

Media Council of Zimbabwe launched

The launch of the Media Council of Zimbabwe on May 10 has left the future of the statutory Media and Information Commission hanging by the thread.

Harare - Representatives from media organisations yesterday met in Harare where they elected an 11-member board to oversee the self-preservation of professionalism in the media fraternity by their own representatives from the media and members of the public. The board is in contrast to the Media and Information Commission imposed on journalists by the infamous Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA).

Sitting on the board are Rev Sebastian Bakare, Irene Petras, Edna Machirori, Angus Shaw, Chris Chinaka, Prof Geoff Feltoe, Fr Oscar Wempter, Muchadei Masunda, Bornwell Chakaodza, Justice George Smith and Lawrence Chibwe.

Of the other three members to be elected by the Zimbabwe National Editors' Forum (ZINEF), Zimbabwe Association of Editors (ZAE) and publishers, Joram Nyati was chosen by ZINEF. After the full composition of the board, they will sit for a meeting, which will decide on the chairperson.

A code of conduct, as well as the constitution governing the functions of the council and the responsibilities of affiliate journalists was adopted at the meeting.

Background

MCZ is the culmination of consultations and preparations over a four-year period by the Media Alliance of Zimbabwe (MAZ), made up of the Media Monitoring Project of Zimbabwe, Media Institute of Southern Africa- Zimbabwe and the Zimbabwe Union of Journalists.

An attempt to launch the council in January this year was thwarted by claims by the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Transport and communication, Leo Mugabe who claimed that not enough consultations were carried out.

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