



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

MINISTRY OF INFORMATION, COMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY

SPEECH BY MR. JEROME OCHIENG, PRINCIPAL SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF INFORMATION, COMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY DURING THE ANNUAL JOURNALISM EXCELLENCE AWARD (AJEA) CEREMONY ON 9TH AUGUST, 2019 AT INTERCONTINENTAL HOTEL NAIROBI

SALUTATION

- 1. Hon. Raila Amolo Odinga-The Chief Guest**
- 2. Mr. David Omwoyo- CEO Media Council of Kenya**

3. **Media Stakeholders Present**
4. **Annual Journalism Excellence Award (AJEA) Finalists**
5. **Management and Staff of the Media Council of Kenya**
6. **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Good Evening!

1. **It is a privilege to be** amongst you today. It is not an everyday occurrence to be in the company of the movers and shakers of the media sector in this country.
2. **The Government of Kenya** is committed to the having a free and thriving media sector. This is due in great part to the fact that the media is recognized as the Fourth Pillar or Estate of government, alongside the Executive, the Judiciary and the Legislature.

3. **Media is the only branch** of government so to speak, that interrogates and magnifies issues on behalf of the citizenry. This is essential for a truly accountable government – which has been your theme for the just-concluded Annual Media Summit and also underpinning the Awards tonight.

4. **The role of media in a** democracy like ours, is most critical in determining the overall efficacy of our public discourse. We rely on the media to bring about accountability and transparency in the conduct of public affairs, while deeply anchoring the importance of public participation in all aspects of governance. In essence, media is the watchdog of society.

5. **To do this**, the media must introspect and ask itself whether it is carrying out that task to the best of its ability and if it is yielding the desired results. This in essence refers to the quality of journalism in this country and whether it faithfully interrogates what ails Kenya, while helping find solutions.

- 6. In my opinion,** this means going beyond the watchdog role – which is important – to also providing solutions as the media, is the next frontier for media in this country and befitting of the Fourth Estate or pillar of government. Research has shown that readers of solutions-based articles not only feel more informed, but also want to continue to learn more about the issue and are inspired to work towards a solution.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

- 7. For this reason,** the Annual Journalism Excellence Awards (AJEA) is very important. By simply looking at how the media have performed in relation to the Code of Conduct for the Practice of Journalism in Kenya, and recognizing those who epitomize the best of the Code in practice.
- 8. As a Government,** we will continue to engage with the media sector, through the regulator Media Council of Kenya to find ways of strengthening the sector and ensuring quality outputs.

9. **We will work with you** in putting in place a Media Sector Policy and strengthen the Media Council of Kenya Act to help it keep up with the ever-evolving media sector especially as regards digital media and the emergence of independent content producers and bloggers vis-à-vis fake news.

10. **Please be assured that** the government remains on track in living out to its vision for the media in this country as one that is Robust, Resourced, Responsive and Responsible.

11. **As for tonight**, I look forward to celebrate with you, the best of the best in our media sector.

Thank you once again!