

## Press Statement

### Police must cease Harassment of Radio Africa Group Journalists

**Wednesday August 5, 2009.** The **International Center for Policy and Conflict (ICPC)** strongly defends a journalist's right to protect his or her sources of information.

In this regard, the Kenyan Police, particularly Anti-Terrorism Unit, must stop its malicious and illegal harassment and intimidation of the Radio Africa Group journalists over terrorism suspect's report. The police act amounts to direct affront on cardinal principle of protecting sources of confidential information. Safeguarding the identities and confidences of courageous whistleblowers who put their life at risk is an important step in ability to shade light on human rights violations and corruption.

This harassment of Radio Africa and or other journalists flies in the face of the Media Act 2007 which states clearly that journalist have a right to protect their source. Media freedom has a direct impact of promoting not only a functioning and accountable democracy but also a healthy one. The state is enjoined to rein and discipline its corrupt and inept officials instead of unleashing terror on journalists who are diligently doing their work.

ICPC observes that every time a journalist is forced to reveal a confidential source, the media as a whole suffers a crippling blow, potential whistleblowers retreat farther away from revelation, and journalists write with restrained pens the consequence of which is wanton violations of human rights and corruption.

Kenya government has an obligation to preserve the free marketplace of ideas and access to information. It is regrettable that in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Kenya has not enacted the **freedom of information law**. It is regrettable that Kenyans still cannot access valuable state information which would facilitate them make informed decisions, and influence state policies making process. This law would also enable citizens to hold state and its agencies to account. It is paramount to uphold the uninterrupted flow of information in order to grease the democratic machine.

We are calling for unconditional opening of doors to those who gather and disseminate information, for any restriction upon their activities is a restriction upon the crucial free press. ICPC is emphasizing that restriction of information flow eats away democratic governance and undermines the role of the free press in checking the government. Popular government couldn't succeed without the steady, robust, unimpeded, and uncensored flow of information.

Thank you

**Signed by**  
**Ndung'u Wainaina**  
**Executive Director**