

iSPEAK

**MY VOICE
YOUR VOICE
OUR FREEDOM**

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List of violations, January 2022

Victor Mabutho

Love is in the air!

It's February, the month of love, and our hearts are overflowing with devotion for our valentine - radio - or at least that would be the case with contributor Norah Appolus, Namibia's grande dame of broadcasting. She's composed a compassionate and heartfelt love letter that tunes into the historical and timeless relationship between radio and its listeners. It shows exactly why we celebrate World Radio Day on 13 February.

The power of radio is none more apparent than in Africa where, more often than not, it is the only link between the peoples of a country and even to the rest of the world, especially for those living in rural or remote areas. Nigerian feminists Obialunmma Efemena Omekedo and Nkechi Ilochi-Kanny share their experience of women who are using radio to revolutionise the struggle for gender justice in their country.

Guilherme Canela and Andrea Cairola reflect on the evolution of the seminal **1991 Windhoek Declaration on Promoting an Independent and Pluralistic African Press** over three decades and how the media sector has adapted itself to a changing landscape, and particularly the opportunities offered to the Fourth Estate by the **Windhoek+30 Declaration** to sustain its credibility. Through their generous contribution we were able to translate the Windhoek+30 declaration into **Kiswahili** and **Portuguese**.

How do we use the law to ensure the safety of journalists? A seemingly simple question, but we're in the safe hands of **iSPEAK podcast** guest and expert on the issue, Edetaen Ojo, who assists us to unpack this complex issue.

Enjoy this and more in our February edition of iSPEAK.

Remember, the iSPEAK newsletter is free so please share the word far and wide with others who may have an interest in reading the analyses provided, and who may wish to participate in our monthly event. We are focused on providing the African context and narrative on freedom of expression issues, and look forward to providing challenging views on current debates that inform or change the way you think.

Make sure you don't miss out on our monthly edition by signing up on **WhatsApp** or joining the **mailing list**. Feel free to get in touch with us via email on info@ispeak.africa.

The iSPEAK team

My Voice | Your Voice | Our Freedom

World Poetry Day competition on Whistleblowing

Whistleblowers who courageously expose corruption and injustice, are doing so, at great risk to themselves and their families.

To commemorate these brave men and women, iSpeak invites entries to their competition on whistleblowing.

Feel free to zone in on any issue highlighting whistleblowing be it the bravery, the risks, the benefits or anything that comes to mind!

Winners will be unveiled on 21 March - World Poetry Day on social media.

The top 5 winners will be published in our monthly newsletter throughout the year.

All entries should be sent to iSPEAK.AFRICA via email on info@ispeak.africa or WhatsApp on +264 85 760 1031 by Monday, February 28, 2022.

We look forward to receiving your entries!

A love letter to radio

By *Norah Appolus*



The world's love story began, to be fair, in the 1890s when Italian Guglielmo Marconi invented the wireless telegraph.

But it was not until the turn of the century, in the 1920s to be exact, that radio truly came into its own: people rushed to buy radios as it became clear that this medium was the fastest way to receive news and entertainment. Not to be outdone, business, political and other social structures and institutions, such as churches jumped on the bandwagon as the power of radio grew.

This was particularly true of the United States of America, where a whopping 80% of the population owned a radio by the end of the following decade.

The "Golden Age of Radio" had arrived and it was here to stay!

Picture these images: people in a darkened room huddled around their radio sets listening to news in shell-shocked London during WWII. Go to Africa, where an entire village - literally - will be huddled around one radio, listening to the latest English Premier League matches. During elections in Africa, radio is king. Citizens will take their tiny transistors with them everywhere to listen to the results. It is also this versatility that has made radio the preferred medium in Africa to obtain and disseminate information.

Even the advent of television could not unseat radio!

The power of radio is none more apparent than in Africa. With far-flung towns and villages and poor infrastructure, this medium is more often than not, the only link to rest of the country, the government and the rest of the world, for many Africans, especially in rural areas. This is true even today, when the continent is grappling with basic infrastructure, let alone the 4th Industrial Revolution.

Radio is able to reach the farthest corners of any African country. In a continent as vast as Africa, radio is an indispensable tool or asset. Citizens can be informed in real time of events as they unfold, be it disasters, pandemics...or coups d'état as the case may be.

It is this power and versatility, coupled with the fact that it requires modest financial investment, that has always made radio the preferred domain of African governments.

This was particularly true of dictatorships in Africa.

Radio was strictly regulated and became, to all intents and purposes, 'his master's voice'. This also ensured that information filtered from the top down only. Punishment was swift to those broadcasters who dared to challenge the status quo or who deviated from the norm of praise-singing.

This was the case even in benign civilian dictatorships. I remember as a child growing up in Zambia, I'd listen to the English Service of Radio Zambia and dance frenetically to the latest pop hits. The only other radio service was the Domestic Service, which broadcast in the Zambian indigenous languages and would belt out a mix of local hits and Congolese rumba. This was also owned by the State.

Radio is able to reach the farthest corners of any African country. In a continent as vast as Africa, radio is an indispensable tool or asset. Citizens can be informed in real time of events as they unfold, be it disasters, pandemics...or coups d'état as the case may be.

Paradoxically, we also listened to Lourenco Marques Radio (LM Radio), a private radio station that broadcast on short-wave from the then Portuguese colony Mozambique, located only a stone's throw from the border of apartheid South Africa. In hindsight, it is no surprise that there was never any news on the station, not even snippets. This suited us just fine, as all we were interested in was the latest hit parade, which the station churned out twenty-four hours a day, every day!

Even in the far north Maghreb region of Africa, they all appeared to have used the same blueprint as their sub-Saharan counterparts for total control of radio.

In Algeria for instance, **Radio-Television Algerie**, where I started my career in broadcasting over forty-five years ago, was the only broadcaster in the country. But then again, the president had seized power in a military coup. The programmes were strictly regulated to reflect government domestic and foreign policy. It therefore came as something of a mild shock when I moved to France to work for **Radio France International**, still government-owned, but with a free hand to report freely within the bounds of a strict code of ethics. We even had a union!

But what was really a source of wonder were the several private and independent radio stations operating in the country, ranging from music to news stations. The listener was spoilt for choice.

In apartheid South Africa, the airwaves were spewing out propaganda and disinformation by the bucket loads. Recognising the power of radio, the Southern African liberation movements went on the offensive. Harnessing this powerful medium to their cause, they set up radio stations in several countries, from as far afield as Ethiopia to broadcast on shortwave and straight into the belly of the beast. Game on!

For decades, Africans were fed a diet of propaganda and carefully scripted and vetted programmes aimed at keeping them docile and in line. It worked...for a while.

The winds of change swept across Africa, inexorably ushering in a new era of multi-party democracy. This new-found democracy invariably brought with it calls for a free media and freedom of expression as cornerstones of democracy.

While the **Windhoek Declaration of 1991** set the tone for a free and pluralistic media on the continent, the **African Charter on Broadcasting (2001)** cemented the importance of opening up the airwaves and allowing a diversity of players on the broadcasting landscape. However, to be honest, the people had long appropriated the airwaves. A precursory tuning in to FM in Zambia and a barrage of independent radio stations would hit you. The same was true in Malawi, Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania.

For the large part, these private and independent radio stations were urban-based, catering for an urban elite. Their programming catered very little for the large rural populations found in Africa. It was glaringly obvious that something had to be done to give rural-based populations a voice and be part of the development process. Enter community radio!

Technology had also advanced to such levels that one could broadcast from a suitcase.

These advances made it possible for community radios to enter the broadcasting landscape and cheaply too. They set the development agenda of the community in which they operate - at least they are supposed to. Unfortunately, they have not always been the catalyst for meaningful change in the lives of their communities, the reasons of which I will not go into in this article. Suffice it to say that the rural populations remain, to a large extent, short-changed.

Some twenty ago I was introduced to a brilliant concept by Zimbabwean veteran journalists - Mavis Moyo, Jennifer Sibanda and Dorcas Hove - that gave women, whose were only heard occasionally on radio - a voice.

The opening up of the airwaves has been a move in the right direction to not only strengthen democracy but also to provide listeners with a wider choice of information.

The concept - Development Through Radio (DTR), allowed rural women to set their own development agenda and assist their communities in the process. This was done by giving the women recording equipment and teaching them how to produce programmes on any issue relevant to their communities. The programmes would then be flighted on mainstream radio.

In Namibia, I set up a pilot DTR at a women's collective in Omahenene, Omusati region, with great success. Their programmes were broadcast on the Namibian Broadcasting Corporation's Oshiwambo language service, now **Kati FM**. Dare I make an appeal to benefactors out there to enable the replication of this concept to all rural populations?

The opening up of the airwaves has been a move in the right direction to not only strengthen democracy but also to provide listeners with a wider choice of information.

Has the increased use of the internet and social media platforms like YouTube and Facebook slowly relegated radio to broadcasting history? Not a chance! Radio has risen admirably to the challenge and taken ownership of the internet. One can now tune in to one's favourite station on your smartphone or tablet from the comfort of your bed or couch, without having to fiddle with those pesky dials. Bliss!

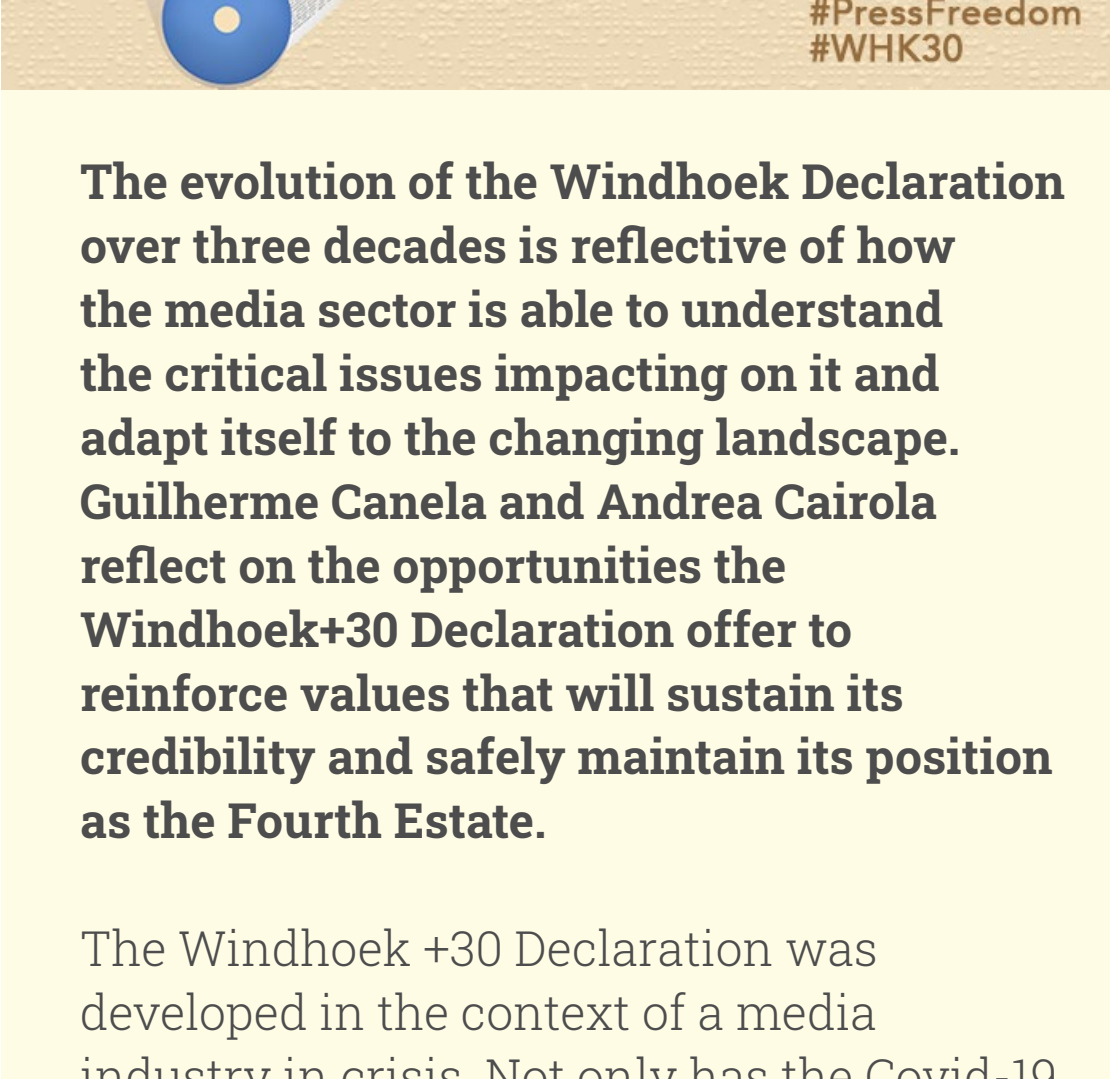
Decades later, through tumultuous and peaceful times, radio has been a constant. A familiar. A legend.

The love story continues...

Norah Appolus is a seasoned journalist with more than 40 years' experience in the broadcasting industry. She has worked with a number of broadcasters: Radio-Television Algerie; Radio France International and the Namibian Broadcasting Corporation. She has trained various broadcasters including Television Malawi. Ms. Appolus is now a Training Consultant.

Keeping the spirit of the Windhoek Declaration alive by reinforcing Information as a Public Good

By Guilherme Canela, Chief, Freedom of Expression and Safety of Journalists Section, UNESCO and Andrea Cairola, Senior Programme Specialist, UNESCO



The evolution of the Windhoek Declaration over three decades is reflective of how the media sector is able to understand the critical issues impacting on it and adapt itself to the changing landscape. Guilherme Canela and Andrea Cairola reflect on the opportunities the Windhoek+30 Declaration offer to reinforce values that will sustain its credibility and safely maintain its position as the Fourth Estate.

The Windhoek +30 Declaration was developed in the context of a media industry in crisis. Not only has the Covid-19 pandemic amplified ongoing threats to the safety of journalists and crackdowns on press freedom, but also intensified existential economic threats.

“Just at the time that we need an independent, credible journalism - a free press - the business model is being undermined,” said Nobel laureate economist, Joseph Stiglitz, at the **launch event of The Highlights of the World Trends in Freedom of Expression and Media Development report**, itself guided by the principles of the Windhoek +30 Declaration.

These principles highlight the need to address the following key challenges: the economic viability of journalism; opacity of Internet companies; and the need to improve media and information literacy among citizens to foster informed engagement with digital communications issues. The **2021 World Press Freedom Day Global Conference** thus highlighted the need for protecting information as a public good holistically, involving over 3,000 participants from over 150 countries representing a wide variety of stakeholder groups.

Given the urgency of the challenges facing our information landscapes, it has been encouraging to follow the impact and influence already achieved by the Declaration. Especially, considering the fact that it has been less than a year since the Participants of the 2021 World Press Freedom Day Global Conference adopted the **“Windhoek +30 Declaration”**, thirty years after the first landmark meeting that brought forth the 1991 Windhoek Declaration on Free, Independent, and Pluralistic Press.

Endorsed by UNESCO member states, acknowledged by the United Nations General Assembly, and used as a reference point for a wide variety of international actors, advocates for press freedom must build on the momentum of Windhoek +30 to continue making the case that information is a public good.

The history of the Windhoek process is in itself an illustration of the ever-evolving progressive movement to tackle challenges to media development and press freedom. This history can be traced to the first UNESCO seminar **held in Windhoek in 1991**, gathering African independent journalists which produced the original 1991 Windhoek Declaration on Free, Independent and Pluralistic Press, paving the way for a vast array of media reforms and progress. It was on 3 May and in its honour the World Press Freedom Day has been proclaimed – becoming an annual rallying point for all press freedom actors around the world.

The spirit of the Windhoek Declaration was not only carried forward in a number of subsequent regional declarations, but also through expanding its focus areas. In 2001, the Windhoek seminar adopted the African Charter on Broadcasting. In 2011, the Declaration turned its attention to right to information. For Windhoek +30, reflecting digital and economic changes in the media industry, the digital ecosystem was taken into greater consideration for the formulation of the Declaration’s key message that information must be protected as a public good.

Windhoek+30 as a catalyst for protecting information as a public good

“Today it is not just a reminder of the past, it is a commitment to keep the spirit of the Windhoek declaration alive”, said Audrey Azoulay, Director-General of UNESCO, on the occasion of the Windhoek+30 Conference.

Indeed, information as a public good is but one puzzle piece in a wider agenda for ensuring that all people have access to the most fundamental building blocks of our societies.

In November 2021, the Windhoek+30 Declaration also became the first of its kind to be endorsed by UNESCO member states during the organisation’s annual General Conference. Its impact has extended even further, contributing to build a growing coalition for a greater political acceptance of information as a public good. On the same month as the declaration’s endorsement, the UN General Assembly **took note with appreciation** of the Windhoek +30 Declaration, before approving by consensus the Resolution on the “Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity.”

Earlier in the year, the African Journalists Leaders’ Conference (organised by the Federation of African Journalists) **also endorsed the Declaration** through specifically referring to it in the adopted Accra Declaration on Building Stronger Unions to Enhance Journalism and Media Freedom in Africa, urging African governments to support the implementation of its recommendations.

In September 2021, in the annual **State of the Union address**, President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen also evoked:

“Information is a public good. We must protect those who create transparency – the journalists.”

The way forward

It is thus clear that Windhoek+30 has already resonated with its intended audience - governments, international organisations, civil society, academics, journalists, and all other actors implicated in the global fight for press freedom. That does not mean it is time to sit back and consider its implementation as a done deal. Thirty years of the Windhoek process has taught us of the need to constantly reevaluate global priorities and the methods we use to address them.

During this year’s World Press Freedom Day, taking place in Uruguay in May 2022, a specific conference track is foreseen to discuss the further implementation of the measures outlined in the Windhoek +30 Declaration on Information as a Public Good. It will be a multi-stakeholder approach, as it is vital that as many perspectives as possible – in terms of regional, thematic, sectoral, and gender diversity – are taken into account when transforming the principles into action.

It is also crucial to keep in mind how these principles fit in with broader long-term agendas. The Declaration itself emphasises that the concept of “information as a public good” is both a means and an end for the fulfilment of collective global aims, including the Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and the African Union’s Agenda 2063.

Indeed, information as a public good is but one puzzle piece in a wider agenda for ensuring that all people have access to the most fundamental building blocks of our societies. In the report **“Our Common Agenda”**, the United Nations Secretary-General supports the promotion and protection of global public goods that deliver equitably and sustainably for all in a variety of areas, including in the digital realm. Support for independent, public interest media is explicitly mentioned as a vital step for ensuring access to quality information for all.

The spirit of the original Windhoek declaration thus lives on. Not only in its updated iterations, but in the continuous and tireless work of global press freedom advocates who implement its principles – not least journalists themselves. It is our duty to continue this work to turn information as a public good from a headline to a reality.

Guilherme Canela holds the position of chief of the section of Freedom of Expression and Safety of Journalists at UNESCO headquarters in Paris.

Programme Specialist at the division for Freedom of Expression, Democracy and Peace of the communication and information sector at UNESCO headquarters, Andrea Cairola has often focused on the linkage between media freedom and sustainability.

AfCFTA: A game-changer for African media

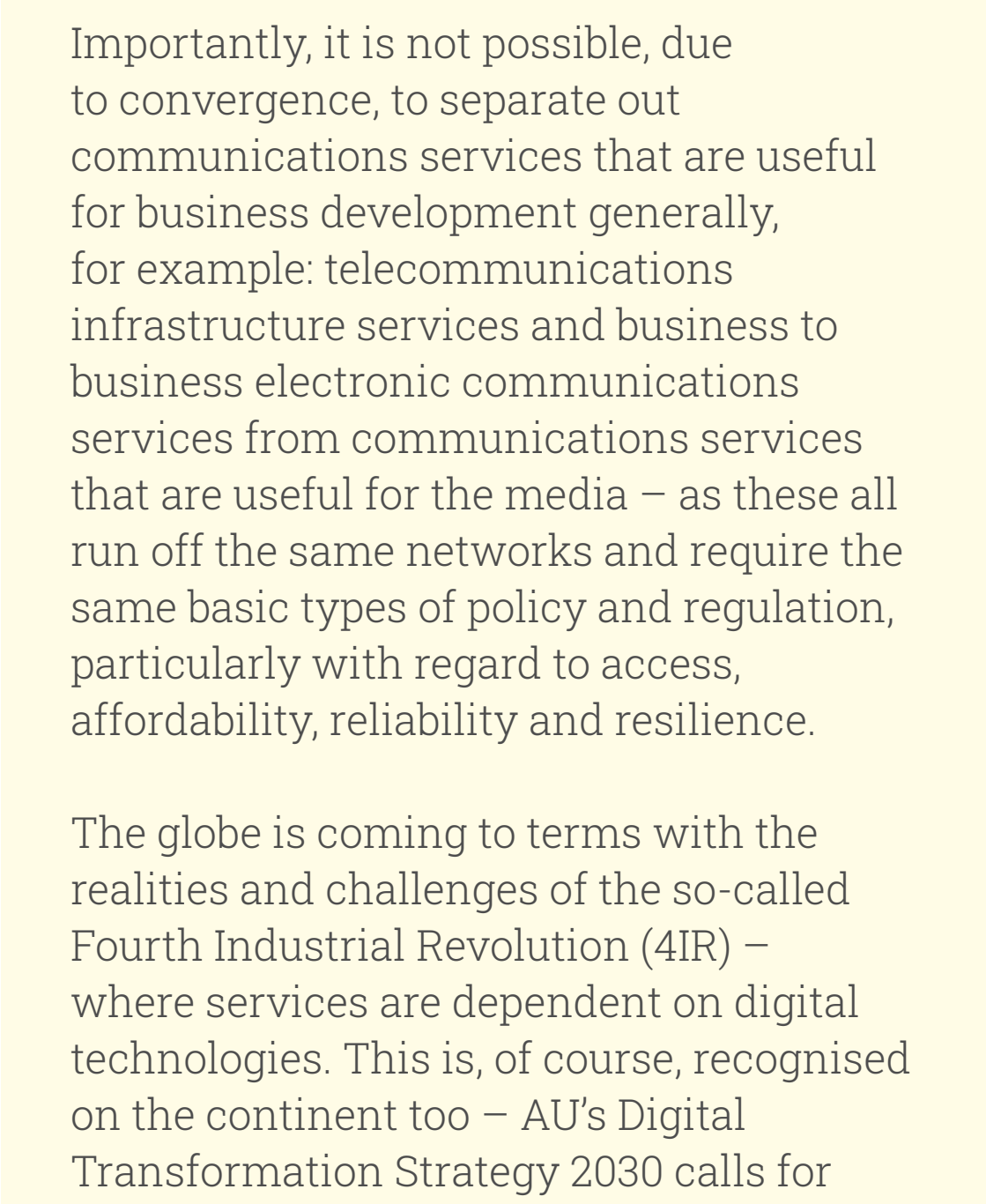
By Justine Limpitlaw

Exciting, times are ahead for the continent – particularly in the media policy and regulatory space. It's being brought about by the African Continental Free Trade Area agreement (AfCFTA), signed by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union (AU) in 2018 and which established the African Continental Free Trade Area.

The AfCFTA came into force in 2019 and actual trading started on 1 January 2021 - delayed by six months due to the Covid-19 Pandemic.

So how does trade impact media policy and regulation?

Essentially it comes down to convergence – the coming together of telecommunications infrastructure and content provision due to technological convergence, in particular the internet.



The importance of electronic communications for trade is internationally recognised. Right from the start, the AU identified trade in communications services as one of the five key priority areas for the implementation of the AfCFTA.

Importantly, it is not possible, due to convergence, to separate out communications services that are useful for business development generally, for example: telecommunications infrastructure services and business to business electronic communications services from communications services that are useful for the media – as these all run off the same networks and require the same basic types of policy and regulation, particularly with regard to access, affordability, reliability and resilience.

The globe is coming to terms with the realities and challenges of the so-called Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) – where services are dependent on digital technologies. This is, of course, recognised on the continent too – AU's Digital Transformation Strategy 2030 calls for the harnessing of digital technologies to transform African societies and break the digital divide.

The 4IR is not only looking at industrial applications – it is also a feature of newsrooms and the media more generally – no media house relies only on its print or broadcast outlets. Every media house uses its web pages, streaming services, podcasts, video-on-demand, and social media platforms (Twitter, Facebook etc) to great effect – providing a seamless service to media consumers whether they are watching TV, listening on the radio, or accessing services via their mobile phones. Consumers use all or some of the available platforms to access content interchangeably.

This is good news for those who want to see media freedom become more entrenched on the continent.

Why? How?

All governments want the upside of 4IR, ie the industrial development, the growth of manufacturing and services sectors, the reduction in unemployment and poverty – the general upside of economic growth and a thriving economy. The bottom line is that this simply cannot happen without access to electronic communications infrastructure and services – as this is how global trade is facilitated. The days of business being conducted by post are so last century.

Much of electronic communications in Africa is based on spectrum use – that is the use of radio frequency spectrum for example, whether for mobile phones/hotspots (to access content and services online), terrestrial or satellite broadcasting. This is particularly slow in areas with poor road or rail infrastructure and where implementation of fixed line communications infrastructure is not possible.

And spectrum use requires formal regulation.

And it is here that a window of opportunity for improved media regulation has opened-up.

Electronic communications are used, not only, for example, in mining and manufacturing, but also in the media, and so they, perhaps inadvertently, also positively impact the media policy environment.

As governments recognise the importance of electronic communications to drive economic growth, so too, the global norms and standards for regulating this sector are forcing adoption. Indeed, many of these standards are already recognised by the AU in various conventions, statements of principle and other international instruments, but have yet to be widely incorporated in national laws.



This is about to change...

In order to drive industry growth – communications infrastructure and services have to be reliable, affordable and resilient – if internet prices are unaffordable to the ordinary person, trade in online businesses/services is impossible to implement.

Similarly, if governments shut down or “throttle” the internet for fear of negative publicity during elections or domestic protests, businesses, industries, indeed all economic activity based on electronic communications grind to a halt with devastating developmental and economic impacts.

This presents all those concerned about media freedom, access to information, freedom of expression and freedom of the internet, with a huge opportunity to use the economic shift to 4IR to garner important national gains in media policy and regulation.

The bottom line is that the AfCFTA's prioritisation of trade in communications services means that attention will be on how best to facilitate seamless, borderless trade and investment in these services whether at an infrastructure level or a services level. This is simply not possible without ensuring that national regulatory frameworks are harmonised to secure adherence with the basic tenets of successful communications infrastructure and services roll out:

- An independent regulator, with the power to act in the public interest, when licensing services and spectrum.
- A recognition of the importance of a competitive environment: with numerous providers of communications infrastructure and which has the knock-on effect of requiring diversity and pluralism in the audio-visual sector, ie, in respect of broadcasting and so-called OTT (over-the-top) or internet-based audio-visual content services.
- A recognition of the importance of universal access and service, particularly to the internet. And it is here that the growth potential in Africa is staggering – As Europe and North America reach saturation levels, Africa is only just beginning – with less than 50% of the African population having access to the internet (Internet World Stats 2021).
- Trade administration, including in respect of trade in, or facilitated by communications, must be reasonable, objective and impartial.

Interestingly, in many international jurisdictions, these principles were fought for and won in the non-online space first, and then the principles were applied online. However, Africa will be unique, in my view, in that the economic force of the communications sector will force through policy and regulatory change which will start with an online focus but, in turn, be applied in the off-line world too.

As governments scramble to take advantage of the trade possibilities of the AfCFTA, they will be forced to turn away from censorious, decrepit media policy and laws (many of which are a hold-over of the colonial era anyway) and will harness the modernising force of the internet, including the traditional media in its embrace.

Justine Limpitlaw - BA LLB (Wits) LLM (Yale) - is an independent communications law consultant and a Visiting Adjunct Professor at the LINK Centre at the University with the Witwatersrand. She specialises in media, electronic communications and space and satellite law. Justine recently published the three-volume second edition of the Media Law Handbook for Southern Africa and is also the author of the two-volume Media Law Handbook for Eastern Africa which includes extensive analysis of broadcasting and online regulatory environments.

Revolution through radio to bridge gender inequalities

By Obialunamma E Omekeke and Nkechi Ilochi-Omekeke

Nigerian women are using radio to revolutionise their struggle for gender justice in their country.

Media engagement primarily through radio is playing a more strategic role in increasing the visibility of women and their issues. Radio has become one of the most highly employed platforms for organising engagements by women's groups in advancing women's rights in Nigeria. It offers women's groups multiple opportunities. Radio allows women to:

- Set their agenda;
- Give women's groups the opportunity to mobilise for positive behavior modification and adoption towards gender equality, and, most importantly;
- Give voice to women's groups and their allies to demand the change they want to see in Nigeria. Radio is now a huge platform for social change. It is also a good road towards education and illumination, and for forming and sustaining opinions, and for entertainment.

Consider that women's groups have a long history of organising in Nigeria, with inspiring herstories, that date back to the Aba women's protest in 1929; Egba women's protest of 1947, led by Funmilayo Ransome Kuti; and the works of Margaret Ekpo in the then Eastern Region in the independence movement; and Gambo Sawaba in the then Northern Region, with women in the 19 Northern States gaining suffrage only in 1979¹.

While the visibility of early women's activism cannot be credited to media in the real sense, however, these herstories are preserved through documentation and amplified through traditional/legacy media – television, newspapers, oral histories and, of course, radio.

By understanding the power of media, and especially radio, the new generation of feminists and women's rights groups are boosting their work. They understand that radio is a powerful tool to amplify messages and issues (that may contribute to behavior change, and to shifting power for women and girls). The 21st century feminist recognises that radio, and other new media, are revolutionary tools towards change that women desire and want sustained.

In recognising the power of radio, women's groups are seizing the opportunity that radio offers for their work. Whether for challenging oppression and injustice, demanding socio-cultural transformation or for holding policy makers and government accountable, radio is the revolutionary tool.

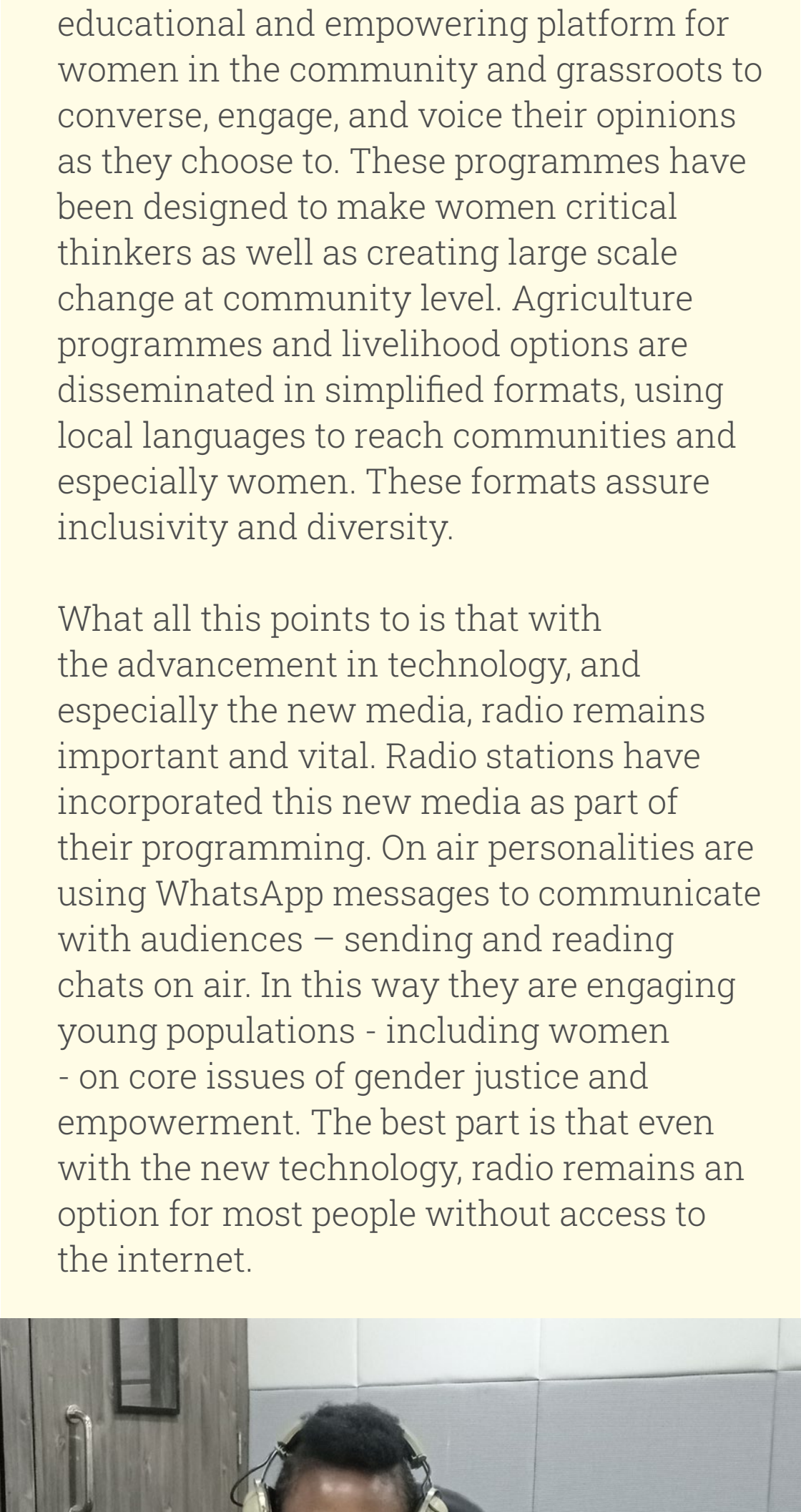
“100% of the 28 women's rights groups that ActionAid Nigeria subgrants under the Women's Voice and Leadership Nigeria Project (WVL) who implement programmes at state and national levels, uses radio programmes for strategic engagements especially during key moments such as International Women's Day, Day of the African Child and during the global 16 Days of Activism to end gender-based violence”.

(Niri Goyit, WVL Project Coordinator, North).

Nigerian radio programming has also recognised the need for focusing the lens a little more intentionally – so that contemporary topics such as feminism, intersectionality, dismantling of patriarchy and shifting power for women are highlighted. This also means gender justice discussions are less likely to be shied away from by many radio stations in Nigeria.

For instance, the WFM 91.7 MHZ, popularly called Women Radio, designs their programming through a women's rights lens. It commenced operations in Nigeria on 16 November, 2015 and is the first gender-focused radio station slanted towards women and their issues.

This is a remarkable addition to the advancement of women's empowerment in the country. Women Radio is a current partner under the Women's Voice and Leadership Nigeria Project, funded by Global Affairs Canada and implemented by ActionAid Nigeria. The station focuses on projecting rights of women and girls, while also providing platforms for other women's rights organisations to advocate, educate/ create awareness on a broad range topics on women's rights.

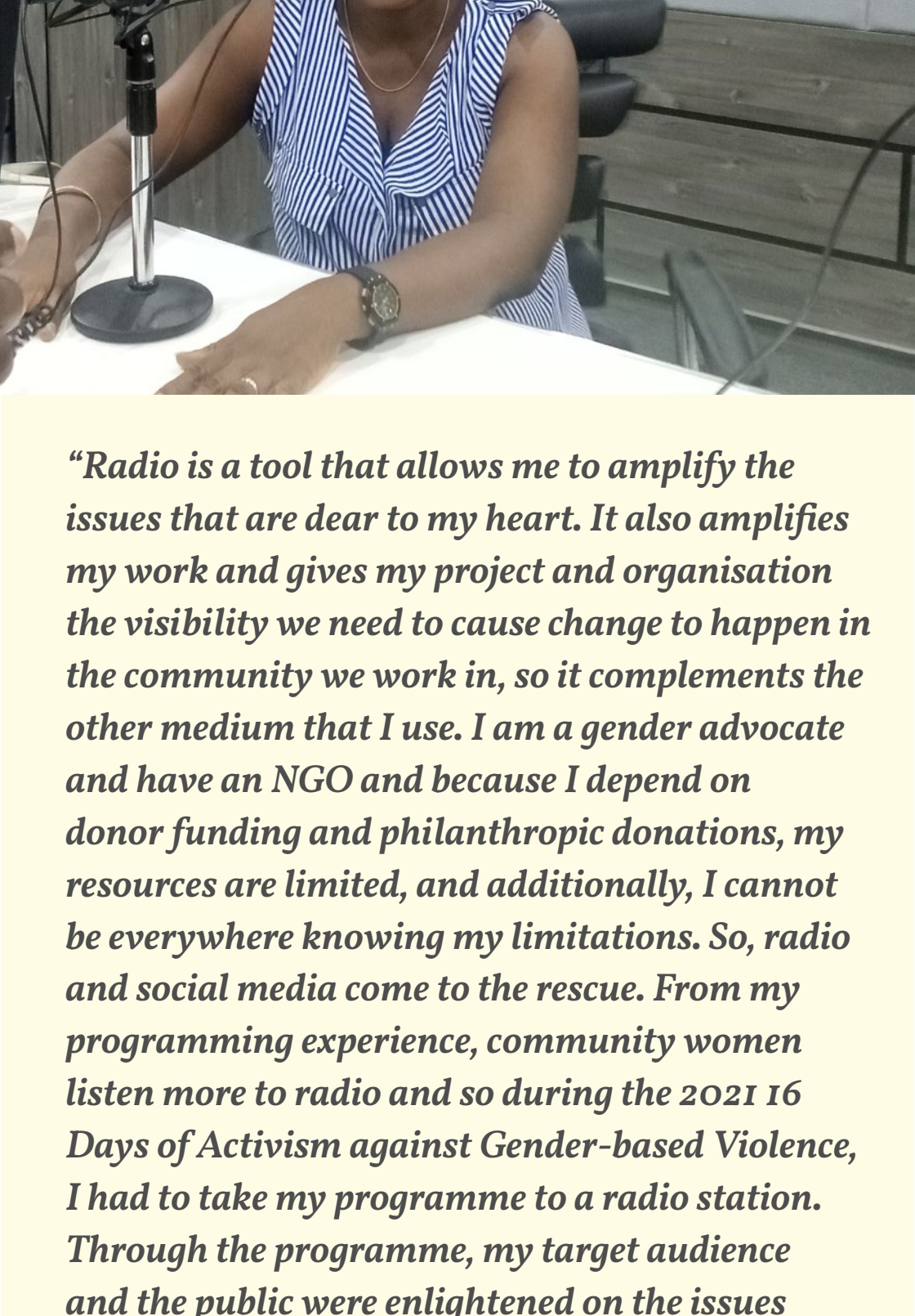


“I have added radio to the tools I use in engaging the political space in Nigeria. Under the WVL project, I used radio to advocate for a constitution that Nigerian women want. This focused on creating awareness on sections of the Nigerian 1999 Constitution as amended that women and women's groups over the years have raised concerns about. Using the radio to amplify these issues helped me in killing several birds with one stone. I reached the policy makers, I reached government, and I reached women and many more persons that are relevant for the change my constituency wants”

Barr, Ebere Ifendu, President, Women in Politics Forum

The growth of community radio stations should also not be ignored. Community radio offers even more advantages for communicating empowerment programmes to a large group of women. Community radio is a remarkable educational and empowering platform for women in the community and grassroots to converse, engage, and voice their opinions as they choose to. These programmes have been designed to make women critical thinkers as well as creating large scale change at community level. Agriculture programmes and livelihood options are disseminated in simplified formats, using local languages to reach communities and especially women. These formats assure inclusivity and diversity.

What all this points to is that with the advancement in technology, and especially the new media, radio remains important and vital. Radio stations have incorporated this new media as part of their programming. On air personalities are using WhatsApp messages to communicate with audiences – sending and reading chats on air. In this way they are engaging young populations - including women - on core issues of gender justice and empowerment. The best part is that even with the new technology, radio remains an option for most people without access to the internet.



“Radio is a tool that allows me to amplify the issues that are dear to my heart. It also amplifies my work and gives my project and organisation the visibility we need to cause change to happen in the community we work in, so it complements the other medium that I use. I am a gender advocate and have an NGO and because I depend on donor funding and philanthropic donations, my resources are limited, and additionally, I cannot be everywhere knowing my limitations. So, radio and social media come to the rescue. From my programming experience, community women listen more to radio and so during the 2021 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence, I had to take my programme to a radio station. Through the programme, my target audience and the public were enlightened on the issues of violence against women and girls on Radio Nigeria. The outcome of the programme was overwhelming as women from rural communities across Nigeria called in to express their views on the issue of VAWG and how they have experienced one form of violence or the other. The radio programme enabled many listeners to access information on the responsible agencies within their states that provide supports for survivors. It also had men calling to report cases of VAWG. This was possible because Radio Nigeria is a networked and national radio station”.

Nkechi Obiagbaoso-Udegbonam, Executive Director, Initiative for Women's and Girls' Rights Advancement, (IWOGRA) Abuja

As such, the importance and use of radio cannot be ruled out. Radio programming has to continue being designed so that it remains interactive, fun, and entertaining as this draws more audiences, which in turn deepens the impact.

¹ ActionAid Nigeria, 2019.

Obialunamma Efemena Omekeke, is a young feminist creative and freelance writer.

Nkechi Ilochi-Omekeke, is a feminist, social justice, and gender advocate with 19 years of programming and leadership experience. She is currently the Manager of Women's Rights Programme in ActionAid Nigeria (AAN) where she provides strategic leadership in the delivery of AAN's commitment to gender equality programmes in Nigeria.



Remembering the fallen



Abdiwali Ali Hassan
Freelance journalist

Universal TV, Radio Kulmiye
Somalia, Afgooye

Age: 25

Date of death: 16 February 2020

Cause of Death: Gunshot

Status: Unresolved

#LetsTakeAMoment to remember young broadcaster and freelance journalist Abdiwali Ali Hassan, who was shot by 2 gunmen on his way home in Afgooye, Somalia, on 16 February 2020. Before he was murdered, Hassan had been receiving death threats from anonymous callers for several months, over his reporting. No group has claimed responsibility for his killing. Government promised to launch an investigation, but two years on, his case remains unsolved.

For a couple of years, Hassan had been reporting on the conflict in the restive lower Shabelle region, where the military and Al Shabaab were fighting.



NEW EPISODE!

with Edetaen Ojo

**HOW DO WE USE THE LAW
TO ENSURE THE SAFETY
OF JOURNALISTS.**



iSPEAK**MY VOICE
YOUR VOICE
OUR FREEDOM****NO
IMPUNITY****LIST OF VIOLATIONS
JANUARY 2022****3
JAN****NIGER**

Journalists Moussa Aksar and Samira Sabou found guilty of defamation by a court in Niamey, after republishing international report which alleges involvement of government officials in drug trafficking. Both journalists were given suspended jail sentences and made to pay fines.

**3
JAN****NIGERIA**

Men allegedly linked to Nigeria's ruling party - All Progressive Congress in Zamfara state attack office of news site Thunder Blowers, assaulting journalists - Anas Sani Anka and Mansur Rabi. The men were looking for editor Abdul Balarabe over his negative coverage of the government.

**9
JAN****CAMEROON**

On day of the kick off of the African Cup of Nations in Cameroon, two Algerian sports journalists Mehdi Dahak and Smail Mohamed Amokrane are injured in a robbery outside their hotel in Douala. They were attacked by men with knives who made off with equipment and money.

**10
JAN****ANGOLA**

Protestors in Angola's taxi driver strike in Luanda, assault and chase six journalists from state owned television stations TV Zimbo and TV Palanca. The reporters who covering protest sought refuge from the nearest police station. Protestors had called the journalists "sell outs", for filming them destroying property.

**10
JAN****NIGERIA**

People's Gazette Managing Editor Samuel Ogundipe and journalist Hillary Essien, are being hounded Nigeria's Intelligence Agency, over story about the units director. The agency demands the names of the informants of that story, and threatens to use other means to get that information.

**11
JAN****TANZANIA**

Six media workers die when vehicle they were in was involved in deadly collision in Simiyu region, Tanzania. In total 14 people were killed in crash. Two other journalists were hospitalised. The names of the journalists killed: Husna Milanzi, Johari Shani, Anthony Chuwa, Abel Ngapenda, Steven Msengi, and driver Paul Silanga.

**12
JAN****CAPE VERDE**

Editor of Santiago Magazine - Hermínio Silves could be charged with violating Cape Verde's judicial secrecy law for using classified documents in his reporting. The attorney general's office want to know who leaked Solves document of the investigation of a government official.

**13
JAN****ZIMBABWE**

Journalist Mary Mundaya who was reporting on teachers strike is arrested for allegedly using invalid journalist credentials. She was released without charge.

**13
JAN****GHANA**

Radio Ada presenter Gabriel Korley Adjaotor has his live show disrupted by men who attack and vandalise the station. Located in the Greater Accra region, station is forced to go off air.

**16
JAN****SUDAN**

Sudan's government pulls plug on broadcaster Al Jazeera Mubasher for what it called the station's "unprofessional coverage of Sudanese affairs". In addition to withdrawing it's broadcasting license, it revoked the accreditation of two of its staff.

**20
JAN****DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO**

Justine Lifombi a community radio journalist, lost her equipment and phones, when she was arrested and detained by police in Tshopo province. Lifombi who was reporting on a protest, was bundled up with demonstrators. She was released after being detained for several hours.

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