

A Tribute to RAILA ODINGA

Defender of Media Freedom



The Media Council of Kenya (MCK) joins the nation in mourning the passing of former Prime Minister **Raila Amolo Odinga**. A towering figure in Kenya's democratic struggle, Odinga was a steadfast champion of media freedom and free speech, recognising them as essential pillars of a strong democracy.

Odinga's advocacy for the press was resolute, particularly during challenging times, such as government closures of major television stations and protests, where he condemned police attacks on journalists, reinforcing the crucial role of the media in upholding democratic principles and rallying support for journalists' rights.

Beyond words, Odinga actively supported the media's role. In 2019, he attended the MCK's Annual Journalism Excellence Awards (AJEA) as guest of honour, presenting awards and affirming the press's vital role in fostering informed public discourse. His presence at the event highlighted his unwavering commitment to journalistic freedom.

Raila Odinga's legacy as a defender of media freedom endures, inspiring journalists and citizens to champion truth and accountability. His voice, resonating across digital media platforms, remains a guiding light for a free press in Kenya and beyond. The MCK honours his lifelong dedication to ensuring the media thrives as a cornerstone of democracy. Rest in eternal peace, Baba.



Some of his notable quotes on Press Freedom

“In my long relationship with the media, I have appreciated the important role of a free & open media plays in society in conveying correct information to the people to enable them make informed decisions. November 2024”

“These actions are not only unacceptable but also a direct violation of the rights enshrined in our Constitution. The right to peaceful assembly, the freedom of expression, and the protection of journalists are fundamental pillars of our democracy, pillars that we have fought long and hard to establish and must continue to protect. August 2024”

“Limiting our press freedom will limit our national thinking. October 2013”

“This is not just an attack on the media; it is a coup against the Constitution and the people of Kenya. When you can send raiders to a media house at midnight, then democracy is dead. March 2006”

“Press freedom in the August House can only be good for public interest. July 2013”

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