the Kamunye newspaper that mentioned the RDC among those opposed to the Kabaka of Buganda's visit to the area.

September 26th, 2010: Two photojournalists working with different media houses in Uganda were confronted and beaten up while on duty at two different entertainment spots in Kampala. Stuart Yiga, 26, a reporter and photojournalist with the Red pepper publication was beaten up by a city lawyer who also smashed his camera. The lawyer accused Yiga of taking his pictures as he kissed a woman at Club T1 in Kampala's Industrial Area. Yiga reported a case of assault and malicious damage to property at the Jinja road police station.

The same night, Mubiru Kakebe, a photojournalist with the New Vision publication was attacked as he covered a musical performance by the Qwela band at Club Rouge in Kampala. Despite being cleared at the gate, Mubiru was later roughened up orders of the manager, his camera confiscated and damaged, and himself suffering injuries in various parts. Police later intervened by the case has not yet been prosecuted.

October 11th, 2010: A reporter with Masaka-based Top Radio Frank Bwekumbule survived being lynched by a mob as he was covering the demolition of a house in Kabonera, Masaka. He was acting after a tip off from one of the listeners of the ongoing demolition at 5am.

The scuffle was between family members of Mzee Jumba Ssegwanyi's household, occupying the same piece of land. The bickering group knew the journalist well and it included one of his teachers. They beat him up, dragged him into a trench and later locked him in car, accusing him of interfering in family affairs. He was saved by villagers who heard the morning scuffle.

Major Developments in Courts and in Government

January 29th, 2010. Cabinet passed The Press and Journalists (Amendment) Bill. The Bill seeks to amend the Press and Journalists Act Cap 105, 2000 to provide for the registration of news papers. To require that the editors of a news paper shall ensure that what is published is not prejudicial to national security; to rationalize the composition of the media council, provide for licensing of news papers, increase the membership of the disciplinary committee; provide for offences and penalties and to provide for expeditious disposal of complaints before the disciplinary committee.

March 15th, 2010. The minister in charge of Communication made a directive to have the Broadcasting Council (BC) and Uganda Communication Commission (UCC) merged following a cabinet decision. BC and UCC are statutory bodies created by the Communication Commission Act (Cap 109) and the Electronic Media Act (Cap 104). Under the Communication Commission Act, the commission is mandated to issue frequencies but not operational licenses for TV or radio. The UCC cannot control what is broadcast and the standard of broadcasting. On the other hand its powers are vested in all modes of communication including postal, electronic and others as a regulatory and licensing body while the BC is only limited to electronic media.

August 25th, 2010. The Constitutional Court declared the law on sedition null and void. The five Judges including Justice Leticia Kikonyogo, Justice Steven Kavuma, Justice George Egwau, Justice Constance Byamugisha and Justice Augustine Nshime nullified sections 39 and 40 of the Penal Code, Cap. 120, which define and establish the law on sedition. “Judges ruled that these sections of the penal code are unconstitutional and inconsistent with Article 29 (1) which guarantee freedom of speech” Ntegye said. The existence of sedition sections do not follow within the acceptable limit of speech. In 2005, journalist Andrew Mwenda and East African Media Institute through lawyers James Nangwala and Kenneth Kakuru petitioned the Constitutional court challenging the provisions on sedition in the Penal Code Act arguing that it was violating the right to freedom of expression which is guaranteed by the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda.

October 5th, 2010: Court has dismissed sedition charges against Radio One former presenter Robert Kalundi Sserumaga in light with the Constitutional Court ruling that scrapped the offence from the Penal Code. The state had accused Sserumaga for making statements that disaffected the person of the President during a talk show in the thick of the September 2009 riots. Sserumaga was kidnapped and put in a car boot by security operatives on 11 September 2009 after attending a TV show (Kibazo Friday) on Kampala based private television Wavah Broadcasting Services (WBS TV). He was then tortured and kept incommunicado for more than eight hours. Sserumaga was later dumped at Central Police station in Kampala where he was kept for three days before being charged with several counts of sedition. He was among the eighteen journalists who lost their jobs on orders of the Broadcasting Council during the September riots. Defense lawyer David Mpanga told Buganda Road Court that it was unlawful for court to continue trying the journalist under the law which was scrapped off from Ugandan law books. Court also discharged Sserumaga’s sureties namely: Lubaga North MP Betty Kamyu, Rubaga South MP Susan Nampijja and activists Richard Mugisha and Geoffrey Wokulira Ssebaggala.



“I commend court for having exercised its independence and struck off sedition out of our law books. This law did not affect us (media) only but the entire country” the Independent Managing Director Andrew Mwenda said. He has been charged with sedition 18 times out of the 25 charges is facing before court. The Court has also made several sections in the Penal Code act redundant which establish the law on promoting sectarianism including; section 42, 43 and 44 however, section which 41 which precisely define sectarianism was maintained.

August 20th, 2010. Nakawa Court issued an injunction barring journalists from reporting details of Police investigations into the bomb blasts. Police applied for the injunction. The Anti-Terrorism Act, 2002 states that any person who establishes, runs or supports any institution for promoting terrorism, publishing and disseminating news or materials that promote terrorism is also liable to suffer death upon conviction. The injunction came at a time when there’s power struggle between the police force and the army over who should do investigation. Last week, the army paraded terrorist suspects before the media while the police boss Gen. Kale Kayihura held a parallel press conference at the same time at the government’s media center. Police argued that media reports about the ongoing investigation into July/11th bomb blasts facilitated other suspects at large to disappear.

Oct.29th, 2010: Buganda Road Court dismissed an assault case against a Kampala businessman Hassan Basajjabalaba accused of beating New Vision photo journalist Arthur Kintu. The magistrate dismissed the case after prosecution reported of unconcluded investigations into the matter by the Director of Public Prosecution (DPP). Magistrate Francis Kobusheshe noted that an assault case was not so complex to investigate and wondered why the DPP was taking long to conclude investigations. Hajji Hassan Basajjabalaba the chairman Entrepreneurship league in ruling party National Resistance Movement -Organization (NRM-O) on **June 9th, 2010** slapped and boxed Arthur Kintu’s lips at the NRM party conference at Namboole Stadium. Kobusheshe dismissed the case and ruled that the DPP may re-instate the matter if he collects enough evidence against Basajja. However, Basajja had never appeared in court to answer to the above charge despite a series of court summons issued to him by Kobusheshe requiring him to appear in court since September 9th, 2010.

Rakai, 06th/Sept/2010; Ugandan Journalists have conducted a peaceful demonstration to mourn the death of their colleagues Dickson Ssentongo and Paul Kiggundu who were beaten to death last month. The demonstration took place in Kyotera town, Rakai district in the Southern Uganda region, on 1st/Oct/2010. It was followed by a memorial service at Staring hall in Kyotera. The prayers were attended by different religious leaders from all denominations.

Section Three:

Statistical data of attacks against journalists

Table 1. Below are attacks recorded between January and October 2010 against print media and foreign media reporters

Media House	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT
Dialy Monitor		2	2			1				
New Vision			2				2		3	
The Observer										
The Independent										
The East African										
Bukedde			3					1	2	
Red Pepper			3					1	2	
Kamunye				1						
Gwanga			1		2	1				
Eddobozi	1									
Etop										
Rupiny										
Freelancers					1					
International Media			1							



Table 2. Attacks recorded between January and October 2010 against electronic media journalists

STATION	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT
URN	1									
Media Plus										
Liberty BS										
All K'moja Fm										
Alpha fm										
Arua One fm										
Baptist Intern. Missions										
Beat fm										
Bob Fm -										
Buddu BS						1				
Bunyoro BS										
Busiro Fm										
Busoga Fm										
Empanga fm										
Campus fm										
Capital fm										
CBS					2					
Peace radio										
Choice fm										
Continental fm										
Dembe fm										
Dunamis										
Spirit fm										
EA Radio										
Family radio										
Faith fm										
Grace radio										
Greater Afrikan										
Hot 100										
Impact fm										
Kagadi fm										
Kampala fm										
King fm										
KIU fm										
Kyenjojo fm										
Kinkizi										
Kfm										
New life fm										
Mama fm										
Mega fm										
Messiah radio										
Mubende BS										
Mama fm										

Table 2. Continued

STATION	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT
NBS fm										
Nile fm										
Open Gate										
Power fm										
Prime fm									1	
Radio ABC										
Apac fm										
Radio Bilal										
Radio Equator										
Radio 4										
Radio Hoima										
Kiira fm										
Veritas fm										
Kitara fm										
Koboko fm										
Radio Lira										
Radio North										
Radio One							1			
Paidha fm										
Radio Pacis										
Palwak fm										
Rhino fm										
Sapientia										
Radio Sky net -										
Radio Two	1									1
UBC Radio										
Radio Wa										
Radio West										
Rock fm										
Rukungiri										
Sanyu fm										
Star fm										
Super fm										
Ssuubi fm										
Signal fm										
Top Radio										1
Top TV									1	
Touch fm										
Unity fm										
Voice of Africa										
Voice Kigezi										
Voice of Life										
Voice of Teso										
Voice of Toro										
WEBS fm										
Life fm										
Vision Voice										
NTV							2			
WBS TV			1					1		

Table 2. Continued

STATION	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT
Bukedde fm						1				
Radio Rupiny										
Radio Etop										
Kingdom fm										
Record TV										
Radio Etop										
Kingdom fm										
Record TV										
Top TV										
NBS TV										
UBC TV										
Bukedde TV										
Star TV -										
Record radio										
Voice of Lango				2						
Luo fm	1									

Table 3. Nature of cases recorded between January and October 2010

TYPE OF CASE	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	TOTAL
Extrajudicial Killings									2		2
Torture/ Inhuman treatment			5		1	1					7
Illegal arrest/detention	1		2		1	1		2	1		8
Attacks /threats			2	1	4	1	3		2	1	14
Unlawful dismissals											
Judicial Sanctions		2	4					1			7
State Interference	1										1
Public Statement				1							1
Police Interrogation	1		1	1					1	1	5
Police Assault											

Table 4. Sources of Reported Attacks against Journalists

SOURCE	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	TOTAL
Police	1	3		6	1	1	1	2		1	16
UPDF			2								2
Pol.Parties											0
Para-military					3						3
Regulators					1						1
State		2									2
Civilian			1	4		1	1		4	2	13
RDC				1			2	1	1		4
Others				1	3	1	1				6

Table 5. Journalists at risk/ targeted most

CATEGORY	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	TOTAL
Photographer	1		6		2	1	1	1	3		15
Reporter	2		6	2	3	3					16
Radio	1		3	2	2		1	2	3	3	17
TV			1				2	1			4
Online								1			1

Table 6. Media houses whose staff were targeted during the period

MEDIA	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Total
Monitor		2	2			1					5
Bukedde			3		1						4
Red Pepper			3					1	2		6
CBS fm			3								3
Ggwanga					2						2
Lira fm				2							2
DW radio			1								1
New Vision			1				2		1		4
Radio/One Two					1		1			1	3
Kamunye				1							1
URN					1						1
Eddoboozi	1										1
Top Radio/TV					1				1	1	3
Luo fm	1										1
NTV					1		1				3
Prime fm	1								1		2
WBS					1			1			2
Buddu Fm						1					1

Table 7. Journalists underwent interrogation and reporting at Police

Name	Media Organisation	Frequency	Police Station
Angello Izama	The Daily Monitor	7 (each)	Jinja Rd/ Kabalagala
Henry Ochieng	The Daily Monitor	7 (each)	Jinja Rd/ Kabalagala
Akena Patrick Ronex	Voice of Lango	2	Lira CPS
Joe Orech	Voice of Lango	2	Lira CPS
Musa Kigongo	CBS fm	1	Masaka
Dalton Kaweesa	Red Pepper	2	Jinja Road
Ben Byaruhanga	Red Pepper	2	Jinja Road
Johnson Kaweesa	Red Pepper	2	Jinja Road
Timothy Kalyegira	Uganda Record	12	Kiira Road

Journalists on trial by October 2010

Name	Media house	Charges
Richard Tumusiime	The Red pepper	Criminal Defamation
Francis Mutazindwa	The Red pepper	Criminal Defamation
Andrew Mwend	The Independent	Sedition
Charles Bichachi	The Independent	Sedition
Moses Akena	The Daily Monitor	Criminal Defamation
Otim Patrick	Mega fm/Rupiny	Treason
Daniel Kalinaki	The Daily Monitor	Forgery & Uttering false document
Henry Ochieng	The Daily Monitor	Forgery & Uttering false document
Siraje Lubwama	The Daily Monitor	Sedition
John Njoroge	The Independent	Sedition
James Tumusiime	The Observer	Promoting Sectarianism
Ssemujju Nganda	The Observer	Promoting Sectarianism
Andrew Mwenda	The Independent	Promoting Sectarianism
Joachim Buwembo	The Daily Monitor	Criminal Defamation
Emmanuel Gyezaho	The Daily Monitor	Criminal Defamation
Robert Mukasa	The Observer	Criminal Defamation
Bernard Tabaire	The Daily Monitor	Promoting Sectarianism
Angelo Izama	The Daily Monitor	Criminal Defamation
Betty Nambooze	CBS fm	Sedition
Angelo Izama	The Daily Monitor	Libel
Henry Ochieng	The Daily Monitor	Libel
Musa Kigongo	CBS fm	Sedition
Ben Byaruhanga	The Red Pepper	Publishing false news
Dalton Kaweesa	The Red Pepper	Publishing false news
Johnson Talemwa	The Red Pepper	Publishing false

NB: The Constitutional Court has already decriminalized sedition and publication of false news. Therefore the charges still pending against these journalists are redundant and they should be dropped without further delay.

Section Four:

Analysis of the data

This section gives an analysis of the information provided in the chronology and the statistics given in the previous sections.

1. General media environment.

The media has operated in a an atmosphere of extreme caution following the major crackdown last year that saw five radio stations closed and journalists suspended. There have not been closures by the writing of this report and those radios were reopened. This has resulted in fewer instances of direct state action on media in general and with individual journalists apart from the police interventions with frequent summons and interrogations.

However, the information given above points to still disturbing trends which need to be addressed if the media is to work in peace and with confidence

2. Most frequent authors of attacks on the Media.

2.1 Police: The Police Force has ranked highest among authors of hostile actions against the media. The Police action ranged from interrogations, torture, illegal detentions, beatings and vandalizing journalists' equipments. It should be noted that in almost all cases reported these incidents have involved junior Police officers.

Police also features for not doing enough to prosecute those individuals who rein violence on journalists. Very few cases have been prosecuted successfully and Police seems reluctant to force officers of government implicated in abuses against media to appear in court.

2.2 Civilian violence: This year was characterized by an increase in attacks by civilians against journalists either through mob action or individual misbehavior. Two journalists were killed by mobs, and another journalist survived narrowly in Masaka. The HRNJ-Uganda notes with concern the increased lawlessness by civilians especially with in the absence of an effective LC system.

It is also our view that the crackdowns on the media by the State, continued acts of intimidation through Police interventions, and reports of journalists in and out of courts have created an impression among sections of the public that they can also attack journalists with impunity. One direct result of last year's crackdown was to leave the media very vulnerable and without any realistic protection by the state.

Civilian violence against the media was also reported during the days that followed the Kasubi Tombs fire where it was largely targeted at journalists working for the state media and the New Vision Group. This highlights a new threat to this particular category of journalists especially in conflict situations.

2.3 The Resident District Commissioners. These are representatives of the President in districts and they head the security committees. The increased reports of RDC -authored actions against the media are disturbing. They force radio stations to cancel shows with opposition leaders, and even order the arrest of journalists at will. HRNJ-Uganda's considered opinion is that the

RDCs are overstepping their authority and therefore the Police should act professionally when executing instructions from the RDCs. Indeed if not checked, RDCs will become some of the leading enemies of the press in Uganda.

2.4 The Uganda People's Defense Forces: There were unfortunate incidents involving the Presidential Guard Brigade at the Kasubi Royal Tombs where they shot and killed several people and injured others including a journalist. Apart from this incident, HRNJ notes with interest that there were other incidents involving the army in acts hostile to the media during the year under review. This contrasts sharply with last year when a number of incidents of attacks and threats to journalists were recorded.

3. Journalists most at risk. The report shows that photojournalists and radio reporters have been targeted most by civilians and RDCs and Police in some cases. These attacks point at the vulnerability of this category of journalists and calls for employers to review their facilitation, training, deployment and issues of safety.

4. Support from employers. Interviews with victim journalists and also with media managers indicate that employers need to pay more attention to the defense of their journalists and to use their positions to urge authorities to do more to protect journalists, especially those working upcountry.

5. Court Rulings: The Constitutional Court ruling to decriminalize sedition was a victory for all media. It follows an earlier ruling that scrapped the offence of publishing false news. It therefore follows that all pending cases of these offences against journalists are now redundant and they should collapse. HRNJ-Uganda calls on the Courts to issue an omnibus order to all courts to immediately drop these cases and clear the accused journalists.

6. Non-Prosecution of cases: The report contains complaints from journalists and cases that they have filed against individuals. Many of these have not been prosecuted with the same zeal as the State prosecuted cases against journalists.

7. Police Call: HRNJ-Uganda also notes that the Police take rather too long investigating cases against journalists, thereby forcing them to keep perpetually reporting to Police many times. This is not only disruptive but it also increases the sense of fear while at work.

8. Inside media houses: Interviews with a cross section of journalists gave testimonies of increased fear and a regime of self-censorship in most media houses. New regulations against offending the State, scrapping of programmes and even shuffling of staff especially from political programs. If this climate of fear persists, the media might not cover the forthcoming elections with all the confidence and the openness the exercise demands.

9. Type of Cases Reported: The highest number of offences reported was physical attacks and outright threats. This comprised nearly a quarter of all cases reported.

Section Five: What HRNJ-Uganda has done

1. The organization has documented and followed up every single case of violence and threats against media personnel reported.
2. It has always issued statements and appeals to the State and institutions involved to do more to protect journalists.
3. It has extended awareness to many journalists and their response is very positive. Many now alert HRNJ-Uganda whenever in trouble.
4. Appealed to and engaged media employers to improve working conditions and facilitation of journalists especially those mostly at risk.
5. It has engaged Senior Police officers in dialogue on improving relations with the media. The response from the senior police cadres is encouraging and have called for more frequent interactions to narrow the gap between the two institutions.
6. HRNJ has also participated in media events to protest violence against journalists.
7. The organization has also appealed to Parliament to reject the proposed amended media laws that will only curtail further the freedom of expression and media working environment.



Section Six: Voices of the victim journalists

Journalist A: Victim of mob violence

I was attacked by a mob, beaten and injured. Those who beat me up knew me very well. There was no mistaken identity; we lived on the same village. It was shocking. I did not expect ordinary people to go into this frenzy of violence.

Unfortunately, despite Police making arrests, the suspects were later released on Police bond. My employers, my workmates, fellow journalists in the area have all tried their best to get this case followed up. I was reliably informed there were people within the local Police frustrating my case, as has been the case before with other cases concerning journalists.

Police expect me to contribute towards the re-arrest of suspects. It normally requires me to provide transport and allowances to two Policemen if they are to effect the re-arrest. That is expensive. Eventually, villagers told me to reconcile with my attackers as long as they paid my medical bills. We agreed on the amount to pay but they have since reneged on this obligation too.

What is most scaring now, is that ordinary people; people living on the same village as you can almost beat you and Police grants them bond and not Police protection for you. That is very scaring.

Journalist B: VICTIM OF RDC VIOLENCE

I had been duly invited to cover a family event—last funeral rights of the RDC's father. By sheer coincidence, his brother who invited me is from the Opposition. He had also invited opposition leaders, just like the RDC had invited government leaders.

When Dr Besigye arrived, the RDC was incensed. He grabbed him and tried to stop him from joining the Mass which was going on. When people openly welcomed the FDC leader, the RDC grabbed a stick and told me to stop covering Besigye. He hit me on the shoulder, on the back and as he tried to hit me on the head, I raised my hand to cover the head. He hit the hand and my camera fell and was badly damaged. I was taken to hospital.

I recorded a statement at Police and my employers also offered me the in-house lawyers. The RDC refused to appear at Police when summoned. For fear of turning the event into a political contest, senior army and intelligence officers in the region and from Kampala intervened. They replaced my camera and ordered the RDC to write an apology and compensate me Shs 1m. They also prevailed on my employer to drop charges and follow the reconciliation path. The RDC has not paid me the money since.

I still feel let down by the justice system. Some people still appear untouchable.

Journalist C: Victim of gun-wielding operatives

It was a day for local by-elections and the areas was charged. I was busy covering the voting when a car pulled by near me. “I was arrested by plain clothed gun-wielding men who forced me into a numberless Toyota Prado which whisked me away. After few minutes of my arrest, I found myself detained in a safe house. The house has a yellow gate where I spotted a yellow bus which resembled the one commonly used by Kalangala Action Plan”. I was mistreated, tortured and sustained serious injuries.

After subjecting me to several hours of cruelty the captors started interrogating me until a phone call came and diverted them elsewhere. That is how I managed to escape. I leave in fear because I do not know the persons behind my arrest or the motive.

Journalist D: Exiled journalist trailed in Kampala

Exiled journalist received deportation threats from Consul to Uganda. The diplomat said he was fed up of my exposure of gross human rights abuse back at home. I had organized protest marches through Kampala to draw attention to these abuses. At home the government clamped down hard on the media and we had to flee.

Misfortune followed me to the land where I fled. One day, while walking on a street in Kampala, the envoy raised his head from the window of a car and threatened me with kidnap and to deport me back home within 24 hours. I live in fear. The HRNJ-Uganda has approached the Consulate many times to resolve my issue to no avail.

Journalist E: Attacked By Soldiers and Threatened

I was arrested and beaten and kicked by soldiers while covering the inferno at the Kasubi Royal Tombs. The soldiers ordered me to delete all the photos on my camera. I however managed to escape. I had taken many pictures including those of soldiers dispersing rampaging crowds that had blocked the way to the burning tombs. I was injured and admitted to hospital. While there, I received a call on a private number asking for both the hospital I am currently admitted to and the where-about of the photos I took at Kasubi tombs. When I asked who the caller was, he identified himself as army captain. He even gave me his names. The caller demanded for photos and said he would get them at any cost. For some time after this incident, I lived in fear and in hiding until the situation normalized.

Journalist F: Suspended from work, questioned by Police for hosting Opposition leader

Throughout the fateful night I received calls including those from the Resident District Commissioner who demanded to know about what had transpired during the programme but I invited him to come to the radio and listens to the recordings.” The RDC booked for the show the following day to clarify what he called “lies” uttered by the Opposition leader.

Police later summoned us for interrogation and demanded to listen to the tapes. Police wanted us to give an account of what we asked the politician and the criteria we used to invite him. We restricted ourselves to the recordings which the station provided. My director then called me to say very senior government officials ad people close to the President were not happy with the show and that the radio station could easily be closed down. We wrote the apology and aired it several times even during the show that the RDC had booked.

After a week of interrogation, police detectives stormed the radio demanding for the list of contributors during the show and their telephone contacts but the Station management said that they had to protect their sources and in any case that required court warrant.

Journalist G: Summoned by police, reported at least 12 times

I was summoned by Police and interrogated many times over an article I wrote on my online journal. I was accused of sedition, causing hatred to the Head of State. The case has since been scrapped by the Constitutional Court by I have not been cleared by the Police. I have reported over 12 times to two different police stations. The endless reporting to Police causes tension and distracts focus away from work.

I think the plight of journalists could be better if people with influence prevailed over government and its agents to stop the harassment of journalists. Development partners and those governments friendly to Uganda have a big role to play here. They have the muscle to cause positive change. Unfortunately, they sometimes plead for funny causes which do not have much meaning to the wider society. If they weighed in on government with the same vigor they employed on the issue of homophobia, then government would certainly act fast on improving media freedoms.



Section Seven:

Views from representatives of accused government agencies

(a) View of from the Minister of State for the Presidency, Hon. Dr. Beatrice Wabudeya.

Dr Wabudeya is responsible for the docket of the Resident District Commissioners. The Report highlighted RDC as ranking number three in attacks of various nature against journalists. These are her views:

- I have not received any report of an RDC harassing journalists. These reports should be sent to me. We have a mechanism of dealing with RDC who offend members of the public. When they are reported, we investigate and handle the matter on a case by case basis.
- In the case of the Kanungu RDC who you say beat up a New Vision journalist in Masaka, this is clearly a private affair. He was not acting in his capacity as RDC. This was a family function away from his administrative area. He is not above the law; the journalist should have taken him to court.
- But you journalists must also remember that RDCs are in charge of security. Suppose the RDC senses that you are about to incite the public in the course of your work, do you expect him or her to keep quiet? You write a lot of sensational things, many not true. Some papers do not even bother to apologize or make corrections.
- As regards to the allegations that some RDCs interfere with radio programs to stop opposition politicians from talking on these radios, I do not buy that argument. These are private radio stations, they can decide whom to invite. If it were Uganda Broadcasting Corporation, which is a public broadcaster, I would not be surprised. You cannot convince me that an RDC can interfere with private broadcasting.
- The cases your report mentions, in any case, are just a few. We have over 100 RDCs, why should the actions of a few tarnish the name of the institution?
- Freedom of expression and the press goes with responsibilities. The media people must also play their part.

(b) Views from the Police:

The Police were ranked first among those harassing journalists. The report says the abuses against journalists mainly included arbitrary arrests and detentions, physical abuse, harassment through prolonged interrogations, and general unwillingness to follow through complaints of attacks on journalists by members of the Force and the public.

The initial reaction of the Police to the report was one of welcome. The report was sent to the following: The head of the Police Standards Unit, Mr John Ndungutse; the head of the Media Offences Desk at the CID, Mr Simon Peterson Kuteesa and the Assistant Inspector General of Police in charge of Community Affairs, Mr. Asan Kasingye. Mr. Kuteesa also attended the launch of the report and the Free Media Week. Mr. Kasingye tasked Mr. Kuteesa with making a formal reaction to the report.

Mr. Kuteesa requested initially for two weeks but he later asked for again more time as he had been deployed for other urgent election related duties. He confirmed he was in the process of drafting a response but it would take time because it had to be vetted by his superiors-as he says. He said the report raised a number of important issues.

HRNJ-Uganda has not yet received the formal reaction from the Police. If got, we will append to the report at a later date. It should be stressed however, that Police was keen to have their views included in the final report.



Section Eight:

Media environment ahead of the 2011 elections

(i) The environment

With just two months away from the elections, the climate for media practice is still one of fear and uncertainty mainly because of the serious attacks on media in 2009. Radio stations that had been closed are back on air, but most media houses have instituted a high degree of self-censorship, a restructuring of staff, and close monitoring of content. The interfering by some RDC in radio operations continues and no action has been taken to restrain them. Furthermore, the creation of a Media Offences desk at the CID has added to the climate of fear. The proposed amendment to the Press and Journalists Act (2000) is cause for worry. One of its objectives is to provide for the creation of media offences.

(ii) Recommendations

In light of the above findings, the following are recommendations are made:

(a) Media Houses and media organizations need to intensify the lobbying for more protection of journalists especially during the electoral period. The media houses should also invest more resources in the protection of their journalists through sensitization, use of best practices, training and facilitation.

(b) The government should stay the proposed Press and Journalists Amendment Bill because it has potential to make media difficult during this electoral period.

(c) All media activists led by human rights organizations should draft a declaration for respect for freedom of the media and expression. The candidates, both at presidential and other levels should be called upon to sign up in support of this declaration.

(d) Media Organisations should start a joint and massive campaign to sensitise the public against attacks to journalists.

(e) Media managers and Police need to develop a working framework especially during the election period to avoid conflict.

(f) Media activists should start working on a law that will operationalise the media freedoms stipulated in the Constitution. Despite the Bill of Rights being enshrined in the Constitution, many people, including officers of government, security officers, politicians and the general public do not fully understand their operationalisation. It is incumbent upon the media to start the process by drafting a private bill that will seek to spell out how these freedoms should be enjoyed.

(g) Media owners and managers should stand up in defense of their staff and endeavour to provide quick legal aid where needed.

(h) Journalists and their associations need to network more with HRNJ to improve the monitoring of abuses and attacks on journalists and media houses.

