

# **STATE OF THE MEDIA**

**For the Quarter: April 1 – June 30, 2006**

**MISA ZAMBIA**

## **MISA Zambia**

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### **State of the Media Report for the second Quarter 2006**

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## **1.0 Introduction to the State of the Media in Zambia Second Quarter 2006**

The *State of the Media* Report is a quarterly assessment of the media environment in Zambia. This *State of the Media* report is for the second quarter of 2006. The assessment and record describes the media situation in Zambia and was prepared by the Zambian Chapter of the Media Institute of Southern Africa – (MISA Zambia). This includes the environment in which media institutions exist and operate and how that environment affects individual journalists.

As indicated in the past quarterly *State of the Media* reports MISA Zambia has contributed a chapter on the state of the media in Zambia in the publication *So This is Democracy* produced by the regional office in Namibia. MISA Zambia has continued to contribute information to this publication. However, a local quarterly *State of the Media* report keeps abreast with the unfolding events affecting the media within the country, to keep media personnel, other stakeholders and the donor community better informed about developments in Zambia's media.

During the quarter, Citizen Forum development consultant, Simon Kabanda complained that the media was not doing enough coverage of development issues such as gender, human rights and democracy. Speaking at a Gender sensitization workshop, Kabanda said the media should speak on behalf of the marginalized to bring out issues that are critical to development.<sup>1</sup> On April 30 Celtel Zambia launched its eleventh shop in Lusaka with an investment of US\$98,000. Addressing the gathering during the launch Lusaka Mayor Mike Mposha called on companies to assist LCC maintain the beauty and cleanliness of the city.<sup>2</sup>

But the quarter also saw a recognition of the role of the media by government. "We cannot pursue social, economic and political development without the participation of the press," information minister Vernon Mwaanga said on the eve of the World Press Freedom Day on the theme "Media, Development and Poverty Eradication".<sup>3</sup>

In general ZAMWA has urged women contesting the forthcoming general elections to be-friend the media. ZAMWA chairperson Margaret Chimanse on May 31 prodded women candidates not to shy away from utilizing the media because the press was critical in reaching out to the electorate. Recently ZAMWA and National Women's Lobby organised a workshop for female Parliamentarians to improve their public relations skills ahead of the forthcoming general elections.<sup>4</sup>

In this assessment the media environment has in the second quarter been dominated by sittings of various Parliamentary Committees including the Committee on Information and Broadcasting where members of media associations submitted their views on the state of the media and how this has affected their work.

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<sup>1</sup>Mail April 1, 2006

<sup>2</sup>Mail May 1, 2006

<sup>3</sup>Post May 3, 2006

<sup>4</sup>Mail June 1, 2006

The major item of interest at the beginning of the quarter was the announcement by the board of Multimedia Zambia that it would re-launch the *National Mirror* and Multimedia Zambia. Acting board chairperson Dr Stella Chintu said on April 1 that the operations, which were temporarily suspended in July 2005, would resume sometime in April 2006.

But heads of government media – print and broadcasting also made submissions to the committee. Presenting his views on the media *Times of Zambia* managing director Arnold Kapelembi urged government to repeal libel and defamation laws in the country. And *Zambia Daily Mail* managing director Godfrey Malama noted that most governments had the propensity to conceal information arguing that it was top secret even if the information was in public interest. Due to lack of transparency in government operations, corruption was rife, Malama said adding that Freedom of Information (FoI) Act would be an appropriate piece of legislation in assisting journalists to operate effectively.

The permanent secretary at the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Emmanuel Nyirenda also submitted to the committee on April 5. He told the committee that government's policy showed commitment to the enhancement of Press Freedom in Zambia. ZANIS director Patrick Jabani too submitted saying there were no policies that impeded practicing of press freedom in Zambia.

In broadcasting the quarter was dominated by a strike at the state broadcaster the Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation in Lusaka and Kitwe.

Lastly, early in the quarter unrest at the University of Zambia dominated media violations and attacks. Students at the university on April 13 stoned and threatened to kill *Post* photojournalist Thomas Nsama while the UNZASU president Antonio Mwanza and eight other students were arrested during a riot that followed the death of a student from Evelyn Hone College who was hit by a bus at the UNZA pedestrian crossing. Narrating the incident, Nsama said when he and *Post* reporter Kingsley Kaswende approached UNZA after being tipped about the riot around 19:00 hours, some students who were along a side road near the UNZA bus stop stoned the vehicle and threatened to burn it with the journalists inside.

## **2.0 Media Environment during the Second Quarter of 2006**

The media environment in the second quarter was dominated by sittings of various Parliamentary Committees including the Committee on Information and Broadcasting where members of media associations submitted evidence on the state of the media especially on matters affecting journalists and their work.

Before these meetings, however the second quarter saw government urge Zambia Telecommunications Company (Zamtel) to put up strategic measures in its Cell-Z network that would withstand the increasing competition in the mobile phone industry. Speaking when he launched the Cell-Z network in Kaoma Communications and Transport Deputy Minister, Eddie Kasukumya, said competition should be encouraged in the telecommunication industry, as that was the best way to guarantee customers of good services. He commended Zamtel for working hard to ensure that most people in rural areas benefited from its Cell-Z network adding that as a wholly State owned company, Zamtel should be able to compete favourably in the current competitive environment while ensuring that there was a balance between profits and service delivery coupled with social responsibility. Kasukumya also commended Cell-Z for providing low tariffs for its mobile phone services that were as low as K20.00 per second through the introduction of per second billing that enabled people to use mobile communication. The Government agenda was for every community to communicate cost effectively, the deputy minister said and urged Zamtel to ensure that all districts were connected to its Cell-Z network. The minister said government was happy that Zamtel was innovative in its efforts to retain its customers. He noted that mobile phone communication was expensive in Zambia before Zamtel introduced cell-Z. He urged the Communications Authority to ensure that all mobile phone providers in Zambia provided low and affordable tariffs to their customers.

And Zamtel mobile phones General Manager, Nicodemus Mwazyia, said Cell-Z offered the lowest costs of K20.00 on its per second billing within and outside its network. Mwazyia also said Zamtel offered on Cell-Z its corporate customers with a minimum of five employees tariffs as low as K10.00 per second. Further Zamtel had reduced by 40 per cent its international tariffs to some destinations and Cell-Z customers were now able to roam in South Africa. Internally Cell Z launched its network in Kaoma.<sup>1</sup>

While the deputy minister for Communication and Transport Kasukumya praised Zamtel's success its rival Celtel brought its international executive officer Martin Pieters to assess the investment environment in Zambia. According to a press statement from Celtel-Zambia office April 3 Pieters, who was expected from Netherlands, would be accompanied by the group's chief finance officer James Maclaurin, would be visiting the Celtel Zambia unit for the second time to donate a community borehole to Kanyama in Lusaka on April 5. He would also meet firms and dealers to discuss business opportunities and to understand their challenges. And in Petauke, the council approved

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<sup>1</sup>Times April 3, 2006

MTN's application for a plot to set up a mast. Council secretary Boyd Mboyi said the move was to ensure good communication in the district.<sup>1</sup>

But on April 4 Celtel International's Pieters said the liberalisation of the international gateway was among the key issues that he would raise with government officials. Speaking on arrival at Lusaka International Airport, Pieters said Celtel International had been discussing the international gateway's liberalisation with government since it entered the market in 1998 and was still confident of a positive outcome.

"Freeing international traffic will ultimately be good for clients because it will help reduce the cost of international calls besides enhancing service quality and clarity. The benefits are even more pronounced for business people, who have to make international calls to facilitate transactions," he said. He cited Zambia as among the fastest growing companies in Celtel International's operations in Africa. On the licensing requirement that Celtel Zambia offers some shares to local investors, Pieters said the programme was delayed when Zambia Telecommunications Company (Zamtel) established its own mobile subsidiary, Cell Z.

"The idea was to cooperate with the fixed line operator, who was supposed to take 41 per cent of the shares. But when they established their own mobile wing, Celtel Zambia was left with the obligation of selling shares to local investors," he explained.

And speaking on the same occasion Celtel Zambia managing director David Venn disclosed that the company would within a month finalise discussions with institutional investors who had expressed interest to buy shares in the firm. He added that Celtel Zambia had reached an advanced stage in negotiating with the institutional investors, including pension fund managers, on the possibility of them buying shares in the company.<sup>2</sup>

As noted above the media environment was also reflected through the sitting of the Parliamentary Committee for Information and Broadcasting. The contributions from media personnel were wide and varied. First to present to the committee was *Times of Zambia* managing director Arnold Kapelembi. He called for the repeal of libel and defamation laws in the country. Appearing before a parliamentary committee on information chaired by Magoye UPND Member of Parliament Andrew Haakaloba, Kapelembi and *Zambia Daily Mail* managing director Godfrey Malama said laws must be revised to suit the democratic dispensation. Kapelembi also said the current legal provisions only mentioned freedom of the press in passing while most of the laws in the Penal Code were a carry over from the colonial days.

"It is now irrelevant," Kapelembi said adding that there was need to transform the law now because should a dictator rule this country, he or she would use them against the media. Kapelembi specifically cited defamation of the President, which he said, was not clear in the current constitution.

"Libel and defamation laws need to be repealed," he said and suggested that the media was surviving by the grace of the authorities. He said many media organisations had

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<sup>1</sup> Post April 4, 2006

<sup>2</sup> Post April 5, 2006

closed because of defamation laws and added that libel should be de-criminalised. He observed that there was no freedom of the press in the country because it was given on the other hand by some laws but taken away by the Penal Code. He said this was the reason why media bodies were advocating changes in the Penal Code.

And Malama said most governments had the propensity to conceal information arguing that it was top secret even if the information was in public interest. Due to lack of transparency in government operations, he said, corruption had become rife. He said a Freedom of Information (FoI) Act would be an appropriate piece of legislation in assisting journalists to operate effectively. Malama said the country was in urgent need of the FOI Act. He said the legal reforms in the country had lagged far much behind to the political reforms to suit the democratic dispensation.

“Most of these pieces of legislation would need to be reformed to give meaning to our new dispensation. The legal regime need to be revisited to buttress press freedom and democracy,” Malama said, adding that the media currently lacked legal protection which could act as a sanctuary for journalists.

But Zambezi West UPND Member of Parliament Charles Kakoma asked whether press freedom in the country was realistic or not. In response Malama said the country needed a free press and a legal protection. However, Malama said there was press freedom in the country, an assertion that Kapelembi refused to accept. At this point Kapoche FDD Member of Parliament Charles Banda observed that journalists in the country were risk takers due to the absence of legal protection.<sup>1</sup>

And also submitting to the Parliamentary Committee on Information and Broadcasting on April 4 ZAMWA chairperson Margaret Chimanse said Zambia was still far from creating a media friendly environment. Ms Chimanse said this was despite Zambia being in the midst of fundamental political and social changes that required the media to play a major role in meeting the aspirations and development goals of the people. She said the present media standards and the general environment in which the media operated in Zambia did not guarantee positive results. She said issues of media ownership and control, professionalism, media independence, freedom of expression and capitalization were major concerns among the Zambian media institutions.

“The penal Code CAP 87 of the Laws of Zambia is one piece of legislation with various provisions imposing restraints on media practice,” Ms Chimanse said and explained that this piece of legislation empowered the President to ban publications deemed to be against public interest and also criminalized publications. Ms Chimanse said the FOI Bill should be taken back to parliament to reverse the concerns on the FOI. She said restrictive media laws, harsh economic realities and the political climate had combined forces to create an environment that inhibited investigative reporting and kept it off the agenda of the Zambian media.

“Media coverage tends to be predominantly political, elitist and personality-centred. Issued-based stories rarely get lead story treatment,” Ms Chimanse said.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Post April 5, 2006

<sup>2</sup>Mail April 5, 2006

The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting permanent secretary Emmanuel Nyirenda spoke to the committee on April 5. He told the committee that government policy had showed commitment to the enhancement of Press Freedom in Zambia. He said the fact that journalists were free to write on issues of their choice showed that press freedom existed and explained that most of the journalists would have court cases pending if they did not enjoy any freedom. Nyirenda said a few journalists who had been taken to court over their stories had either been acquitted or had their charges dropped, a strong indicator of press freedom. He, however, said freedom was enjoyed up to the level when it did not offend other people. Nyirenda said some laws imposing restraints on media practice as they were there to protect the majority who may be injured as a result of a publication. He said it was good that there was a Media Complaints authority where aggrieved members of the public could go when they were unhappy with a publication. "The media should be able to regulate itself and should not leave it to government to do it for them because this makes it appear as if they are being censored," he said. When asked by Kapoche MP Charles Banda why the FOI Bill was being delayed Nyirenda explained that this was due to consultations taking place. He said government was getting views from Commonwealth countries where this law was in effect to come up with a law that would please everyone.

And ZANIS director Patrick Jabani said there were no policies that impede practicing of press freedom in Zambia. He said the problem lay with media heads who were timid and inexperienced and did not know how to bring out real issues in a story. "Some of the journalists in Zambia would not be allowed to practice in certain countries because of some of these stories they write are very malicious. You cannot describe a national leader as 'pint sized' and get away with it," he said. He said an experienced journalist could not fail to bring out the news aspect of a story on any given issue even if the story was anti government.

ZNBC director general Joseph Salasini told the Committee that the market response showed that there was a certain amount of press freedom existing in Zambia. To support this Salasini cited the fact that people were setting up radio stations, newspapers and television stations and that this could not happen if the environment was hostile to the media. "The flourishing media industry has offered business opportunities to many," he said. Salasini also talked about the transmitters ZNBC would install in 26 districts including Siavonga adding that this would allow people to have access to information especially in this election year. He said phase one of the project had already been completed and that more equipment was expected during the course of this month (April) after which Phase two would commence.<sup>1</sup>

Interestingly the *Times of Zambia* reported the issue of a Media Complaints Authority differently. In its edition of April 6 the *Times* reported that government was considering coming up with a Media Complaints Authority that would protect members of the public who might be injured by the Press.<sup>2</sup> The newspaper indicated that this was

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<sup>1</sup> *Mail* April 6, 2006

<sup>2</sup> *Times* April 6, 2006

what Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Services Permanent Secretary, Emmanuel Nyirenda, told the parliamentary watchdog committee on Information and Broadcasting Services chaired by Magoye Member of Parliament, Andrew Hakaloba (UPND) referred to in the *Mail* newspaper report. According to the *Times* Nyirenda emphasized that there was Press Freedom in Zambia because deliberate policies had been put in place to promote and enhance that freedom in line with the requirements of the constitution. Strangely Nyirenda also supported the existence of an independent media, free from government control that could act as a useful critic and could contribute to the improvement of communication in the country. The permanent secretary also observed that government was mindful of the fact that monopoly of the media could undermine the rights of the people. And Nyirenda explained that although defamation laws had been put in place practitioners viewed these as a hindrance to media freedom. But the *Times* also quoted ZANIS director, Patrick Jabani, on his view that there were no laws that infringed on Press Freedom in Zambia. In most cases, Jabani said, individual journalists censored themselves.

“It is important to train individual journalists to understand the law and see how their stories can fit in with the requirements of their organisations,” Mr Jabani said. In this regard ZNBC director general, Joseph Salasini, said Press freedom was present in Zambia and he cited the increased in opportunities for business in the media sector.

On April 5 the Parliamentary Committee of Information and Broadcasting also received a submission from the chairman of the Press Freedom Committee of *The Post* Webster Malido. He advised government to consider the growth of the media industry as a critical function to a functional democracy and in this regard the media industry should be considered for special incentives such as a waiver on all forms of taxation for raw materials in the case of newspapers and all broadcasting and other electronic equipment in the case of the electronic media.

Further, Malido said although freedom of expression was expressly guaranteed under Article 20 of the Constitution of 1991, amended in 1996, it was clear that there were still several factors that critically limited this freedom. He said some of these could be financial or economic. Malido also noted that the media was currently one of the least attractive sectors for any investor and noted that this was probably why the government and the Church dominated it, adding that accessing finance from banks and other financial institutions was still a big problem for the media because of its fragility and the attendant political risk because a media institution can easily be closed by the authorities on trumped up political charges. Malido said media editors, unlike managers of other businesses, were open to criminal charges for mistakes and could go to prison for many years.<sup>1</sup>

“Which financial institution would be comfortable to lend money to such an industry or sector?” he asked. Malido said the economic and financial system had a bearing on the operations of media institutions.

“A weak financial situation of media houses gives rise to poor journalism, for a number of reasons. A media house in a weak financial situation has a low budget for

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<sup>1</sup>*Post* April 6, 2006

newsgathering,” he said. Malido said that meant that shortcuts had to be made to save costs because a story had to be completed. He said media houses could not adequately cover the country because it was very expensive to do so adding that Zambian newspapers were very expensive due to high production costs.

“Although there is a claim that there is no duty on newsprint, there is a 17.5 per cent VAT on all imports of newsprint. To the media, whatever this is called, it still amounts to a duty. This is the same for all other printing materials on which duties are levied,” he said.

And Malido further said that Section 69 of the Penal Code, which protects the President’s reputation and the dignity of the office, should be removed from the statute books. He said that piece of law had been abused by the state to harass journalists. “It is an archaic, vague, obnoxious and colonial piece of legislation, which needs to be expunged from our statute books,” he said. On legislation generally, Malido said while existing legislation such as the IBA Act and the ZNBC Act were enacted in good faith, the implementation process had been problematic. He said though the matter was still in court there was no harm to state that the implementation of these two Acts was very important in terms of expanding freedom of expression and press freedom. In addition there was the Freedom of Information Bill, which was withdrawn from Parliament though the Bill was intended not only for the journalism profession, but also for the public too.

“In so far as press freedom is concerned, this should be one of the most progressive pieces of legislation that Zambia should embrace. It is still our belief that this Bill should, sooner than later, be brought back before the National Assembly for enactment,” he said.

But according to Malido legislation of the FOI Bill was inevitable to reform the system of access to information in all public institutions, including the National Assembly of Zambia. He noted that the National Assembly still had certain restrictions in terms of how journalists operated within its precincts.

“There is no need, for instance, to bar journalists from using tape recorders in the chamber or to take pictures while the House is in session, much as there is no justification in prohibiting reporters from interviewing members of parliament within Parliament buildings and neither is there any good reason for journalists not to have access to and interview the Speaker as and when they needed to do so,” he said. Malido observed that Press Freedom in Zambia was not fully guaranteed and as a result, the recommendations in the Mung’omba Constitution Review Commission on legislative reforms should be considered because they were also required for the public print media, in line with what had been done for the public broadcaster.

In April Foundation for Democratic Process (FODEP) executive director, Elijah Rubvuta, observed that the manner public media conducted itself during the year’s elections regards balanced coverage was critical to Zambia’s democratic dispensation. Speaking on a radio Phoenix programme “The role of the media in the election year” Rubvuta said the media should be as fair as possible and should report facts in a balanced manner in order to gain public confidence. During the same programme, Zambia Union of Journalists (ZUJ) president, Isabel Chimangeni, said there was need for the public to

change their perception of the public media. She said the duty of the public media was to inform, educate and entertain. On the Electoral Bill currently then before Parliament Chimangeni said this had covered most of the concerns although issues of resources for public media personnel still needed to be addressed. She reminded journalists to avoid self-censorship and be devoted to their job. Also that they (journalists) should not get into the profession for money because this would dent the image of the media. She dismissed the notion that there was a hidden hand that controlled the editorial policies of public media institutions. And ZAMWA vice-treasurer, Joy Sata, called for further training of Journalists in specialised skills so that the issues of biasness should not arise. She said journalists should love their job and ensure they reported correctly and professionally. She noted that though journalists from public media institutions faced intimidation from politicians they should not be deterred in informing, education and communicating to the masses.<sup>1</sup>

And still on the topic of elections early in April the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) challenged the media to cover the tripartite elections in a fair manner. Speaking at the MISA Zambia launch of the Guidelines and Principles for SADC broadcasters on covering elections on April 10 FES resident director Gerd Botterweck noted that the media played a critical role in the democratisation process of the country. He said the launch was timely because without the media, the public would not make informed decisions on which party to vote for during elections. MISA Zambia chairperson Kellys Kaunda said the ZNBC had a huge national responsibility during the elections to ensure that Zambians were accorded the opportunity to gauge political parties contesting the elections. Some of the Guidelines urged ZNBC to treat all political parties or contestants equitably and provide for the public to take part in political debates on election issues and also avoid one-sidedness in all programmes. He noted that the ZNBC (Amendment) Act No.17 of 2002 transformed the corporation from a state broadcaster and placed a heavy responsibility on the ZNBC management not only to collect license fees, but to ensure that the station's programming was balanced, reflected all shades of political opinion and was of the highest professional standards.

But government also advised the media to ensure a fair and objective coverage to all political parties during the tripartite elections. Information and Broadcasting Services minister Vernon Mwaanga said it was imperative that the media reported accurately and objectively about political parties taking part in the election to give Zambians correct information. Mwaanga said objectivity and accuracy was cardinal in information dissemination and that professional associations like the Press Association of Zambia, the Zambia Union of Journalists and others should address the problem of declining media standards in Zambia.<sup>2</sup>

And competition between cell network providers continued with Celtel Zambia assuring subscribers in Chipata, Mansa, Mazabuka and Mongu that the company would resolve the current difficulties they were facing in making or receiving calls and texting

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<sup>1</sup>Times April 7, 2006

<sup>2</sup> Times April 11, 2006

messages by the end of April 2006. Celtel public relations manager, Bridget Nundwe, said in Lusaka April 11 that the difficulties were a result of the ongoing upgrading work in the four districts. She said the upgrading work in Chipata and Mazabuka was almost completed while customers in Mansa and Mongu might experience the same problem until the end of April. Currently, Mongu subscribers for example, could only make or receive calls including texting between 23:00 hours and 07:00 hours.

“We have successfully finished expanding the network to all the 72 districts. We are now carrying out an upgrade on the network. This started with Lusaka in June 2005 and we have moved to the Copperbelt. What happens when there is an upgrading is that customers will begin to experience problems like total outages (no signal) sometimes, and even sending SMS (short message service) becomes impossible,” Mrs Nundwe said adding that besides as technology kept changing, her company did not want to remain behind but to keep updating the network.<sup>1</sup> But besides complaints Luangwa residents welcomed Celtel Zambia and Cell Z for setting up their business in the district. The residents said setting up business in the area was evidence that government was concerned about the people. Justin Banda a Luangwa resident said with the introduction of Celtel and Cell Z in the district residents were now able to easily communicate.<sup>2</sup>

And University of Zambia (UNZA) Vice-Chancellor Professor Robert Serpell said journalists like scholars had to make judicious decisions about what sells and what promotes social progress. Addressing trainee journalists at *The Post* Newspapers offices on Thursday, Prof Serpell said scholars and journalists championed social progress through dissemination of information.

“University education and the mass media are both in the business of information,” he said. “Journalists like scholars have to strike a balance between what sells, informs, educates and what promotes social progress.”<sup>3</sup>

Of interest during the quarter Information and Broadcasting Services Permanent Secretary, Emmanuel Nyirenda announced plans to send journalists as Press Attaches to Zambian foreign missions in 2007. Nyirenda revealed that Zambia only had two embassies in New York in the United States (US) and in Pretoria, South Africa had press attaches. He said this on April 23 when he appeared before a Parliamentary watchdog committee on Government Assurances chaired by Lupososhi Member of Parliament, Emmanuel Musonda.<sup>4</sup> The Permanent Secretary said Government had plans to send Press attaches to London, Addis Ababa and Windhoek, but could not do so in 2006 due to lack of funds. But Sikongo MP, Best Makumba (UPND) wondered why it took long for Government to send Press attaches to Zambia’s foreign missions, but did not take as much time when sending other appointees. Sinazongwe MP, Raphael Muyanda noted the need for more Press attachés to be sent to foreign missions because these were focal points in the promotion of Zambian tourism. Nyirenda told the committee that the former Zambia News Agency (ZANA) and the former Zambia Information Services (ZIS) had

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<sup>1</sup>*Times* after April 12, 2006 – “Mrs Nundwe also apologised to subscribers countrywide for the problems they were facing in automatically transferring airtime from one Celtel subscriber to another using the ‘Me 2U’ service. She said this was due to maintenance work on the network.

<sup>2</sup> *Mail* April 26, 2006

<sup>3</sup> *Post* April 15, 2006

<sup>4</sup> *Times* April 24, 2006

finally been merged to form the Zambia News and Information Services (ZANIS) while the rural television project had now been handed over Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation.

The revised Electoral Code of Conduct has proposed that all media institutions should provide fair coverage of all registered political parties during the run up to the elections. These proposals were made at the just-ended workshop in Livingstone for stakeholders organised by the Electoral Commission of Zambia to revise the Electoral Code of Conduct. According to the revised draft Code of conduct, media organisations would be required to report election news in an accurate manner and not make any abusive editorial comment or encourage racism, religious intolerance and hatred. Television and radio broadcasters would be expected to allocate equal airtime to parties for their political broadcasts while political parties would not be allowed to buy more than 30 minutes airtime on television or radio, except where one party's allocated time was totally or partially unused. The code of conduct also proposed that media organisations devise an election results programme to keep the electorate informed.<sup>1</sup> FODEP commended the Electoral Commission for revising the Electoral Code of Conduct in readiness for the tripartite elections. FODEP national secretary Stanley Mhango said May 29 that there was need for stakeholders to sensitise the public on how to adhere to the code of conduct. Mhango said there were positive things that have come up in the electoral process that may entail free, fair and genuine elections. The UPND, on the other hand, noted that the stakeholders' seminar held to revise the electoral code of conduct was a mere holiday for participants. UPND chairperson for elections Ackson Sejani who attended the stakeholders' seminar in Livingstone said without tackling constitutional issues the revision of the Electoral Code of conduct did not instill confidence that the political playing field would be leveled.<sup>2</sup>

The media in Zambia celebrated World Press Freedom Day on May 3. On the eve of the press freedom day information minister Vernon Mwaanga addressed the nation on a theme – “Media, Development and Poverty Eradication.” “We cannot pursue social, economic and political development without the participation of the press. We do realise, as a government, that we cannot go anywhere in our pursuit of social, economic and political development without the full participation of our press. It is for this reason that my government is strongly committed to the development of the media in Zambia so that it can occupy its central role in national development and good governance,” Mwaanga said. He said a review of the Zambian press with regard to national development showed some inadequacies. “A casual review of our Zambian press performance as regards to national development and poverty reduction reveals some inadequacies; some of which are self-inflicted while others are externally caused,” he said. “Taking stock of our media contribution towards the achievement of this millennium goal of poverty eradication, we as government can only advise the media to re-orient its reportage so that it can re-assert itself as a reliable partner in the whole process.”<sup>3</sup> The story was also reported in the *Times of Zambia* on the

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<sup>1</sup>Mail April 29, 2006

<sup>2</sup>Sunday Mail April 30, 2006

<sup>3</sup>Post May 3, 2006. Also in the *Times* of the same date.

same date informing its readers that the minister had urged the media to cover this year's tripartite elections in a balanced, fair and accurate manner. Mwaanga reaffirmed Government's commitment to ensure that the media developed, as it was a major stakeholder in economic development. He said Government was aware of the several problems faced by the public media such as lack of equipment, poor communication and inadequate training.<sup>1</sup> And Heritage Party president, Godfrey Miyanda challenged journalists to remain professional in their duties and to ensure that the electorate made informed choices in choosing their leaders. Speaking at the World Press Freedom Day conference in Lusaka on May 2, Brigadier General Miyanda said journalists should preserve the system of choosing leaders because they had the power of the pen and should therefore make the ordinary people understand the nature of politics.<sup>2</sup> MISA chairperson, Kellys Kaunda, said journalists should steer politicians making personal attacks as opposed to discussing the national agenda. He said journalists should gather information on every individual wanting to serve the people while those dwelling on personal attacks should be exposed. And Evelyn Hone College head of Journalism school, Caesar Jere, in his presentation under media as a critical tool in the electoral process, said the Zambian media should strive for liberal theories to have a balanced approach. Mr Jere said the media played a central role in providing checks and balances and should therefore accommodate all sectors of society with views. And media consultant and trainer, Edem Djokotoe, said media institutions should have a consolidated plan of action to cover the political landscape in a manner that was broad based, issue driven and sustainable. Press Association of Zambia (PAZA) vice- president, Amos Chanda, said though freedom of expression was expressly guaranteed under article 20 of the Constitution it was limited by statutes which authorised things to be done, derogations which were said to be reasonably required in the interest of defence, public safety, public order, public morality or health and that the Constitution did not expressly guarantee Press freedom.

The World Press Freedom Day was attended by hundreds of journalists on May 3. Media associations urged practitioners to cover this year's elections in a fair and balanced manner. Journalists from all media institutions gathered at Lusaka Main Post Office before marching to the Freedom Statue. ZUJ president Isabel Chimangeni urged the media to cover this year's elections objectively while ZAMWA vice treasurer Joy Sata told the media to reflect on the theme and ensure that it stuck to ethics of the profession. She said there was need for fair coverage and balanced reporting. And PAZA vice president Amos Chanda urged government to look at the calls by media associations for media law reforms as genuine and not malicious. MISA Zambia chairperson Kellys Kaunda said there was need for government to put in place a framework – in the name of media law reforms – to protect the country's resources. ZAMWA chairperson Margaret Chimanse said the media cannot be ignored in the electoral process because it played an

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<sup>1</sup>*Times* May 3, 2006

<sup>2</sup>*Times* May 3, 2006 - The conference was held as part of the activities commemorating the World Press Freedom Day (WPDF) under the global theme, "Media, Development, and Poverty Reduction" while the local theme was, "The role of the media in the electoral process". The conference was organised by the WPDF under the auspices of PAZA, MISA, and the Press Freedom Committee of the Post, Society for Zambian Senior Journalists, the Zambia Community Media Forum, the United Nations Information Centre, Zambia Union of Journalists, Ministry of Information and Zambia Media Women Association.

important role in informing and educating the public for them to make informed decisions while Press Freedom committee of *The Post* vice chairperson Yvonne Shibemba said media freedom and access to information played a key role in facilitating local participation in empowerment of the poor.<sup>1</sup> PAZA president Andrew Sakala urged journalists to ensure equity and fair coverage of news. Speaking during the commemoration of World Press Freedom Day Sakala said that journalists should not allow politicians to set agendas for them. He advised journalists to ignore politicians who talked about irrelevant issues and instead write about developmental programmes that would benefit the nation. “The press always covers some Members of parliament who are talking about petty issues while ignoring those talking on developmental issues.”<sup>2</sup>

In the continued celebration of World Press Freedom Day United States ambassador to Zambia, Carmen Martinez, said freedom of the press was essential for a healthy democracy and a strong civil society. She said this when she officiated at the Press Freedom Committee (PFC) of the *Post* Newspapers dinner to commemorate the World Press Freedom Day (WPFDD).

“A free Press educates the public and provides a check on power and the abuse of power. “Citizens must have the ability to express themselves, to debate alternative ideas and to challenge assumptions. The Freedom of Information Bill, Independent Broadcasting Authority Act and Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation Act were still pending. I believe these laws are essential to further strengthen democratic institutions in Zambia and it is important to work with the Government to bring them to conclusion,” Ms Martinez said. And PFC vice-president, Yvonne Shibemba, was unhappy with the hurdles journalists continued to face in Zambia as far as obtaining information was concerned. Ms Shibemba was not happy that journalists continued to be harassed by political cadres, Government officials and students. For society to develop, Ms Shibemba said there was need for the media to be embraced instead of being viewed as detractors.<sup>3</sup>

During the quarter public media received a boost in form of vehicles from government. Chief Government spokesperson, Vernon Mwaanga, said that the media should intensify its coverage especially in peri-urban and rural areas. Mwaanga said this May 4 at the new Government complex when he handed over nine Tata twin cab vehicles to the *Times of Zambia*, *Zambia Daily Mail*, *Zambia News* and Information Services (ZANIS) and Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation (ZNBC). Managing directors of Times Printpak Zambia Limited Arnold Kapelembi and *Zambia Daily Mail* Godfrey Malama, ZNBC director-general, Joseph Salasini, and ZANIS director, Patrick Jabani, received the vehicles. The minister, who is Information and Broadcasting Services Minister said government appreciated the role the media played in keeping Zambians informed and also the operational hiccups that they faced.

“It is in the interest of expanding our catchment areas and to provide a service to rural populations that Government released K4.2 billion in 2005 to enable ZNBC expand its rural coverage,” Mr Mwaanga said.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>*Mail* May 4, 2006

<sup>2</sup>*Mail* May 4, 2006

<sup>3</sup>*Times* May 5, 2006

<sup>4</sup>*Times* May 5, 2006 and *Mail* May 5, 2006

Government was losing about K15 billion worth of revenue every year through piracy in Lusaka alone, Information and Broadcasting Services Minister, Vernon Mwaanga, said when he addressed artistes and other activists against piracy at the Freedom Statue in Lusaka. Mwaanga, who is Chief Government spokesperson, said creators of intellectual property were getting little from their sweat while pirates who did not pay any tax were becoming instant billionaires. This scenario prompted his ministry, through the copyright office, to facilitate the training of law enforcement officers and the establishment of the anti-piracy crack squad to effectively handle cases of copyright infringement.<sup>1</sup> And the Anti-Piracy Squad has commended the media for joining the fight against piracy by forming the Journalist Against Piracy in Zambia (JAPIZ). National Coordinator Kingsley Nkonde said the network, formed at the end of the workshop on the role of journalists in the fight against piracy in Lusaka, was the first of its kind in the sub region. The workshop was organised by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Services in conjunction with Multichoice Zambia. "The Anti-Piracy Crack Squad is also happy that the media has joined the fight against this serious vice that robs Government of billions of kwacha in revenue per year and is optimistic that its inclusion in this important fight will further strengthen the resolve to eradicate the perpetrators of the crime," Mr Nkonde said.<sup>2</sup>

MISA Zambia chairperson Kellys Kaunda urged journalists to continue highlighting media violations to remind government on the need to repeal anti-media laws. Kaunda said May 19 when he launched the 2005 MISA annual publication – *State of Media Freedom in Southern Africa* - that highlights media violations in Southern Africa - that the media ought to be vigilant to report all acts of harassment, intimidation or threats to their operations particularly in 2006 when the country would hold elections. He noted that MISA, together with PAZA, ZAMWA and other institutions, was still committed to the fight for media law reforms in Zambia. He further noted that the government should implement the recommendations of the 1993 Media Law Reform Committee and the 1999 Task Force on Media Law Reforms that called for the repeal or amendment of all anti-media laws. He added that courts of law had also become leading oppressors of media freedoms and expression rights going by an increase in the number of incidents where the media was censored through gagging orders or granting exorbitant damages for defamation.<sup>3</sup>

During the quarter ZUJ expressed happiness at the speedy conclusion of negotiations with *Times* Printpak management. ZUJ treasurer Elias Mwamba said May 26 during the signing ceremony between the union and the *Times* Printpak management that despite the financial difficulties the company was facing the Collective Bargaining Unit (CBU) managed to clinch a deal acceptable to both management and employees.<sup>4</sup> Also during the quarter ZAMWA urged women contesting the forthcoming general elections to be media friendly. ZAMWA chairperson Margaret Chimanse prodded women

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<sup>1</sup>*Times* May 2006 - The copyright office has established anti-piracy crack squads in Lusaka, Ndola, and Kitwe and Kapiri-Mposhi districts.

<sup>2</sup>*Mail* May 10, 2006 - Executive members of JAPIZ elected are Herbert Mutabi (president), Rosalia Lubumbashi (vice president), Francis Mangaila (information and publicity) and committee members who are Meck Phiri, Peter Chikwampu, Kelvin Musaku and Francis Lungu.

<sup>3</sup>*Times* May 20, 2006

<sup>4</sup>*Times* May 28, 2006

candidates not to shy away from utilizing the media because the press was critical to reaching out to the electorate. Ms Chimanse said May 31 that the number of women in decision-making positions was disproportionate to that of men because most women shy away from the press. She said women should realize and appreciate the power of the media in information dissemination.<sup>1</sup>

In Parliament Information and Broadcasting Services minister Vernon Mwaanga told the House that government was still consulting over the Freedom of Information Bill (FOI). And according to the *Mail* Mwaanga said government had learnt from the 40 countries, which have the FOI legislation in place, that a lot of things should be done before the bill was legislated. He said out of the remaining 151 UN member-countries, which had not yet implemented the FOI, Zambia was among 30 nations that were in the process of enacting the bill.<sup>2</sup> He insisted that government was still committed to media reforms but wanted to move with caution because countries where such a law was enacted had indicated that they rushed in introducing it. The minister said there was also need to protect citizens, MPs and other members of society from abuse by journalists. He observed that Media Council of Zambia (MECOZ) was a toothless body in ensuring no abuse because some media institutions were not ascribed to the body and noted that government did not censor any news gathered by the public media as insinuated by some MPs in the House. But according to the *Mail* the minister said MECOZ was irrelevant because not all media institutions belonged to it. Mwaanga told Parliament that this had made it difficult for MECOZ to take action against some media organisations whenever they published information injuring other people. He added that as a result government could not prevent individuals from taking media institutions to court if they published libelous information about them.

“We as government have a duty to protect public interest, and laws affecting the media are meant to protect the public,” Mr Mwaanga said, when winding up the debate on the Parliamentary committee report on Information and broadcasting. The minister further noted of the many issues raised by members in the House as well as progressive recommendations the committee made through its report. Mwaanga also observed that the implementation of the ZNBC (amendment) Act and the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) Act depended on the outcome of the case currently before the Supreme Court.<sup>3</sup>

Earlier moving the motion to adopt the report, Magoye MP Andrew Haakaloba (UPND) said his committee discovered that while there was some amount of press freedom in Zambia, this was hampered by inadequate or archaic legislation. He acknowledged that although there were certain levels of Press Freedom in Zambia, this fell below minimum international standards. Hakaloba, who is also Magoye MP (UPND), said Zambia was number 100, out of 167 countries that were found to be harassing journalists by the Reporters Without Borders.<sup>4</sup> He also expressed disquiet at

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<sup>1</sup> *Mail* June 1, 2006 - ZAMWA and National Women's Lobby held a workshop for female Parliamentarians that sought to improve their public relations skills ahead of the forthcoming general elections. Ms Chimanse said ZAMWA would continue with such efforts in a bid to provide a platform for women in the country.

<sup>2</sup> *Mail* June 7, 2006

<sup>3</sup> *Mail* June 7, 2006

<sup>4</sup> *Mail* June 7, 2006

Government's failure to enact the Freedom of Information Bill and urged Government to re-introduce the Bill to parliament so that once enacted, citizens would have access to public information. Also seconding the motion Sinjembela MP Mubika Mubika (MMD) emphasised the need for the freedom of information law to be enacted and urged for the speedy implementation of the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) and ZNBC amendment Acts.<sup>1</sup>

"These laws were passed by this house, and it is inexcusable for the executive, which is part of the law of the law makers, to drag its feet in implementing these two laws," Mr Mubika said.<sup>2</sup>

And according to the *Mail* acting Speaker of the National Assembly, Jason Mfula, curtailed Deputy Minister of Information, Benny Tetamashimba's debate when, according to the Speaker, he started bringing in partisan politics. Tetamashimba accused Bangweulu MP Joseph Kasongo (Independent) of scouting for a political party to join when earlier the Speaker had warned all MPs from politicking in the House.

"We know this is an election year, but let us stop politicking....Do not over-politicise issues and campaigns must be done outside the chamber, whether you are coming back or not it is not for the chamber," Mr Mfula earlier said. He also warned MPs not to trivialise President Mwanawasa's illness because sickness was a serious issue, which he noted, was not part of the motion on the floor.

"We all know that the President's health concerns everybody but do not belabour on it here," he said.

But despite the Speaker's warning Luena MP Crispin Sibetta (UPND) accused government of hiding information on Mr Mwanawasa's illness on the grounds that it was top secret. This comment forced the Speaker to curtail Sibetta's debate. And Chilanga MP Cosmas Moono (UPND) said government should not have allowed the controversial Da Vinci Code movie to be shown in Zambia because the country was a Christian nation, which should not allow its citizens to be corrupted by blasphemous material. But Mr Tetamashimba reminded Captain Moono that the UPND resolved that Zambia should be a secular state, and "for him to speak for the country's Christian community is actually malicious." Several other MPs, who debated the report, called for better conditions of service and modern equipment for public media journalists while other MPs called for an end to harassment of journalists, especially by politicians and their cadres.<sup>3</sup>

And government challenged the media in Zambia to uphold professional ethics during this year's elections to satisfy all stakeholders. Chief government spokesperson and minister of Information and Broadcasting Services Vernon Mwaanga said the media would this year be put to test to prove that it was in a position to provide free, balanced and objective coverage. Mwaanga was speaking at the media and elections breakfast meeting organised by the Zambia Union of Journalists (ZUJ) at Lusaka's Hotel Inter-Continental with the support of the Norwegian embassy. The minister urged political

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<sup>1</sup>*Times* June 7, 2006

<sup>2</sup>*Mail* June 7, 2006

<sup>3</sup>*Mail* June 7, 2006

parties to provide journalists access to cover all their activities and prevent any harassment.

The Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ) expected to set guidelines through a Statutory Instrument on the role of the media in this year's elections while ZNBC had also set guidelines for elections coverage in line with the Southern African Development Community (SADC) members' agreement. And the new Electoral Act has also provided for election observers and monitors during elections whose conduct would be regulated by the ECZ and that those that would be in conflict with the law would be dealt with. Mwaanga also said that government was still making consultations on the withdrawn Freedom of Information Bill but added that it was not likely to be re-introduced before the dissolution of the current sitting of Parliament. Norwegian ambassador, Terje Vigtel, said his country would not interfere with the political independence of Zambia but render support to the governance programme. He the media, the Church and civil society had a critical role to play in the elections and urged them to also act as a watchdog on the political situation in Zambia. ZUJ president, Isabel Chimangeni urged government to ensure that the elections were free and fair. She said her organisation would closely monitor how the media whether public or private covered the elections. Ms Chimangeni said the media bodies did not want a situation where the media would be used as a scape-goat for those that would fail to win elections simply because their issues were not covered. And the Southern African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (SACCORD) appealed to Parliamentarians to amend the Electoral Act so that it can incorporate contentious issues left out in the legislation. SACCORD information officer, Obby Chibuluma, said Parliamentarians had their last chance to make amendments to the just passed electoral law to ensure an even political playing field during this year's tripartite elections. In an interview Chibuluma said amendments should include the issue of the Public Order Act (POA) as well as those aimed at removing the clause empowering the President to announce the election date. Other issues that needed inclusion were the 50 per cent plus one threshold for a winning presidential candidate, which the Government had argued was a constitutional matter. But Mr Mwaanga, said it was not possible to make any further amendments to the Electoral Act 2006, because the President had already assented to the legislation that would govern this year's tripartite elections.<sup>1</sup>

University of Zambia (UNZA) researcher Dr Neo Simutanyi revealed that recent research on the media showed that The *Post* newspaper was the most widely read publication in Zambia. Presenting a paper on 'Communicating research' during the PANOS Southern Africa and National Media Institute of Southern Africa (NAMISA) organised consultative meeting between researchers and media practitioners in Zomba, Malawi Dr Simutanyi said the PANOS southern Africa-initiated research that was conducted in Lusaka and Chongwe district showed that the public was more inclined to getting its information from newspapers.

"In terms of access to information, the independent Post was the most widely read newspaper (77 per cent) in the country and was also considered the most objective, followed by *Times of Zambia* and *Zambia Daily Mail*," Dr Simutanyi said.

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<sup>1</sup>*Times* June 2006

“In the electronic media Radio Phoenix was the most popular (63 per cent) and also the most trusted station, followed by Radio Christian Voice (17 per cent) and Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation (ZNBC) at 13 per cent.

“Clearly, both for newspapers and electronic media, it would appear that the public media is the least trusted in the country. This has implications as a source or medium for the dissemination of research findings,” Dr Simutanyi said adding that the study showed that media coverage in Zambia concentrated on political stories, health issues such as HIV/AIDS and agriculture. Further the study revealed that the media experienced a lot of problems in accessing research and development information.

“Most journalists interviewed expressed disappointment with academic researchers who did not make their work known. However, researchers who also mistrusted the media indicated that the work environment and restrictions placed on commissioned studies made it difficult for them to make their work available to the media,” he said.<sup>1</sup>

Of interest Justice minister George Kunda told the *Post* June 15 in an interview that ZNBC should adhere to the electoral Act as a public broadcaster. Kunda urged ZNBC and other media organisations to adhere to the electoral Act to give political players equal coverage during this year’s elections. The new electoral Act under Article 27(2) states that “every candidate and political party shall have the right to have the substance of the candidates’ or the political party’s campaign propaganda reported in all public media in a fair and balanced manner”. He added: “It should also adhere to the ZNBC Act and it should adhere to defamation laws.” However, Kunda also said that insults were taking away the reputation *The Post* had established in the nation.<sup>2</sup>

MTN shareholders have approved the reconstituted MTN Group Ltd board at the organisation’s AGM. MTN brand communications officer Linda Mafoko disclosed that the MTN Group had decided to review the board composition following the restructuring of the company’s operations.<sup>3</sup> In Zambia MTN disclosed that it had switched 10 more network sites to improve cell phone coverage in Lusaka. Company Southern regional sales manager Ethel Mulenga said in an interview that the company’s client base had increased since August 2005 hence the need for more sites. Mulenga said MTN was in the process of putting up more sites across the country to satisfy the growing demand.<sup>4</sup>

And Zamtel responded to allegations on the failures of equipment through an advert entitled – France Telecoms Signaling Link Failure. The content of the advert read - “Zamtel would like to correct the wrong impression created by the *Mail* as to the reason for the failure of the signaling link between Zambia and France in their edition of Tuesday June 20, 2006. The article, which appeared on page 4, was entitled Euro Telecoms cut off Zamtel. The failure of the link used for roaming and transmission of SMS was not a result of Zamtel being disconnected by France Telecoms who are Zamtel’s bilateral partner in the provision of this service, but purely as a technical fault, which lasted longer than usual from 09.20 hours on June 12, 2006 to 15.44 hours on June 13, 2006. During this period Zamtel engineers worked around the clock with their French

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<sup>1</sup>*Post* June 8, 2006

<sup>2</sup>*Post* June 16, 2006

<sup>3</sup>*Saturday Post* June 17, 2006

<sup>4</sup>*Post* June 19, 2006

counterparts to resolve the fault. It is worth noting that since its inception in 2000 this link has been working very well with the exception of this particular incident. Further Zamtel's link with British Telecoms on June 13, 2006 was affected by intermittent interruptions attributed to bad weather. This link is not even configured to support roaming as insinuated in the *Mail*.<sup>1</sup>

Panos Southern Africa announced that it would monitor media coverage of Zambia's elections. In an interview Panos Southern Africa regional director Parkie Mbozi said campaigns by political parties should be issue-based.

"The media needs to guide the political campaigns to focus on issues that are systematic and key to development such as environment, poverty, and preservation of natural resources," he said adding that Panos would also launch a media tool kit for the community media to build media capacity and policy sensitization.<sup>2</sup> On the Copperbelt the United Democratic Alliance (UDA) urged the media to be more ethical and objective by reporting both the government and opposition political party functions. UDA provincial secretary Issa Zgambo said by affording all political parties equal coverage the media would be playing its role of disseminating, informing and educating the people.<sup>3</sup>

Celtel Zambia complained that it was facing problems in sending international SMS and providing roaming services to other countries. Speaking in an interview in Chalimbana, Chongwe district Commercial Director Norman Moyo said although the British and French telecoms problems with Zamtel had been resolved some areas gave problems to the company in accessing international SMS and roaming services. Moyo said the company received numerous complaints from subscribers over the system failure linking between Zambia-France and Zambia-Britain. The company blamed transmission failure by Zamtel. However, the company revealed that it would connect 100 more towns to its network and that it would soon announce the names of towns connected.<sup>4</sup> But despite such complaints against Zamtel government announced June 25 that the company would soon lay an optic fibre network across the country. Communication and Transport Deputy minister Eddie Kasunkumya said Zamtel would do this after it completes discussion with stakeholders on Information Communication Technology (ICT) and the way forward.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Post June 23, 2006

<sup>2</sup>Post June 24, 2006

<sup>3</sup>Times June 24, 2006

<sup>4</sup>Mail June 26, 2006

<sup>5</sup>Mail June 26 – Kasunkumya was speaking in Lusaka when he launched a journalist book on Media and the ICT Network in Development noted that government was committed in ICT for development because the country was lagging behind in the ICT sector.

### **3.0 Broadcast Media during the Second Quarter of 2006**

In broadcasting the quarter was dominated by a strike at the Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation in Lusaka and Kitwe, the sitting of the parliamentary Committee on Information and Broadcasting to which media associations gave evidence and MISA Zambia's training programmes in Eastern Province under the good governance project.

Early in April Multi-Media Zambia unveiled its new look board of governors and its new chief executive, Eddy Mupeso, a former ZNBC Director General. Multi-Media Zambia acting chairperson, Stella Chintu-Tembo, said the organisation was being re-launched after its suspension in July 2005 to pave way for a new strategic plan to be implemented by the new chief executive under which the business plan focused on the *National Mirror* newspaper while other departments like book publishing and broadcasting were also expected to be fully operational soon.<sup>1</sup>

Closely following the development at Multimedia government urged Zambia Telecommunications Company (Zamtel) to put up strategic measures in its Cell-Z network that will withstand the increasing competition in the mobile phone industry. Communications and Transport Deputy Minister, Eddie Kasukumya, said competition should be encouraged in the telecommunication industry to guarantee customers of good services. Speaking when he launched the Cell-Z network in Kaoma the minister commended Zamtel for working hard to ensure that most people in rural areas benefited from its network. He advised that as a state owned company, Zamtel should compete favourably in the current competitive environment and ensure a balance between profits and service delivery coupled with social responsibility. Kasukumya further commended Cell-Z for providing low tariffs for its mobile phone services through the introduction of per second billing adding that the government agenda was for every community to communicate cost effectively. The deputy minister also urged Zamtel to ensure that all districts were connected to its Cell-Z network though the exercise was costly. He noted that mobile phone communication was expensive in Zambia before the introduction of cell-Z by Zamtel adding that the Communications Authority should ensure that all mobile phone providers in Zambia gave low and affordable tariffs to their customers. And Zamtel general manager for mobile phones, Nicodemus Mwazya, said Cell-Z was offering the lowest costs of K20.00 on its per second billing platform within and outside its network. He said corporate customers with a minimum of five employees on Cell-Z further enjoyed tariffs as low as K10.00 per second while the international tariffs were also reduced by 40 per cent to some destinations. Other facilities introduced were the Short Messaging System (SMS) to all destinations in the world. Zamtel had developed a fibre network system to guarantee its clients of lower tariffs. Mwazya said Zamtel acknowledged the challenges on the Millennium Development Goals on the provision of information to the public. The launch of the Cell-Z network in Kaoma would benefit mostly the agriculture and tourism sectors.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Times April 2, 2006 - Apart from working for ZNBC, Mr. Mupeso also worked as technical director of the Pan African News Agency (PANA) and was currently a member of the Institute of Electronic and Radio Engineers of the United Kingdom.

<sup>2</sup>Times April 3, 2006

Celtel International BV chief executive officer Marten Pieters on April 4 said the liberalisation of the international gateway was among the key issues he would raise with government officials during his visit. Speaking on arrival at Lusaka International Airport, Pieters said Celtel International had been discussing the international gateway's liberalisation with government since it entered the market in 1998 and was still confident of a positive outcome.

“Freeing international traffic will ultimately be good for clients because it will help reduce the cost of international calls besides enhancing service quality and clarity. The benefits are even more pronounced for business people, who have to make international calls to facilitate transactions,” he said.

Pieters said among Celtel International's operations in Africa, Zambia was among the fastest growing and that this justified the commitment of US \$60 million for investment in improving the network this year. He said with the Build Our Nation project, under which Celtel Zambia was supporting education in the country, the group was re-affirming its commitment to Zambia.

“This is because we believe that though communication is important for development, investing in education is even better,” he said.

On the licensing requirement that Celtel Zambia offers some shares to local investors, Pieters said the programme was delayed when Zambia Telecommunications Company (Zamtel) established its own mobile subsidiary, Cell Z.

“The idea was to cooperate with the fixed line operator, who was supposed to take 41 per cent of the shares. But when they established their own mobile wing, Celtel Zambia was left with the obligation of selling shares to local investors,” he explained.

And Celtel Zambia managing director David Venn disclosed that his company would within one month finalise discussions with institutional investors who had expressed interest in buying shares in the firm. Venn said Celtel Zambia had reached an advanced stage in negotiating with some institutional investors, including pension fund managers, on the possibility of them buying shares in the company.<sup>1</sup>

During the quarter Multichoice Zambia revealed it had contributed close to K20 billion in taxes to government in the 2005-2006 financial year. Speaking at a breakfast meeting with the media MultiChoice Zambia general manager Alex Mayeya said the company recorded 30 per cent growth in revenue in the financial year ending March 31, 2006. He said MultiChoice had no problems paying taxes to government and that it had been paying on time. Mayeya also said MultiChoice Zambia had recorded the highest subscriber growth record in Africa from an initial 19,575 to 26,000 as at March 31, 2006. He said the sustained appreciation of the kwacha against the US dollar was a major catalyst to the success of its business in 2005. He explained that since MultiChoice Zambia had continued to incur import costs in dollar terms, prices of subscription and Digital Satellite Television (DSTv) equipment would be based on a kwacha equivalent to the dollar price. However, MultiChoice had continued to reduce the cost of equipment in view of the kwacha's performance, he said adding that MultiChoice Zambia had launched a revolutionary Personal Video Recorder (PVR) decoder, a cutting edge piece

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<sup>1</sup>Post April 5, 2006

that allowed subscribers to view two different channels on two different television sets whilst recording a third at the same time. Mayeya explained that the PVR allows subscribers to pause, rewind and slow motion on live television feeds. “We are reviewing the cost structure of our latest decoder, the PVR, with a view of reducing the cost. Currently they are selling at K2 million and we expect it to drop to about K1.5 million,” Mayeya said. He also said this year MultiChoice would be establishing a presence in Solwezi in North Western Province. Mayeya also said MultiChoice was discussing with a local bank to allow subscribers to make their payments wherever they are. He also announced that MultiChoice had completed setting up a corporate sales team allowing established organisations to access DSTv for their employees on an agreed staggered payment basis. Mayeya said the free-to-air decoders currently on the market were a challenge to his organisation, adding that his organisation had made representations to the Zambia Competition Commission and the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Services because use of this equipment amounts to piracy and government had responded saying they were looking at the issue.<sup>1</sup>

And ZNBC director general Joseph Salasini told the Parliamentary Committee on Information and Broadcasting that the market response showed that there was a certain amount of press freedom existing in Zambia. Salasini said people would not be setting up radio stations, newspapers and television stations if the environment were hostile to the media. “The flourishing media industry has offered business opportunities to many,” he said. He said ZNBC would install transmitters in 26 districts including Siavonga so that people could have access to information especially that this was an election year. He said phase one of the project had already been completed and that more equipment was expected during the course of this month (April) after which phase two would commence.<sup>2</sup> The *Times* reported that the ZNBC director general said Press freedom was present in Zambia as evidenced by the increase in opportunities for business in the sector.<sup>3</sup> And Press Freedom Committee of *The Post* chairman Webster Malido told the same Committee chaired by Magoye UPND Member of Parliament Andrew Haakaloba that while existing legislation such as the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) Act and the Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation (ZNBC) Act were enacted in good faith, the implementation process had been problematic.<sup>4</sup>

On the cell phone network front the Celtel network experienced connectivity problems with Cell Z. Subscribers in Lusaka also experienced difficulties making calls within the Celtel network. But Public relations manager Bridget Nundwe who confirmed the connectivity problems blamed the problem on signal failure between the Celtel and Cell Z inter-connect routes.

“We have been experiencing signal failure between the Cell Z network and Celtel on the interconnector route. That is what is causing the problem but we are working with them to iron out the problem,” Nundwe said, adding that the constant breakdown in links was not in any way related to commercial disputes but merely a technical hitch. In the past,

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<sup>1</sup> *Post* April 6, 2006

<sup>2</sup> *Mail* April 6, 2006

<sup>3</sup> *Times* April 6, 2006

<sup>4</sup> *Post* April 6, 2006

many callers had been experiencing problems in making calls from a Zamtel landline to Celtel numbers, which had to take the Communications Authority to intervene as the matter was more to do with commercial disputes. On intra-network difficulties, Nundwe said that might have been due to the ongoing network upgrade.<sup>1</sup>

The Frederick Ebert-Stiftung resident director Gerol Botterweck in an interview after the launch of 'Guidelines and Principles for SADC Broadcasters on Covering Elections' at the Media Institute for Southern Africa (MISA) Zambia offices said the ZNBC in particular could play a crucial role in fair election coverage.

"It is quite important that they give all political parties a chance so that the public knows about their policies. That is the only way to ensure free and fair elections." Botterweck said the electronic media had a big responsibility to give people the policies of political parties so that they know what they stood for. He said ZNBC in particular had a big role to play especially that people paid licence fees. And MISA Zambia chairperson Kellys Kaunda said MISA would closely monitor the implementation of the ZNBC and SADC guidelines and principles on broadcast coverage of elections.

"We will constantly remind ZNBC of its local and regional obligations," he said.

"If ZNBC does not adhere to these principles and guidelines, it risks being a laughing stock in the SADC region." Kaunda said an informed and enlightened society was a catalyst for development and that ZNBC was strategically placed to stimulate development by publicising the different viewpoints in the marketplace of ideas. He said the principles of fairness, impartiality and objectivity were professional universal norms in broadcasting as in other forms of journalism.

"They become very important during elections because various contesting parties are eager to have their ideologies and viewpoints aired on the national broadcaster for the public to decide whether to vote for them or not," he said.<sup>2</sup>

But the *Times* reported the story to suggest that FES had challenged the media to cover this year's tripartite elections in a fair manner. The paper reported that FES resident director Gerd Botterweck told journalists that the media played a critical role in the democratisation process of the country. He said the launch was timely as Zambia was scheduled to hold elections this year and that without the media, the public would not make informed decisions on which party to vote for.

MISA Zambia Chairperson Kellys Kaunda said April 10 ZNBC had a huge national responsibility during this year's elections to ensure that Zambians were accorded the opportunity to gauge political parties contesting the elections. Some of the Guidelines call on ZNBC to treat all political parties or contestants equitably and provide for the public to take part in political debates on election issues. ZNBC should also avoid one-sidedness in all programmes and afford political parties and candidates the right to reply to inaccurate information on the broadcasting institution. He noted that ZNBC (Amendment) Act No.17 of 2002 which transformed the corporation from a state broadcaster, placed a heavy responsibility on ZNBC management not only to collect

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<sup>1</sup>Post April 7, 2006

<sup>2</sup>Post April 11, 2006

license fees, but to ensure that the station's programming was balanced, reflected all shades of political opinion and was of the highest professional standards. It was worrying that ZNBC was a victim of accusations of being biased in favour of the ruling MMD and censoring views that were critical of the Government or blacking out perceived anti-government elements from television and radio.<sup>1</sup>

Kaunda explained that the guidelines were developed as after a series of workshops and meetings which deliberated on the role of the public service broadcaster in enhancing free, fair and democratic elections in the region. He urged the public to be critical in their assessment of the conduct of ZNBC as a public broadcaster adding that this can only be possible if the public is well informed about the contents of the guidelines.

"The public has a right to know this information because it partially finances ZNBC through payment of TV licences," Kaunda said. "Being the most widely viewed and accessible means of communication to the majority of Zambians there is no doubt that the public will rely on a lot on ZNBC for news and information on elections," he said adding that the ZNBC Amendment Act number 17 of 2002 which transformed ZNBC from a State broadcaster had placed a big responsibility on the organisation's management not only to collect licence fees but also to ensure that the station's programming was of the highest professional standards. He said MISA would monitor the implementation of the ZNBC and SADC guidelines and principles on broadcast coverage of elections. And FES resident director Gerd Botterweck said the launch of the guidelines came at an appropriate time because the media was an indispensable part of the country's democracy and that without proper media coverage, the public would find it difficult to make informed decisions. The guidelines were adopted by chief executives of national broadcasters in all SADC member countries at a Southern African Broadcasting Associations (SABA) AGM held in Arusha Tanzania in September 2005. SABA is a regional association of public broadcasters to which ZNBC is a member.<sup>2</sup>

And Chief Government spokesperson, Vernon Mwaanga, said the media should intensify its coverage especially in peri-urban and rural areas. He was speaking when he handed over nine Tata twin cab vehicles to the *Times of Zambia*, *Zambia Daily Mail*, Zambia News and Information Services (ZANIS) and Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation (ZNBC). *Times Printpak Zambia Limited* managing director, Arnold Kapelembi, *Zambia Daily Mail* managing director, Godfrey Malama, ZNBC director-general, Joseph Salasini, and ZANIS director, Patrick Jabani, received the vehicles. "By handing over these vehicles, I am actually flagging off your intensified media campaign coverage. The budgetary constraints have hindered us from creating an enabling environment for you to have an increased media outreach. It is in the interest of expanding our catchment areas and to provide a service to rural populations that Government released K4.2 billion in 2005 to enable ZNBC expand its rural coverage," he said. The rural television project was progressing well and under the second phase, 14 more rural districts would have their transmitters rehabilitated in addition to the 26.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>*Times* April 11, 2006

<sup>2</sup>*Mail* April 11, 2006

<sup>3</sup>*Times* May 5, 2006

“In the case of ZANIS we have not for a long time been able to provide for district offices,” the *Mail* reported Mwaanga as saying. The paper also mentioned the release of K4.2 billion in 2005 to enable ZNBC expand its rural coverage in 26 rural districts where transmitters have been rehabilitated. The paper also said that 14 more districts and population centres would be added under the second phase.<sup>1</sup>

And unionised workers at ZNBC on May 5 staged a sit-in protest demanding a 25 percent salary increase though ZNBC management insisted it could not go beyond its latest offer of 15 percent. The workers, who were also upset with management officials for getting 13.5 percent of their salaries as housing allowances started the protest in the morning but vowed not to resume work until management met their demands. At Mass Media Complex workers were seated outside, while managers were running both radio and television. On the same day ZNBC crews did not even cover President Mwanawasa at State House where he handed over of four buses to four training institutions and later that day director of programmes Ben Kangwa read the 13.45 hours main news. The national broadcaster later combined its Radio Two and Radio Four transmissions while Director General Joseph Salasini was forced to hold a meeting with National Union of Communication Workers (NUCW) and Zambia Union of Broadcasters and other Disseminators (ZUBID) officials. At the meeting Salasini gave the unions an increased management offer rising from 13 to 15 per cent. But both unions rejected the 15 percent offer and addressing the workers later NUCW president Patrick Kaonga said the unions would maintain their demand for a 25 per cent increment. Kaonga accused management of being selfish and insensitive to the workers’ plight while NUCW deputy general secretary James Zulu said the huge housing allowances management officials were getting meant that each one of them had virtually two salaries. But ZUBID president Simon Mwila said the issue of housing allowance for his members would be tackled after dealing with the salary increment. And commenting on the matter ZNBC PR manager Miriam Tonga said the company would not go beyond the 15 percent offer because it did not have the capacity to meet the workers demand. On the huge allowances management officials are alleged to have awarded themselves Ms Tonga said in any organisation there was a difference in remuneration between senior staff and junior staff. ZNBC currently has a workforce of about 410 unionised workers and 80 management staff across the country.<sup>2</sup> In Kitwe unionized staff staged a sit in protest to register their grievances over the delay in salary negotiations. The times reported that a check at ZNBC studios in Kitwe found some workers playing cards outside the studios and could not attend to clients and sources.

“Workers have been working under a lot of difficulties in the past years and have always remained dedicated but management has done nothing to motivate workers,” the paper quoted Mwila as saying. He said workers have always tightened their belts to ensure that the corporation was doing fine but that their conditions of service had remained poor adding that it was unfortunate that management had refused to negotiate for other conditions of service after the union rejected the 15 percent basic pay increment. The paper contacted ZNBC public relations officer Mirriam Tonga who said the protest was not a strike as such but that workers had decided to down tools adding that management

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<sup>1</sup>*Mail* May 5, 2006

<sup>2</sup>*Mail* May 6, 2006

had no capacity to go beyond the 15 percent it had offered. The ZNBC director general, Joseph Salasini reiterated that the on-going strike by unionised workers was illegal and he asked employees to resume work. Salasini said the 25 per cent increment being demanded by the union leadership was one the corporation had no capacity to meet, because it previously reviewed salaries by 18 per cent in 2004, 11 per cent in 2005 and the 15 per cent on offer this year. This, Salasini said, amounted to close to 50 per cent increase on salaries alone not to mention several other areas that had posted similar improvements in the staff compensation plan. Salasini refuted information by the union leaders that management staff got over 60 per cent of the total wage bill, adding that this was misinformation.

And the Zambia Union of Journalists (ZUJ) came out in full support of the strike by ZNBC workers and warned against intimidation of any member of staff. ZUJ president, Isabel Chimangeni, said in a statement that the union had repeatedly called, in vain, for the improvement in the conditions of service for public media workers to enhance service delivery. Ms Chimangeni observed that it had become a trend in Zambia to wait for strike actions to respond to problems facing workers and that the action by ZNBC, State advocates and doctors should serve as a warning that it would not always be business as usual. She said ZUJ was saddened to learn that ZNBC management had resorted to using part-time staff to run such an institution of importance, thereby compromising national security. She said the use of part-time staff to run ZNBC should be condemned because the move would not resolve the issue at hand. She urged the ZNBC board and management to come clean and find an amicable solution. The introduction of pay television among other things was meant to improve conditions of service for the entire workforce at ZNBC and not for managers alone. She regretted ZNBC's disservice to the electorate in an elections year. She further urged Information and Broadcasting Services Minister, Vernon Mwaanga, to urgently intervene in the matter and warned that should there be any reprisals against any unionised member of staff, ZUJ would be left with no option but to withdraw its labour from both the *Times of Zambia* and *Zambia Daily Mail* in support of colleagues at ZNBC.<sup>1</sup>

And joining the wrangle at ZNBC Minister of Information Vernon Mwaanga directed the ZNBC board chairperson Augustine Seyuba to intervene. The strike by ZNBC workers on May 7 entered its third day. In an interview on the same day Mwaanga confirmed that he had asked the ZNBC chairperson to travel to Lusaka to help ZNBC management resolve the problem.

"I have asked him to take critical decisions if necessary," Mwaanga said adding that the workers' claim that management was capable of meeting their demand because the corporation was earning a lot of revenue from TV licence fees was not valid because they had not considered operational costs the company was incurring. He said the cost had become higher than before because government was slowly reducing funding to ZNBC. Mwaanga advised the workers to make demands according to the company's balance sheet. But reacting to ZNBC director general Joseph Salasini's statement that the strike was illegal and his appeal on May 6 to workers to resume work, ZUBID president Simon

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<sup>1</sup>*Times* May 8, 2006

Mwila said the strike was legal because workers had exhausted all channels before downing tools. He also insisted that the workers would not resume work until the ZNBC management met a 26 percent salary increment they demanded. Mwila said the workers were disappointed that management had resorted to using threats to force them resume work.

“Management has no powers to force us endorse what is not in the best interest of our members,” he said. He accused Mr Salasini of double standards and described his statement as a departure from his earlier assurance that he could guarantee management’s consideration of the union’s suggestion to be given 15 percent now and the remaining 10 percent within a specified time frame this year.<sup>1</sup>

But on the same day (May 7) the unions called off their strike. Thus operations at both ZNBC Lusaka and Kitwe returned to normal following the intervention by Information and Broadcasting Services Minister, Vernon Mwaanga, who convinced workers to resume work. The unionised ZNBC employees, who had been on strike since May 5 returned to work after it was agreed that the two unions at the institution return to the negotiating table with management. ZNBC public relations manager, Mirriam Tonga, and ZUBID president, Simon Mwila, confirmed the development to the *Times*. Mwaanga tasked ZNBC board chairman, Augustine Seyuba, to address the problem urgently and a meeting of the board of directors was held on May 7 to help management resolve the strike action. Ms Tonga said a full board meeting, chaired by Mr Seyuba, implored the union leadership to appreciate the financial position of the corporation.

“The ZNBC board salutes the maturity of the union leadership and management to agree to the process of getting back to the negotiating table. The board would also like to remove the suspicion that ZNBC management offered itself unreasonable perks,” she said as she explained that the management package was 41 per cent of the corporation’s wage bill.

“When you include the cost of rented houses and institutional houses occupied by unionised staff, the ratio of management’s wage bill is reduced to 38 per cent while that of unionised staff moves up to 62 per cent,” she added. The other union at ZNBC is the National Union of Communication and Industrial Workers.<sup>2</sup>

And ZNBC’s rural TV expansion project fell behind schedule because of the delay by suppliers in delivering equipment needed in the project. The setting up of the down link infrastructure of the phase-two project, which was initially planned for the first quarter of 2006 had not yet taken off. ZNBC public relations manager Mirriam Tonga revealed in a statement on May 10 that the Phase Two project had not started except for the construction of towers and transmitter shelters in certain areas like Kaputa and Chiengi. Ms Tonga said the delayed equipment was now expected in Zambia by the end of May 2006. She noted that seventeen new districts were earmarked to receive the ZNBC TV signal in the second phase of the rural expansion project, namely Kaputa, Chiengi, Chilubi, Mungwi, Mkushi, Chama, Nyimba, Luangwa and Mwinilunga. Other areas include Chavuma, Zambezi, Mufumbwe, Sesheke, Munyumbwe, Maamba,

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<sup>1</sup>*Mail* - May 8, 2006

<sup>2</sup>*Times* May 9, 2006

Sinazongwe and Chirundu while the phase one rural TV expansion project that was concluded in January 2006 resulted in 26 districts accessing the ZNBC signal.<sup>1</sup>

ZUBID revealed in an interview May 16 that its salary negotiations with ZNBC management were going on well. ZUBID president Simon Mwila confirmed, saying from the way negotiations were progressing his union was optimistic that it would achieve a meaningful increment. He dismissed allegations by some ZNBC workers that ZUBID, the National Union of Commercial Workers and management had signed a 17 percent salary increment without informing the employees. Some ZNBC workers complained that the two unions agreed to endorse the 17 percent salary increment without informing them. But Mwila said the unions would brief their members on the outcome of the negotiations as soon as a meaningful agreement with management was reached.<sup>2</sup>

Away from ZNBC worker problems, MISA Zambia conducted a two-day workshop May 18-19, 2006 under the Good Governance programme funded by Irish Aid. The workshop in Chipata was for both Radio Breeze and Radio Maria where 13 participants attended drawn from the two stations. The Objectives of the workshop were:

- Familiarise Radio and Good Governance Programme Officer and National Director to the community radio sector.
- Conduct Production training for the two radio stations
- Conduct monitoring of stations performance on the Good programme project.
- Introduction of Good Governance in detail
- Identification of Good Governance issues by participants
- Introduction to Guidelines and Principles for SADC broadcasters on Election reporting.
- Introduction to Media ethics and Principles
- Collect and update baseline information on community radio stations in Eastern province.

The workshop, facilitated by MISA Zambia national director Fanwell Chembo, Broadcasting Researcher Brian Lingela and Good Governance Programme Officer Chela Katwishi, was participatory and it achieved its objectives.

The challenges for both stations were listed as:

- Refusal to comment by Government Officials on issues affecting the community.
- Fear of victimisation and intimidation by Government Officials
- Lack of interviewing techniques on investigative and sensitive issues.
- Monetary expectations from invited guests on the programmes.
- Limited understanding of citizens' rights.
- Lack of decentralization of authority
- Limited funds for production equipment.
- Lack of time management to meet production and broadcast schedules
- Lack of teamwork among producers and presenters
- Limited Radio coverage area

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<sup>1</sup>*Times* May 11, 2006

<sup>2</sup>*Mail* May 17, 2006

- High staff turnover.

The workshop listed the following as solutions to the above challenges:

- Build cordial relations as way of winning government's confidence. However, if this failed air the problem as is and the government would definitely react.
- Know your rights and responsibilities as a broadcaster/journalist. Implement the media ethics and principles.
- Implement the interviewing techniques acquired in the workshop.
- Include the expenditure of your guests in your allocated budget.
- Need for civic awareness campaigns in form of radio spots for the community to be sensitized on the rights.
- Follow up the lack of decentralization with authorities in Lusaka
- Apply to government for transmission repeater stations.
- Management needs to motivate staff adequately to avoid high staff turnover.

The impact of the Good Governance project at Radio Breeze is illustrated through programmes on the 2006 Budget, Tobacco Marketing System for 2006, Tobacco Loans versus buying prices, Deforestation, Mchinji-Chipata Railways project and the K40 billion Youth Fund as it affects rural Youth. At Radio Maria the impact has been on the importance of voter registration and how this is linked to the issuance of National Registration Cards and through a programme on credible leadership in which qualities of a good leader were identified.<sup>1</sup>

MISA Zambia organised a one-day workshop at Chikaya Community Radio station. The objectives of the workshop focus areas and content were the same as those in Chipata. Sixteen participants attended the workshop that raised and listed the following challenges:

- Only one producer was trained previously and when he left for "greener pastures" – the programme suffered because the rest did not know where to start.
- Some people have developed fear of the unknown to appear on the Good Governance radio programmes
- Limited resource persons
- Transport problems limit the producers from reaching the far-flung areas resulting in them focusing on the locals.
- Lack of adequate broadcast recording equipment
- Gender sensitivity is a problem because most women shy away to avoid conflict in their traditions and customs.

The participants included some board members in a workshop that was participatory and hence, participants were involved in finding solutions to the challenges some of which were listed as follows:

- Need to have in-house training so that others can benefit.
- Need to sensitize the community through sketches and drama for them to be aware of the importance of Good Governance.
- Use other means of communication to contact provincial headquarters officials where need be.
- Include maintenance of available transport in your budget.

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<sup>1</sup>MISA Zambia Report – May 18, 2006

- Include purchasing of broadcast equipment in your budget
- Need for men to be sensitized for the woman's voice to be heard.

The station has had a great impact on the community and on officials especially related to road maintenance.<sup>1</sup>

Reassuring noises on the need for impartiality of ZNBC came from Justice minister George Kunda. The minister on June 15 urged ZNBC to adhere to the Electoral Act as a public broadcaster. In an interview, Kunda called on ZNBC and other media organisations to adhere to the stipulation of the electoral Act, which states that all political players receive equal coverage in this year's elections.

"ZNBC should adhere to the Act as a public broadcaster. It should also adhere to the ZNBC Act and it should adhere to defamation laws. I also urge other media bodies to be professional in their reporting," Kunda said. He also advised the media to ensure that statements that hinged on inciting public disorder were not broadcast or published. Asked if ZNBC was fair in its coverage of political players, Kunda said the institution had tried within its legal provisions to accommodate divergent views.

"The public media tries its best to accommodate views. One aspect must be appreciated that the government of the day has its programmes supported by ZNBC Act. It is inevitable that the President must be covered and government policies must come out," he said. The new Electoral Act under Article 27(2) states that "every candidate and political party shall have the right to have the substance of the candidates' or the political party's campaign propaganda reported in all public media in a fair and balanced manner".

But Kunda also noted that insults being published in the privately owned Post newspaper were taking away the reputation the newspaper had established in the nation. Kunda said insults were eating into the reputation *The Post* had established for itself. "Your paper is accurate, the way you publish stories would be accurate but when it comes to the commentaries, the negatives spice the day. You use very strong insults against government officials," Kunda said. "You use words like idiots, thugs, stupid. I don't think that is allowed in journalism, let us put across the real message." He said the policy of any newspaper should be to publish news that is of benefit to the public. "But your insults do not add any value at all to *The Post* Newspaper. If as you are saying that the newspaper has a good reputation, insults deduct from its reputation," said Kunda.<sup>2</sup>

At the end of the quarter MTN shareholders in South Africa approved the reconstituted MTN Group Ltd board during the organisation's Annual General Meeting. MTN brand communications officer Linda Mafoko disclosed that the MTN Group had decided to review the board composition following the restructuring of the company's operations.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>*MISA Zambia Report* – May 20, 2006

<sup>2</sup>*Post* June 16, 2006

<sup>3</sup>*Saturday Post* June 17, 2006

#### **4.0 Freedom of Information during the Second Quarter of 2006**

Dominant during the quarter was the sitting of the Parliamentary Committee for Information and Broadcasting. Presenting his views on the media *Times of Zambia* managing director Arnold Kapelembi urged for the repeal of libel and defamation laws in the country. Appearing before a parliamentary committee both the *Times* managing director and *Zambia Daily Mail* managing director Godfrey Malama said laws must be revised to suit the democratic dispensation. Kapelembi said the current legal provisions only mentioned freedom of the press in passing while most of the laws in the Penal Code were a carry over from the colonial days. He said there was need to transform the law now because should a dictator rule the country, he or she would use them against the media. Kapelembi said defamation of the president was not clear in the current Constitution.

“Libel and defamation laws need to be repealed,” he said, adding that the media was surviving by the grace of the authorities. He said many media organisations had closed because of defamation laws. He said libel should be decriminalised.

And Malama observed that most governments had the propensity to conceal information arguing that it was top secret even though the information was in public interest. Thus due to lack of transparency in government operations, corruption had been rife, he said adding that Freedom of Information (FoI) Act would be an appropriate piece of legislation in assisting journalists operate effectively. Malama said the country was in urgent need of the FoI Act while noted that the legal reforms had lagged far much behind to the political reforms to suit the democratic dispensation. He said the media currently lacked legal protection which could act as a sanctuary for journalists. But asked by Zambezi West UPND Member of Parliament Charles Kakoma whether press freedom in the country was realistic, Malama said the country need a free press and a legal protection. However, Malama concluded by saying there was press freedom in the country, an assertion which Kapelembi refused to accept. And Kapoche FDD Member of Parliament Charles Banda observed that journalists in the country were risk takers currently due to the absence of legal protection.<sup>1</sup>

In the continued submission by the media the Zambia Media Women Association (ZAMWA) chairperson Margaret Chimanse on April 4 told the Parliamentary Committee on Information and Broadcasting that Zambia was still far from creating a media friendly environment. Ms Chimanse said the FOI Bill should be taken back to parliament to reverse the concerns on the FOI. She said restrictive media laws, harsh economic realities and the political climate had combined forces to create an environment that inhibited investigative reporting and kept it off the agenda of the Zambian media.<sup>2</sup>

Ministry of Information and Broadcasting permanent secretary Emmanuel Nyirenda said April 5 that government policy showed commitment to the enhancement of Press Freedom in Zambia. Nyirenda told the Committee on Information and Broadcasting that the fact that journalists were free to write on issues of their choice showed that press

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<sup>1</sup>Post April 5, 2006

<sup>2</sup>Mail April 5, 2006

freedom existed. He said it was good that there was a Media Complaints Authority where aggrieved members of the public could go when they were unhappy with a publication.

“The media should be able to regulate itself and should not leave it to government to do it for them because this makes it appear as if they are being censored,” he said.

When asked by Kapoche MP Charles Banda why the FOI Bill was being delayed Nyirenda explained that this was due to consultations taking place. He said government was getting views from Commonwealth countries where this law was in effect to come up with a law that would please everyone. And ZANIS director Patrick Jabani said there were no policies that impede practicing of press freedom in Zambia. He said the problem lay with timid media heads who were inexperienced and did not know how to bring out real issues in a story.

“Some of the journalists in Zambia would not be allowed to practice in certain countries because of some of these stories they write are very malicious. You cannot describe a national leader as ‘pint sized’ and get away with it,” he said.

ZNBC director general Joseph Salasini told the Committee that the market response showed that there was a certain amount of press freedom existing in Zambia. Salasini said people would not be setting up radio stations, newspapers and television stations if the environment was hostile.

“The flourishing media industry has offered business opportunities to many,” he said.<sup>1</sup>

In Parliament information minister Vernon Mwaanga said June 7 that government had learnt from the 40 countries, which have the Freedom of Information legislation in place because a lot of things should be done before the bill was legislated. He said out of the remaining 151 UN member-countries, which had not yet implemented the Freedom of Information law Zambia was among 30 nations that were in the process of enacting the bill. Mwaanga said implementation of the ZNBC amendment Act and the IBA Act depended on the outcome of the case currently before the Supreme Court. But earlier moving the motion to adopt the information and Broadcasting report, committee chairperson, Andrew Hakaloba, said although there were certain levels of press freedom in Zambia, this fell below the minimum accepted international standards. Hakaloba, who is also Magoye MP (UPND), said Zambia was, for instance, number 100 out of 167 countries that were found to be harassing journalists by the Reporters Without Borders. And seconding the motion, Sinjembela MP Mubika Mubika (MMD) said there was need for government to fully implement the IBA and the ZNBC amendment Act.

“These laws were passed by this House, and it is inexcusable for the executive, which is part of the law makers, to drag its feet in implementing these two laws,” Mr Mubika said. Several other MPs, who debated the report, called for better conditions of service and modern equipment for the public media journalists. The MPs also called for an end to the harassment of journalists, especially by politicians and their cadres.<sup>2</sup> In its report of the same debate the Times said the minister informed the House that Government was still consulting over the Freedom of Information Bill (FOI). He assured the House that Government was committed to media reforms but was merely cautious as countries

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<sup>1</sup>Mail April 6, 2006

<sup>2</sup>Mail June 7, 2006

where such an FOI law was enacted had indicated that they rushed in introducing it. The paper also noted that Magoye MP Andrew Haakaloba (UPND) expressed disquiet at Government's failure to enact the freedom of information legislation urging it to re-introduce the Bill to parliament so that once enacted, citizens would have access to public information.<sup>1</sup> The same item came on Radio Phoenix in its main news at 6.45 on June 8. The station reported that Mwaanga told parliament that government would not introduce the FOI Bill during the current sitting of the House because it was still consulting, adding that the FOI Bill would more likely be introduced in the new parliament that would be elected after the 2006 elections.<sup>2</sup> A similar report was published by the *Times* saying the minister had indicated that the government was still making consultations on the withdrawn Freedom of Information Bill and that it was not likely to be re-introduced before the dissolution of the current sitting of Parliament.<sup>3</sup>

The *Post* newspaper carried a detailed item of the parliamentary committee on information and broadcasting service especially as it affected Freedom of Information. The committee observed that lack of access to information from government had led to corruption going unpunished. According to the committee's report presented to the Fifth Session of the Ninth National Assembly, it was observed that most governments concealed information from the public on the pretext that it was 'top secret'. "Ostensibly, this reason is often advanced merely to keep prying eyes at bay when disclosure of information being sought is in the public interest and should not be classified as such," the report stated, adding: "The negative effect, which stems from this practice, is that there is lack of transparency in government operations, which lead to corruption going on unabated."

Further the report stated that some societies had taken measures to circumscribe government behaviour by limiting the extent of secrecy. The report noted that most witnesses who were called to appear before the committee were of the view that press freedom did not exist in the country. "In order to be able to work freely, the press must be free from control by the state," the report read in part, adding: "It is important to recognise the fact that the press will not be free unless and until certain minimum benchmarks are met." The report also stated that access to information was crucial to the existence of a free press. "Only non-democratic governments continue to restrict access to information purely for their continued existence," it read.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>*Mail* June 8, 2006

<sup>2</sup>*Radio Phoenix* June 8 – News at 6.45

<sup>3</sup>*Times* June 8, 2006

<sup>4</sup> *Post* June 21, 2006 -Among stakeholders that submitted their views to the committee were the Press Freedom Committee of *The Post* Newspapers, *Daily Mail*, *Times of Zambia*, Non Governmental Organisations Coordinating Council (NGOCC), Media Institute of South Africa (MISA) Zambia, Council of Churches in Zambia (CCZ), Radio Phoenix and Zambia Episcopal Conference (ZEC)

## 5.0 Print Media during the Second Quarter of 2006

The major item of interest at the beginning of the quarter is the announcement by the board of Multimedia Zambia that it would re-launch the *National Mirror* and Multimedia Zambia. Acting board chairperson Dr Stella Chintu said on April 1 that the operations, which were temporarily suspended in July 2005, would resume sometime in April 2006 and would pave way for a new strategic plan.

“The institution had, for over thirty years, successfully served the people of Zambia in the communication of Christian and other development oriented information using various forms of media,” she said. Dr Chintu said the shareholders of Multimedia Zambia who are the Zambia Episcopal Conference and the Christian Council of Zambia hoped the board of governors and other staff to be recruited would soon receive maximum support from stakeholders and clients. She said the board had appointed Eddy Mupeso as its new managing director. Mupeso had worked acting director general of ZNBC, technical director of Pan African News Agency and currently a member of the Institute of Electronic and Radio Engineers of the United Kingdom. Dr Chintu said Mupeso would implement a business plan that would focus on the *National Mirror* for the next couple of years.<sup>1</sup> The *Times* on April 4 reported that the board of governors of the new look Multi-Media Zambia was optimistic that the organisation’s new chief executive, Eddy Mupeso, and other professional staff to be recruited soon would receive support from all stakeholders and clients.<sup>2</sup>

The print media was at the forefront of submitting to the Parliamentary Committee on Information and Broadcasting. *Times of Zambia* managing director Arnold Kapelembi told the committee of the need for the repeal of libel and defamation laws in the country. The *Times* managing director and *Zambia Daily Mail* managing director Godfrey Malama told the committee chaired by Magoye UPND Member of Parliament Andrew Haakaloba, that laws must be revised to suit the democratic dispensation. Kapelembi observed that the current legal provisions only mentioned freedom of the press in passing. He said most of the laws in the Penal Code were a carry over from the colonial days and there was need for transforming the law now because should a dictator rule the country, he or she would use them against the media. Kapelembi said defamation of the president was not clear in the current Constitution.

“Libel and defamation laws need to be repealed,” he said, adding that the media was surviving by the grace of the authorities and many media organisations had closed because of defamation laws. He said libel should be decriminalised. Kapelembi said there was no freedom of the press in the country because it was given on the other hand by some laws and taken away by the Penal Code. He said this was the reason media bodies were advocating changes in the Penal Code.

And Malama noted that most governments had the propensity to conceal information arguing that it was top secret even if the information was in public interest. Due to lack of transparency in government operations, corruption had been rife, he said adding that Freedom of Information (FoI) Act would be an appropriate piece of legislation in assisting journalists to operate effectively. Malama also said the country

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<sup>1</sup>Post April 2, 2006, also *Times* April 2, 2006

<sup>2</sup>*Times* April 4, 2006

was in urgent need of the FoI Act. He said the legal reforms in the country had lagged far much behind to the political reforms to suit the democratic dispensation. Asked by Zambezi West UPND Member of Parliament Charles Kakoma whether press freedom in the country was realistic, Malama said the country need a free press and a legal protection. But Kapelembi rejected Malama's view that there was press freedom in the country. At this point Banda said journalists were risk takers currently due to the absence of legal protection.<sup>1</sup>

The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting permanent secretary Emmanuel Nyirenda on April 5 also submitted to the committee. He told the committee that government's policy showed commitment to the enhancement of Press Freedom in Zambia. Nyirenda observed that the fact that journalists were free to write on issues of their choice showed that press freedom existed. He explained that most of the journalists would have court cases pending if they did not enjoy any freedom. Nyirenda said a few journalists who had been taken to court over their stories had either been acquitted or had their charges dropped, a strong indicator of press freedom. He, however, said freedom was enjoyed up to the level when it did not offend other people. Nyirenda also said some laws imposing restraints on media practice were there to protect the majority who may be injured as a result of a publication. He said it was good that there was a Media Complaints Authority where aggrieved members of the public could go when they were unhappy with a publication.

"The media should be able to regulate itself and should not leave it to government to do it for them because this makes it appear as if they are being censored," he said.

And ZANIS director Patrick Jabani said there were no policies that impede practicing of press freedom in Zambia. He said the problem lay with media heads who were timid and inexperienced and did not know how to bring out real issues in a story.

"Some of the journalists in Zambia would not be allowed to practice in certain countries because of some of these stories they write are very malicious. You cannot describe a national leader as 'pint sized' and get away with it," he said. He said an experienced journalist could not fail to bring out the news aspect of a story on any given issue even if the story was anti government.<sup>2</sup>

And submitting to the committee on behalf of the Post newspaper Press Freedom Committee of *The Post* chairman Webster Malido urged government to consider the growth of the media industry as a critical function to a functioning democracy. He said the media industry should be considered for special incentives.

"Therefore, as is the case for other sectors, the media industry should also be considered for special incentives such as a waiver on all forms of taxation for raw materials in the case of newspapers and all broadcasting and other electronic equipment in the case of the electronic media," he said.

Malido noted that currently the media was one of the least attractive sectors for any investor suggesting that this probably explained why the government and the Church dominated sector.

"And to this is added the political risk. A media institution can easily be closed by the

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<sup>1</sup>*Post* April 5, 2006

<sup>2</sup>*Mail* April 6, 2006

authorities on trumped up political charges,” he said, adding that media editors, unlike managers of other businesses, were open to criminal charges for mistakes and could go to prison for many years.

“Which financial institution would be comfortable to lend money to such an industry or sector?” he asked. Malido said distributing a publication to all corners of Zambia cost a lot of money in terms of automobiles, fuels and other running costs, including other logistical costs. He said without a favourable economic and financial system, newspapers could be quite expensive and out of reach to most people. He said Zambian newspapers were very expensive due to high production costs.

“Although there is a claim that there is no duty on newsprint, there is a 17.5 per cent VAT on all imports of newsprint. To the media, whatever this is called, it still amounts to a duty. This is the same for all other printing materials on which duties are levied,” he said, adding that other problems newspapers faced was that of space for stories that was very limited because it was very expensive to carry many stories.

On minister of finance Ng’andu Magande’s levying of VAT on newspapers Malido wondered why the minister had targeted such a fragile industry for further taxation.

“Such measures are effective not in terms of broadening the tax base, but in strangling the fragile media industry. Instead of proposing new taxes for the industry, the government should be focusing more on offering incentives for the growth of this struggling industry,” he said.<sup>1</sup>

During the quarter government was impressed with the massive investment *The Post* had put into human resources. Officiating at the third graduation ceremony for *Post* trainee journalists on April 13 Vice-President Lupando Mwape said the survival of any established institution depended to a large extent on the quality and skill of its human resource. The vice-president also commended *The Post* for giving priority to the health of its staff through its HIV and AIDS programme. He called on other media organisations to take interest in the health status of their employees. The vice-President also noted that the conduct of the media played an important role in the political, social and economic cultural development of society. And speaking on behalf of the graduating journalists, Grace Mumbere said there was need to critically look at laws that hinder the work of journalists. And *Post* Newspapers board chairman Maurice Attala said the training would give the new journalists an opportunity to make it to the top while *Post* legal counsel Sam Mujuda said the costly training programme was necessitated by the realisation that a gap existed between what the media industry got from the University of Zambia and Evelyn Hone College.

“We are in no way trying to undermine what these government-recognised institutions are doing,” Mujuda said. “But we do realise that they are not in touch with the market trends, hence our decision to train the journalists we intend to employ.”<sup>2</sup> And addressing trainee journalists at *The Post* Newspapers offices University of Zambia vice chancellor Prof Robert Serpell said both scholars and journalists championed social progress through dissemination of information.

“University education and the mass media are both in the business of information,” he

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<sup>1</sup>*Post* April 6, 2006

<sup>2</sup>*Post* April 14, 2006

said. “Journalists like scholars have to strike a balance between what sells, informs, educates and what promotes social progress.”<sup>1</sup>

All the media, including print, celebrated the World Press Freedom Day on May 3, 2006. Addressing the nation on television on the eve of the World Press Freedom Day which on the theme "Media, Development and Poverty Eradication", Information minister Vernon Mwaanga said government cannot pursue social, economic and political development without the participation of the press. Hence, government placed special attention on the World Press Freedom Day and the media in general as it went beyond mere celebrations. Mwaanga said: “It is for this reason that my government is strongly committed to the development of the media in Zambia so that it can occupy its central role in national development and good governance.”<sup>2</sup> On May 4 the minister handed over nine Tata twin cab vehicles to the *Times of Zambia*, *Zambia Daily Mail*, Zambia News and Information Services (ZANIS) and Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation (ZNBC). Government spared some money to buy the vehicles because people’s expectations in terms of provision of information would be so high this year; especially that it was time for elections, he said.<sup>3</sup> Mwaanga also said the budgetary constraints hindered government from creating an enabling environment for increased media outreach.

“In the case of ZANIS we have not for a long time been able to provide for district offices,” he said.<sup>4</sup>

Apart from the marches on May 3 the Press Freedom Committee of *The Post* organised a dinner for various guests. Officiating at the function United States ambassador to Zambia, Carmen Martinez said a free Press gave voice to the persecuted. “A free Press educates the public and provides a check on power and the abuse of power,” she said. PFC vice-president, Yvonne Shibemba, was unhappy with the hurdles journalists continued to face in Zambia as far as obtaining information was concerned. She was also not happy that journalists continued to be harassed by political cadres, government officials and students. UNESCO advisor for communication and information in Southern Africa based in Harare, Kaliwo Gervasio, was happy that the WPFDD celebration started by his organisation had been embraced the world over. He challenged journalists to reach out to the poor people and those marginalised as they covered their stories. Mr Gervasio said the fight for media laws should be a continued effort. At the same function, a survey on HIV/AIDS coverage was launched by Gender and Media in Southern Africa chairperson, Mwika Mulindima. It was saddening to note that the study revealed that only five per cent of 3,000 stories in Zambia covered the issue of HIV/AIDS, he said.<sup>5</sup>

The re-launch of the *National Mirror* announced in April was held on May 4, 2006. Officiating at the launch deputy minister for Information Benny Tetamashimba

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<sup>1</sup>*Post* April 15, 2006

<sup>2</sup>*Post* May 3, 2006

<sup>3</sup>*Times* May 5, 2006 - *Times* Printpak Zambia Limited managing director, Arnold Kapelembi, *Zambia Daily Mail* managing director, Godfrey Malama, ZNBC director-general, Joseph Salasini, and ZANIS director, Patrick Jabani, received the vehicles.

<sup>4</sup>*Mail* May 5, 2006

<sup>5</sup>*Times* May 5, 2006

urged the new *National Mirror* to provide another channel for Zambians to exercise their freedom of expression during this year's election. He expected the newspaper to contribute in creating peace in the country by promoting dialogue between government and the church. Tetamashimba said the *National Mirror* should maintain its non-partisan and evangelical policy which should remain a guide to the reporters. He also urged the new board of directors and management to learn from the past mistakes to avoid the recurrence of past problems.<sup>1</sup> And according to the *Times* the deputy minister said the re-launch of the *National Mirror* newspaper would enhance diversity of views through freedom of expression. Tetamashimba recalled the great contribution the tabloid made towards the rebirth of multiparty politics in Zambia. He said the fight for democratic governance was not an easy one but the Zambian media should help in the consolidation of the young democracy and in ensuring that vices like corruption were eradicated.<sup>2</sup>

The strike at ZNBC raised a reaction from ZUJ who threatened that employees at *Times of Zambia* and *Zambia Daily Mail* would join the strike if an amicable solution was not found to address grievances. ZUJ president Isabel Chimangeni dismissed assertions by labour minister Mutale Nalumango and ZNBC management that the action of workers at ZNBC was illegal. Supporting the action by workers at ZNBC Chimangeni said the action was justified.

“ZUJ would like to categorically state that should there be any reprisals against any unionised members of staff at ZNBC, it shall be left with no option but to withdraw its labour from the *Times of Zambia* and *Zambia Daily Mail* in support of our colleagues at ZNBC,” Chimangeni warned, adding: “We are watching with keen interest developments at ZNBC and urge our colleagues to soldier on.”

And commenting on the threat by Zambia Union of Journalists that *Times of Zambia* and *Zambia Daily Mail* might join ZNBC in the action, information minister Vernon Mwaanga observed that the two public media had just concluded their negotiations and he did not see why they would go on strike.<sup>3</sup>

But though the minister had adduced to negotiations at the *Times* and *Mail* there some misunderstanding over what was really offered by the *Zambia Daily Mail* management. This prompted a press statement by deputy managing editor, Evans Milimo who clarified the matter. He revealed that his organisation had offered unionised employees a total of K360, 000 increment across the board contrary to ZUJ claims that only K100, 000 had been offered. At the time the bargaining unit adjourned to allow ZUJ make consultations, K240, 000 was offered as salary increment while K120, 000 was for accommodation, representing a total of 27.03 per cent, Milimo said. Management described as false and misleading claims by ZUJ acting president, Morgan Chonya, that workers in JS-1 who included himself had been offered a K100, 000 salary increment. The company's ability to pay remained the overriding consideration, which invariably influenced management's decision on the level of increment offered to employees. Milimo observed that the increment offered by the *Zambia Daily Mail* management was the same amount that *the management had offered Times of Zambia employees* and the

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<sup>1</sup>*Mail* May 5, 2006

<sup>2</sup>*Times* May 6, 2006

<sup>3</sup>*Post* May 8, 2006

same union accepted. It was, therefore, curious why the ZUJ acting president was misleading the public on the status of the negotiations and inciting industrial unrest.<sup>1</sup>

The second month of the quarter saw ZUJ expressing happiness at the speedy conclusion of negotiations with *Times* Printpak management. ZUJ treasurer Elias Mwamba said on May 26 during the signing ceremony between the union and *Times* Printpak management in Lusaka. Mwamba observed that despite financial difficulties that the company was facing the Collective Bargaining Unit (CBU) managed to clinch a deal which was acceptable to both management and employees. He urged employees to remain committed towards duty and help the company improve its service delivery to the public. He said the union was mindful of the difficult economic situation the company was experiencing during its negotiations for the improvement of conditions of service with management.<sup>2</sup>

However, the quarter ended with some journalists being attacked or harassed, not by government but the students at the University of Zambia. MISA Zambia condemned the attacks on journalists by students, whenever there were disturbances at the institution. MISA Chairperson, Kellys Kaunda, said in a statement that MISA was concerned about the increasing incidents of harassment of journalists by some UNZA students. Kaunda cited the incident involving *Times of Zambia* journalist, Abel Mbozi, who was roughed up by some demonstrating students as he covered disturbances at the institution and *Post* newspapers photojournalist, Thomas Nsama, who narrowly escaped death at the hands of unruly students during earlier disturbances. He said the two incidents highlighted growing problems, which needed to be addressed urgently by the UNZA Student Union leadership before something nasty happened to journalists reporting about disturbances at UNZA. Kaunda urged the UNZASU leadership to take immediate steps to put an end to the harassment of journalists at UNZA.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>*Times* May 12, 2006 - The increment means that the highest paid unionised employee in JS-1 will now earn a salary of K1, 975,533 and housing allowance of K987, 667, totalling K2, 963,000 while the lowest paid unionised employee would now earn K683, 333 with a housing allowance of K341, 667, totalling K1.025, 000.

<sup>2</sup>*Times* May 28, 2006

<sup>3</sup>*Times* June 19, 2006

## **6.0 Attacks on MISA members and non-MISA members during the Second Quarter of 2006**

Early in the quarter unrest at the University of Zambia dominated media violations and attacks. Students at the university on April 13 stoned and threatened to kill *Post* photojournalist Thomas Nsama while the UNZASU president Antonio Mwanza and eight other students were arrested during a riot that followed the death of a student from Evelyn Hone College who was hit by a bus at the UNZA pedestrian crossing. Narrating the incident, Nsama said when he and *Post* reporter Kingsley Kaswende approached UNZA after being tipped about the riot around 19:00 hours, some students who were along a side road near the UNZA bus stop stoned the vehicle and threatened to burn it with the journalists inside.

“They started stoning the vehicle and they wanted to burn it to ashes,” he said. “When I alighted from the vehicle the door was still open, and as I came out of the car, I saw Kingsley reversing while there were stones hitting the top of the car.” Nsama said the students warned that they did not want any reporter to go to UNZA. The students burnt a minibus which had earlier hit and killed an Evelyn Hone student. Nsama said amid the confusion created by the students, Kaswende reversed the vehicle while he (Nsama) was still trying to come out of it. Nsama said he jumped into the drainage along the side of the road to avoid the vehicle and stones from the students. “I was dragged by the door, but I made sure that I didn't fall down. The moment I let go of the door I just saw the vehicle behind me, that's when I jumped and the students started stoning me,” he said.<sup>1</sup>

The quarter also witnessed attacks of politicians by the media. On April 15 *The Post* carried an editorial condemning the government for “its lies” over the health of President Levy Mwanawasa.<sup>2</sup> While because of media attacks about his HIV status second president Frederick Chiluba requested his South African doctors to release the HIV test results to the media in Zambia. Chiluba also demanded an apology from the *Post* newspaper “for disputing his status in its editorial comment of April 15.”<sup>3</sup> Similarly on April 17 the newspaper carried a less complimentary editorial of the second republican president.<sup>4</sup> The *Post* comments force the second president to consult his lawyers on the possibility of taking legal action against the newspaper following alleged refusal to apologise for disputing his HIV status. And reacting to the situation Evangelical Fellowship Zambia secretary Paul Mususu observed that Dr Chiluba deserved privacy and confidentiality especially that he was a former head of State. He also advised the former president against publicizing the results of his HIV tests he undertook in South Africa where he was then admitted for specialist medical attention.<sup>5</sup> But despite the advice from Mususu authorities at the Clinic in Johannesburg on April 18 released former president Frederick Chiluba's HIV results, which showed that Chiluba's HIV status was negative.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>*Post* April 15, 2006

<sup>2</sup>*Post* April 15, 2006

<sup>3</sup>*Mail* April 17, 2006

<sup>4</sup>*Post* April 17, 2006

<sup>5</sup>*Mail* April 18, 2006

<sup>6</sup>*Post* April 19, 2006

On the issue of harassment of journalists by students the UNZASU leadership by April 17 expressed regret at the harassment faced by some journalists during the student protests. MISA Zambia chairperson, Kellies Kaunda, condemned the harassment of journalists by rioting students and urged the UNZASU leadership to sensitise its members on the importance and impartiality of the media in any situation. And reacting to complaints by MISA Zambia on the harassment of journalists who went to cover the riot, UNZASU secretary general, Stanford Kabwata, said the union was working hard to build its relationship with the media in view of what happened during the protest. Describing the incident as sad, Kabwata said the students who were aggrieved with the death of their colleague could have mistakenly harassed the journalists. He said the UNZASU executive committee would soon meet and issue a comprehensive statement over the matter concerning the harassment of journalists.<sup>1</sup> UNZASU went further on May 23. The union apologized to *The Post* Newspapers for the violence exhibited against photojournalist Thomas Nsama during the April riots at the institution. In a letter addressed to the editor-in-chief signed by union president Antonio Mwanza and acting secretary general Kashimbi Limata, the union regretted the riotous behaviour, which was sparked by the death of a student from Evelyn Hone College who was hit by a minibus. “We wish to convey our sincere and unreserved apologies to your management and staff over the unwarranted violent action that some students took against your innocent journalist Thomas Nsama during the previous riotous demonstrations,” he stated. And *The Post* assistant news editor Tabitha Mvula said the media organization had accepted the apology from UNZASU. However, Mvula emphasized that the students through their union have to replace the equipment. “We have accepted their apology but we must insist that the students replace the camera and flash disk because we feel the action was deliberate,” she said, adding that *The Post* would not tolerate or support violence for whatever reason.<sup>2</sup>

Journalists were again the subject of harassment on May 24. Following the death of Anderson Mazoka UPND cadres harassed journalists from the state media and accused them of reporting negatively against the late party leader when he was still alive. The cadres said they could not allow a ZNBC crew on the premises because of the manner the news announcing Mazoka's death was framed. “We will not allow any one from ZNBC here. This morning during the news when they were announcing Mr. Mazoka's death, they were urging UPND members to join Sata's PF,” said one of the cadres. “So we will not allow anyone from ZNBC to enter. We have chased them.”

Some cadres insulted journalists and declared that they would not allow reporters from the state media to enter the secretariat premises because of their negative reporting. And when a *Times of Zambia* photojournalist arrived and proceeded to join other journalists from other media institutions who stood at a distance. But before he could

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<sup>1</sup>*Times* April 18, 2006

<sup>2</sup>*Post* May 24, 2006 – According to the newspaper the unruly students damaged a Nikon camera worth K26 million and a flash disk valued at K8 million.

even reach the safety of other journalists that had grouped together for security reasons, the photojournalist was accosted by two cadres who tried to move him out.

The cadres confronted the journalist to the point of almost hounding him out of the premises. It took former UNZASU president Cornelius Mweetwa's intervention for the journalist to be spared. However, the cadres insisted that they would not permit any reporter from ZNBC to cover the press briefing by UPND acting president Sakwiba Sikota. Politician Dante Saunders told the *Times* journalist that the cadres might be right in their complaints because Mazoka was not being covered when he was alive. Saunders wondered why the media was covering him now when he is dead.<sup>1</sup> The Press Freedom Committee of *The Post* (PFC) condemned the harassment of state media journalists by UPND cadres. PFC member, Joseph Chanda, on May 27 said journalists were supposed to perform their duties without hindrance regardless of the institution they represented. "We condemned the UPND cadres who harassed journalists from the state media," Chanda said adding that the late UPND president Anderson Mazoka was not only UPND but was a national asset. He said the action by UPND cadres had instilled fear in journalists, which would make it difficult for them to cover Mazoka's burial. "If Mazoka's burial is not shown on ZNBC, these are the same cadres who will be the first ones to complain," said Chanda and observed that the PFC would soon sit down with MISA Zambia Union of Journalists, Press Association of Zambia and other media bodies to discuss the continued harassment of journalists in the country.<sup>2</sup> The Mail on May 30 reported how on May 29 UPND members led by their national youth chairperson intimidated and harassed journalists, especially those perceived to be from ZNBC.<sup>3</sup>

On June 18 MISA Zambia again criticized the university of Zambia students. MISA Zambia Chairperson, Kellys Kaunda, condemned the recent attacks on journalists by UNZA students. In a statement Kaunda said he was concerned about the increasing incidents of harassment of journalists by some UNZA students whenever there were disturbances at the institution. Kaunda cited the latest incident involving *Times of Zambia* journalist, Abel Mbozi, who was roughed up by some demonstrating students as he covered disturbances at the institution and earlier *Post* newspapers photojournalist, Thomas Nsama, who narrowly escaped death at the hands of unruly students during disturbances at UNZA a few months ago. He said the two incidents highlighted growing problems, which needed to be addressed urgently by the UNZA Student Union leadership before something nasty happened to journalists. Kaunda urged the UNZASU leadership to take immediate steps to put an end to the harassment of journalists at UNZA.<sup>4</sup>

The harassment of journalists by police authorities was a subject of discussion on June 29 when Inspector General of Police Ephraim Mateyo warned police officers against brutalizing journalists during the forthcoming election period. Mateyo also claimed that people were not debating the Public Order Act because the police were implementing it properly. Speaking during a ZUJ breakfast meeting on police brutality against journalists, Mateyo said it was regrettable that some police officers were brutal when dealing with journalists. Mateyo appealed to police officers to, instead work with journalists because

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<sup>1</sup>*Post* May 25, 2006

<sup>2</sup>*Sunday Post* May 28, 2006

<sup>3</sup>*Mail* May 30, 2006

<sup>4</sup>*MISA Pres Release*

they meet in trouble areas.<sup>1</sup> The *Times* also reported the same story but instead of using the word ‘warn’ the paper used the word ‘directed’. Thus according to the *Times* Mateyo, had directed officers countrywide to stop brutality against journalists adding that it was regrettable that some police officers were brutal in dealing with journalists but the vice must stop. The paper further promised that he would soon organise a meeting between all commanders countrywide and journalists to share challenges, which they expected to face during the tripartite elections. It was strange for the police to beat up journalists who were merely carrying out their duties, where there was no breach of peace and Mr Mateyo attributed brutality by some officers to lack of retraining. Earlier ZUJ president Ms Isabel Chimangeni said there were many examples where officers brutalised journalists with impunity for covering events deemed likely to cause breach of peace. “Even when identity cards are produced to prove that ours is to cover what is happening and not to participate, we are told that our conduct is likely to cause the breach of peace. However I get amazed sometimes that even after such things happen I find officers reading newspapers and listening to news to know what actually happened. This shows that we can not do without each other, but instead of apologising for the conduct the apology we get is that we were warned not to cover such an event,” Ms Chimangeni said.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>*Post* June 30, 2006

<sup>2</sup>*Times* June 30, 2006

## 7.0 Media violations during the Second Quarter of 2006

Date	Victim	Attacked/Harassed	Who	Legal/Action
April 13	Thomas Nsama - <i>Post</i> newspaper	Harassed, threatened and stoned	Unza students during riot at the university	
April 15	Thomas Nsama – <i>Post</i> Newspaper	Harassed, threatened and stoned	Unza students attack/harass/stone during riot at university	Kellies Kaunda – MISA Zambia statement condemning student action
April 17	Thomas Nsama – <i>Post</i> Newspaper	Harassed, threatened and stoned	Unzasu leader Stanford Kabwata expresses regret about attack/harass/stone during riot at university	
May 24	ZNBC crew	Harassed and threatened	UPND cadres at the party’s secretariat during Anderson Mazoka’s funeral	
June 17	Austin Mbozi – <i>Times of Zambia</i>	Harassed and threatened	University of Zambia students	
June 18	Austin Mbozi – <i>Times of Zambia</i>	Harassed and threatened	University of Zambia	Criticised and condemned by Kellies Kaunda – MISA statement
June 29	Journalists	Police Brutality generally	Police	Condemned and warned by Inspector General - Ephraim Mateyo during a breakfast by ZUJ

