

**HUMAN RIGHTS IN ZAMBIA-[2017-2022]:  
ACCESS TO INFORMATION, INTIMIDATION  
AND ATTACKS AGAINST JOURNALISTS,  
INDEPENDENCE OF THE MEDIA.**

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# Situation in Zambia – Issue 1

- During the 3rd UPR cycle in 2017, the Government of Zambia received and accepted seven (7) recommendations relating to media freedoms, access to information, and civic space;
- Zambia has not implemented almost all the recommendations e.g. the enactment of the Access to Information law.
- The New developments are that Zambia has a new administration since August 12, 2022 which has demonstrated willing to make the reforms;
- New needs include new players induction

# Recommendations – Issue 1

- Guarantee that journalists and other media workers can carry out their work independently and without fear of persecution;
- Review defamation laws to make sure they are in full compliance with international human rights law; Amend the law;
- Enactment of the access to information law in consultation with stakeholders;
- The process is ongoing on the enactment as consultations on the draft Bill are still in progress;
- Police are now tough on people harassing the media and journalists

# Situation in Zambia – Issue 2

- **Issue 2:** Ensure media freedom by providing full editorial independence to publicly-owned media;
- **New Development:** New board for ZNBC and IBA; management has also changed and the ministry in charge of information changed to Ministry of Information and Media from information and broadcasting; To date, the public media outlets don't have substantial heads;
- **New needs:** appointment modalities of the Board of Directors must change from politicians to an independent Board; IBA must have an oversight over publicly-owned media

# Recommendations – Issue 2

- Establish a genuine publicly-owned media for better information, entertainment and educational programming
- Amend the IBA and ZNBC laws to ensure that IBA oversee publicly-owned media not only the private and also ZNBC is weaned from its dependence on the state for its operations;
- Set up an inter-sectoral Board of directors for both IBA and ZNBC to ensure independence of the two boards and also the institutions they oversee;
- Enact the Access to information and also media ethics Council to ensure responsible reporting

# Situation in Zambia – Issue 3

- **Issue 3-Enact legislation to facilitate access to information**
- **New developments:** upped national stakeholders' engagement/dialogue on the need to enact access to information law; review of the draft Bill;
- **New needs:** slow pace at which the review of the draft is being done for the country to arrive at the final copy; move from rhetoric to practical steps on the enactment of the Bill
- More civil society advocacy around the ATI key to ensure expeditious enactment.

# Recommendations – Issue 3

- Establish a ATI CSOs coalition to advocate the for the quick enactment of the law;
- Harmonisation of the law on state secret and state security Acts to ensure that fears by the state are taken care of hence easy implementation of the ATI once enacted;
- Set up an inter-ministerial commission to re-examine the ATI Bill for buy-in from other state agencies;
- Make the bill as a public good and not a media good as this creates fear in the state who feel it is meant to intrude in privacy of citizens.

# Conclusion

- To realise freedom of assembly and expression, the country should give a deadline when the laws inimical to these freedoms must be repealed and replaced or amended;
- In this regard, the public order Act, the defamation law, the penal code Act (prohibition of publications and contempt of Court), cyber Security and Cybercrimes Act among others;
- Undertake a referendum to expand the liberties such as civil, political, cultural and environmental.



# MEANWHILE

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**“A mouth with a rotten tooth should chew with caution”**

# Thank You

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## **From all the members of our coalition:**

- ❑ Panos Institute
- ❑ Zambia Council for Social Development
- ❑ Media Institute for Southern Africa-Zambia
- ❑ Civicus World Alliance for Citizens' participation