



# ***Media Dialogue: Turning the Page of Hate Media in Africa***

April 17-18<sup>th</sup> 2014

## **20<sup>th</sup> Commemoration of Genocide against Tutsi**

### **KIGALI DECLARATION**

We the participants at the Turning the Page of Hate Media Dialogue, held in Kigali, Rwanda, on April 17/18<sup>th</sup> 2014,

*Having* considered the impact of genocide against Tutsi and having paid solemn tribute to those, including in media, who lost their lives,

*Believing* that the time is right for a renewal of the Africa-wide struggle to combat attempts to use media as instruments of propaganda, hatred and violence,

*Considering* that free media and ethical journalism are cornerstones of democracy and vital to the creation of unified, peaceful and tolerant society,

*Insisting* that hate speech, which incites violence and intense hatred between communities, must be exposed, isolated and eliminated without undermining ethical journalism and press freedom,

*Calling* on all governments in Africa to commit themselves to the highest standards of press freedom and free expression and to support continental efforts to strengthen journalism and media by signing the Declaration of Table Mountain,

*Noting* that among the primary victims of intolerance and discrimination are women and people from minority communities whose portrayal in media is often demeaning and full of stereotypes,

*Welcoming* the rapid expansion of internet access across Africa and recognising that there is an urgent need to promote responsible use of information online but also to counter and, where appropriate, to block hate speech in social networks,

*Further recognising* the growing significance of online information in the media economy and strongly insisting that media do not sacrifice standards and ethical credibility for commercial gain, and finally

*Noting* the tendency of media on all platforms to sensationalise information and to use stereotypes and clichés which reinforce the conditions in which hate speech can flourish,

**We declare our support for the launch of an unprecedented campaign, *Turning the Page of Hate Media in Africa*, with the aim of promoting ethical, tolerant and inclusive journalism, good media governance and responsible communications across the open information landscape.**

We further welcome the commitment of the government of Rwanda to support this campaign.

We urge the organisers of this meeting to establish a framework for the operation and development of the campaign including the preparation of materials and activities to the benefit of journalism in Africa.

As a start we endorse:

- a) the enclosed guidelines to test for hate speech in journalism;
- b) the partnership proposed to the African media community by the Special Envoy for Women, Peace and Security of the Chairperson of the African Union to fight against hate speech that targets women;
- c) the organisation of further activities including a meeting in Kampala, Uganda, on *Hate Speech and Reporting on Violence and Discrimination Against Women* and an event in Johannesburg, South Africa, at the time of the African Media Leaders Forum.

We urge all media professional groups at national and regional level and across all platforms of journalism in Africa to raise awareness of the ethical challenges set out here and to strengthen editorial work in line with the objectives of the *Turning the Page of Hate in Media* campaign.

Finally, we thank the Media High Council, the Ethical Journalism Network and the African Media Initiative for the organisation of this meeting.

We urge them to broaden support for the campaign through further co-operation with the participants signed below who include among them representatives and members of Africa's leading media professional groups including the Association of Rwandan Female Journalists, African Editors' Forum, Federation of African Journalists, International Association of Women in Radio and Television, Rwanda Media Commission, Rwanda Journalists Association, World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers, and the Ugandan Journalists' Union.

*Kigali, April 18<sup>th</sup> 2014*



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*Signatories:*

African Media Initiative

Media High Council of Rwanda

Ethical Journalism Network

Special Envoy on Gender, Peace and Security of the African Union

Association of Rwandan Female Journalists

African Editors' Forum

Federation of African Journalists

International Association of Women in Radio and Television

Rwanda Media Commission

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Ugandan Journalists' Union