



GHANA CENTER FOR DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENT

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PRESS RELEASE

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CDD-Ghana condemns assault of Citi FM reporter by National Security operatives, calls on CHRAJ to investigate and bring perpetrators to book

On Tuesday, May 11, 2021, Mr. Caleb Kudah, a reporter of Citi FM, an Accra-based radio station, was arrested by operatives of the National Security Ministry. He was arrested for allegedly taking 'unauthorized' pictures and videos of vehicles procured with state funds but reportedly abandoned for a long period of time and parked within the premises of the National Security Ministry.

On the same day, armed operatives of the National Security Ministry invaded the premises of Citi FM in an attempt to arrest another reporter, Ms. Zoe Abu-Baidoo, for allegedly receiving the said pictures and videos taken by her colleague, Mr. Kudah. Ms. Abu-Baidoo was released after a few hours, while her colleague Mr. Kudah was released later on the same day.

CDD-Ghana condemns the armed invasion of the station's premises and the attempted arrest of its reporters without regard to the arrest procedure prescribed by law which outlaws the arrest of persons in such situations without a court warrant and caution.

The Center also condemns the reported assault of Mr. Kudah by operatives of the National Security Ministry while he was held in custody. This incident, which follows numerous other cases of assault on journalists by members of security agencies in the recent past, demonstrates a propensity of law enforcement officers to assault journalists with impunity and complete disregard for rights and freedoms of journalists in the pursuit of their constitutional duty.

The suggestion that a journalist using surreptitious means to uncover and expose wrongdoing is unethical and therefore warrants brutal assault by National Security operatives is as absurd as it is undemocratic. The National Security Ministry, a public institution, cannot be immune to public scrutiny and transparency in its operations.

The failure of the relevant State institutions to effectively investigate these frequent assaults on journalists and hold the perpetrators accountable demonstrates a growing trend of complete disregard for the rule of law and fundamental human rights. CDD-Ghana condemns this worrying development which continues to undermine press freedom in an emerging democracy such as ours.

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The Center calls on the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) to thoroughly investigate this and many other incidents of assault on journalists by members of security agencies and bring the perpetrators to justice, in accordance with article 218 of the Constitution.

Further, the Center calls on government to implement the recommendations of the Emile Short Commission with respect to streamlining the structure and operations of national security agencies, including but not limited to the training of officers of security agencies to internalise and respect human rights in their activities.

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About CDD-Ghana

With a mission to promote and deepen democratic consolidation, good governance, and inclusive growth and development, the Ghana Center for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana) works to support and promote a free, peaceful, and a well-governed democracy in Ghana and in other parts of Africa. The Center has over two decades of experience, expansive reach, and a robust network of partners at the national, continental and global levels. CDD-Ghana has cultivated an enduring reputation as a leader in the field of democracy and governance, which enables the adoption and implementation of targeted strategies aimed at addressing the fundamental issues hindering citizens from enjoying the full benefits democracy and good governance has to offer.

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