



**A COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE END OF A STAKEHOLDERS’
CONSULTATIVE MEETING ON BROADCASTING IN GHANA
HELD ON FRIDAY, 16TH APRIL 2021**

Background/Purpose

On Friday 16th April 2021, the Ministry of Information hosted a Stakeholders' Consultative Meeting on emerging issues relevant to Broadcasting in Ghana. The meeting took place at the Alisa Hotel, Ridge Accra.

Stakeholders Engaged

- The Ministry of Information;
- The Ministry of Communications and Digitalisation;
- The Ministry of Justice and Attorney-General's Department;
- The Ministry of Local Government, Decentralisation and Rural Development;
- The National Media Commission (NMC);
- The National Communications Authority (NCA);
- The Ghana Independent Broadcasters Association (GIBA);
- The Ghana Journalists Association (GJA);
- The Media Foundation for West Africa (MFWA);
- The Judiciary;
- Bank of Ghana;
- National Cyber Security Centre;
- The National Security Secretariat;
- The Communications Select Committee of Parliament;
- The UNESCO Ghana Commission
- National Film Authority;
- Local Government Service; and
- The Gaming Commission.

Discussions focused on the following

- A. Regulatory Collaboration to address *Unethical broadcast content*.
- B. The draft *Broadcasting Bill*.

Outcomes of the engagement

A. Regulatory Collaboration to address Unethical broadcast content

To address the question of Unethical broadcast content, stakeholders agreed to set up a joint stakeholder group under the National Media Commission to examine reports of unethical content and invoke the powers of the National Communication Authority, to take punitive action against offending broadcasters.

To achieve this, the following steps were outlined.

- (I) Stakeholders will sign up to a **Memorandum of Co-operation** within fourteen (14) days of the meeting, formalising arrangements for action.
- (II) Key to the arrangements, is the setting up of the joint Stakeholder group as a committee of the National Media Commission (NMC) in accordance with section 10 of the NMC Act 1993 (ACT 449).
- (III) Membership of the committee is to include representatives of;
 - A. The National Media Commission
 - B. The National Communications Authority
 - C. The National Security Secretariat
 - D. The Bank of Ghana
 - E. The Ghana Independent Broadcasters Association
 - F. The Ghana Journalists Association
 - G. The Office of the Attorney-General
- (IV) The work of the committee is to among other things;
 - A. Monitor the broadcasting landscape to identify and to examine complaints of unethical broadcast content. These include content that is offensive to National Security, Public order, Public Morality, against the reputations, rights and freedoms of other persons.
 - B. Provide an early warning system for flagging such unethical broadcast content.

- C. **Recommend appropriate remedies** to relevant regulators including
- Recommendations for the issuance (and publication) of warnings,
 - Recommendations for the suspension of frequency authorization by the National Communications Authority,
 - Recommendations for the withdrawal of frequency authorization by the National Communications Authority.

B. Draft Broadcasting Bill

The meeting also examined key issues being considered in the development of a broadcasting law for Ghana. While agreeing on several policy propositions, others required further address through memoranda from stakeholder groups.

Stakeholders agreed to submit formal written memos on the bill for the immediate attention of the Ministry to assist in formulating a final draft.

Stakeholders further agreed to engage the Judiciary on the balance between *media gate-keeping* and *protection of the freedoms of media and expression*.

The Ministry undertook to secure the needed approvals and lay the bill before parliament immediately upon conclusion of consultations.

Conclusion

Stakeholders were pleased with the open and frank engagement platform and committed to work together to achieve results urgently. The *Ministry of Information* has committed to hold this engagement annually to examine developments in the Industry and agree with stakeholders on measures to further develop the Industry.

SIGNED



KOJO OPPONG NKRUMAH (MP)

MINISTER