



October 20, 2017

---

## **PRESS STATEMENT FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

---

### **NMT calls for restraint ahead of Swapo Congress**

The Namibia Media Trust (NMT) condemns the current disinformation campaigns – including hate speech – which are circulating largely online ahead of the Swapo Congress.

We appeal to those involved on these social media platforms to refrain from targeting journalists in smear campaigns associated with political and factional in-fighting for Swapo Party leadership positions.

The NMT, which stands for the promotion of media freedom, free expression and access to information - online and offline – urges journalists in particular, but also all citizens posting on social media networks, to uphold high ethical standards when doing so.

At a time when citizens depend on the media to make sense of a tense political situation, we urge Namibian media professionals to be voices of democratic reason that rise above the fray to present the public with accurate, quality news and information in order to make informed choices and decisions.

Solidarity among members of the media profession is a critical element that draws us together when we are under attack from those who attempt to curtail media freedom and freedom of expression. Equally, journalists should not allow themselves to be used by groups with clear political agendas and to refrain from incitement of any kind.

We would encourage those aggrieved to make use of the Office of the Media Ombudsman to lodge complaints to hold media to account for their reporting, instead of resorting to vilification campaigns against individual journalists.

The newly developed Code of Ethics deals with the conduct of journalists online and offline and it is important that media adhere to these guidelines.

The Media Ombudsman, Mr John Nakuta, can be contacted on [jbnakuta@yahoo.com](mailto:jbnakuta@yahoo.com) or 081 127 0661.

*Gwen Lister*  
*Executive Chairperson*

*/Ends*

---

**Enquiries: Namibia Media Trust**  
**[info@nmt.africa](mailto:info@nmt.africa)**  
**[www.nmt.africa](http://www.nmt.africa)**