



**JOINT STATEMENT BY THE NATIONAL MEDIA COMMISSION
(NMC) AND THE NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS AUTHORITY
(NCA) ON MEDIA RESPONSIBILITY IN THE RUN UP TO THE 2016
GENERAL ELECTIONS**

The National Media Commission (NMC) and the National Communications Authority (NCA) met today, Thursday, 24th November, 2016 to discuss ways to renew their collaboration in regulating the broadcasting sector to ensure free and responsible coverage of the elections especially on Election Day and the immediate post-election period.

This follows previously successful efforts in 2012 and 2013 for the general elections and the election petition respectively by the NCA and NMC, where we sought to ensure that media practitioners safeguarded the interest and safety of our country and its citizens by not using the airwaves for activities that were likely to undermine our collective peace and security.

In this regard, the NCA and NMC wish to remind all frequency authorisation holders of the obligations they have with regards to their use of a national resource. This responsibility extends to all those who in one way or the other use a frequency which has been allocated for the purposes of fair and responsible dissemination of news. These obligations can be found under the terms of their broadcasting authorisations, the various guidelines of the National Media Commission, the Code of Conduct of the Ghana Independent Broadcasters' Association (GIBA) and the Code of Ethics of the Ghana Journalists Association (GJA).

As authorisation holders, you have to ensure that your platforms are not used to incite violence and in all situations, diligently and independently investigate all allegations and claims by interest groups before putting them out. Broadcasting houses should at all costs, avoid disseminating false news, a phenomenon which can escalate tension at such a critical time.



As we get close to the elections, we are aware of efforts by several institutions to foster an atmosphere of tolerance and peace. We also take this opportunity to condemn any acts of election violence and intolerance and reiterate that Ghana's stability should be paramount at all times. As gatekeepers and news handlers, the NCA and NMC caution you, the media, especially, the broadcast media to watch against incendiary verbal attacks on air and inflammatory statements which could result in negative actions.

We take this opportunity to assure the public that while every effort would be made to encourage professional practice in the media, the two institutions would not hesitate to take all appropriate measures within the law against any media house that does not comply with the earlier mentioned statutes and especially with regards to your broadcasting authorisations.

The meeting also called on all citizens of Ghana to ensure the judicious and responsible use of social media to promote peace during this critical period.

Mobile Network Operators (MNOs) are reminded to ensure that their networks function during the Election Period and they shall be held to the strictest quality of service standards. Related to this, all content providers on electronic communication networks should not create and/or spread false information.

The meeting stressed that identified media houses and individuals who flout or do not comply with the laid down standards, rules, guidelines, laws and regulations would be sanctioned.

All members of the general public who may have any concerns about the professional performance of any broadcasting house should report their concerns to the National Communications Authority or the National Media Commission. Special numbers would be communicated in due course.



Issued on 24th November, 2016 by NCA and NMC:

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