



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Lilongwe, Malawi – 31st March, 2026

A CALL FOR PROFESSIONALISM AND INTEGRITY IN THE 2026 MISA MALAWI NGC ELECTIONS

LILONGWE, March 31, 2026 – As the Malawi Chapter of the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA Malawi) prepares to hold its National Governing Council (NGC) elections on **May 9, 2026**, the Media Council of Malawi (MCM) wishes to issue a timely reminder to all candidates regarding the high standards of conduct expected of those seeking to lead the institution.

MISA Malawi remains an advocate of Media freedom and Freedom of Expression. The leadership of such an institution carries a profound responsibility to both the media sector and the public. MCM asserts that a MISA Malawi leadership compromised by external interests is a direct threat to media freedom, the safety of journalists, and the integrity of the media in the already struggling democracy.

In this regard, the Council calls upon all candidates aspiring to serve in leadership positions to uphold the highest standards of independence, integrity, and commitment to press freedom. Without departing from the provisions of the MISA Constitution, MCM is calling on all aspirants to adhere to the following principles throughout the campaign period and beyond:

1) Unwavering Professionalism

Candidates must conduct their campaigns with the decorum and propriety befitting media leaders. We urge all contestants to focus on substantive issues and manifestos that address the evolving challenges of the industry.

2) Transparency in Campaign Financing

In the spirit of accountability, the Council strongly encourages all candidates to be transparent about the sources of their campaign funds. Leadership in the media sector must be beyond reproach and free from the influence of undisclosed interests that could compromise institutional integrity.

3) Independence and Neutrality

MISA Malawi is a non-partisan body. Candidates must demonstrate their commitment to maintaining the independence of the Chapter. The NGC must remain a shield for journalists, unswayed by external political or commercial pressures. To ensure that the NGC is composed of leaders, not lobbyists, MCM officially challenges all candidates

for the positions of Chairperson and Vice Chairperson to include a Declaration of Independence in their manifestos.

4) Commitment to Public Service

The primary mandate of the NGC is to serve and protect the media sector and, by extension, the Malawian public's right to know. Aspirants should reflect a clear vision for safeguarding press freedom and promoting high ethical standards across all media platforms.

5) WPFDD Commitment

We encourage MISA Secretariat to use the upcoming World Press Freedom Day (WPFDD) in Salima (May 1–2, 2026) to allow the aspirants sign a formal Code of Conduct committing: to fight media capture; to champion inclusivity and diversity in media representation, ensuring voices from all regions and communities are heard; to promote ethical journalism that prioritizes truth, fairness, and accountability over partisan or commercial interests; and to strengthen solidarity among journalists to defend against intimidation, censorship, and manipulation.

The Media Council of Malawi believes that a transparent, fair, and professional elective process within MISA Malawi strengthens the entire media ecosystem. We trust that the candidates will lead by example, showing the same level of accountability they demand from other sectors of society. We call on candidates to stand firm, act with courage, and ensure that the NGC remains a beacon of independence and a defender of press freedom in Malawi and beyond.

MCM commends MISA Malawi for engaging the Malawi Electoral Commission (MEC) to manage the polls, ensuring transparency in the process. However, transparency in the process must be matched by transparency in persona.

We urge all paid-up members eligible to vote to look beyond popularity. Evaluate candidates on their ability and understanding of the role and functions of MISA, and to resist the lure of political patronage. "The future of press freedom in Malawi depends on electing an NGC that cannot be bought, bullied, or borrowed."

The Media Council of Malawi stands ready to work with an independent, vibrant, and fearless MISA Malawi NGC. Let the May 9 elections be a masterclass in media integrity for the rest of Africa to follow.

We wish MISA Malawi and all candidates a peaceful and successful elective General Assembly.

Signed:



Dr. Jolly Maxwell Ntaba
BOARD CHAIRPERSON



Moses Kaufa
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR