



OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS

REMARKS BY THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS

“THE INTERNATIONAL DAY TO END IMPUNITY FOR CRIMES AGAINST JOURNALISTS”

WEDNESDAY 2ND NOVEMBER, 2023

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today, we are gathered here to observe the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists and it is a stark reminder that these crimes continue to be committed despite several measures undertaken to protect the lives of journalists in the course of their duties.

Journalists play an integral role in disseminating information of public interest, promotion of the rule of law and upholding freedom of expression and media as well as access to information pursuant to the provisions of Article 33, 34, 35 and 37 of the Constitution.

Ladies and Gentlemen, a free and independent media is the cornerstone of any democracy as it ensures transparency and accountability in the management of public affairs. Therefore, journalists are the voices of the voiceless and seek to inform the public of their rights, freedoms and public interest related issues.

The ODPP is committed to upholding the fundamental freedoms and rights of journalists in the course of their duties as the crimes committed against journalists erode and undermine democracy and accountability in society.

I am honored to stand before you today with a clear and unequivocal commitment to uphold the rights and freedoms of journalists within the confines of the law.

To this end, I am committed to ensure that the following measures are undertaken;

1. Investigations into crimes committed against journalists should be undertaken expeditiously and those found culpable should be prosecuted.
2. **Protection of Witnesses and Whistleblowers:** This is an integral part of the criminal justice system as it is meant to protect credible sources of information. Therefore, it is paramount that witnesses and whistleblowers are effectively protected and not victimized so as to ensure quality prosecutions are undertaken especially against individuals of influence within society. Further, I urge journalists to fully utilize the Whistleblowers Protection Act and the Witness Protection Act.
3. **Training and Sensitization.** I propose joint training programs for prosecutors, judicial officers and law enforcement agencies so as to adopt measures and strategies to address crimes against journalists.

4. **Timely Prosecution.** I undertake to ensure that crimes against journalists are not only expeditiously prosecuted but I will also endeavor to hold those found those culpable to account no matter their status in society.
5. **Collaboration and Coordination.** My agenda which is focused on a people centered prosecution service emphasizes on collaboration and coordination of external and internal stakeholders. I will pursue strategies that foster close collaboration between my office and the Kenya Media Stakeholders Working Group to enhance information sharing and exchange of ideas. This will end impunity for crimes against journalists and ensure a transparent and accountable system.
6. **Transparency and Accountability:** Further, as part of my Agenda, I will revamp the ODPP Public Affairs and Corporate Communication Division which will provide the platform for dissemination of information regarding investigation and prosecution of crimes against Journalists.

It is therefore my firm belief that with these measures and our collective commitment to change, we can make a significant difference. The ODPP is committed to create an environment where journalists can pursue their work without fear or intimidation.

As we commemorate this International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists, let us recommit ourselves to the protection of those who dedicate their lives to upholding the values of truth and transparency. Let us stand together in the fight against impunity, and promote a culture

where journalists can work without fear, where justice prevails, and where society thrives through accountability and adherence to the rule of law.

I also note that there are numerous instances where journalists have been involved in the dissemination and misinformation and disinformation otherwise referred to as 'fake news'. I must emphasize that this is a trend that erodes the credibility of the profession. Therefore, I strongly urge the Media Council of Kenya to deal with such vices which are only meant to undermine the rule of law and accountability. I also strongly urge the Kenya Editors Guild to embrace professionalism in order to curb such vices.

Once again, I assure you of my unwavering support to ensure that crimes against journalists are dealt with and I wish to thank you for this opportunity to address you on this auspicious day in commemoration to end impunity for crimes against journalists.

Thank you.