



REMARKS DELIVERED BY

COMMISSIONER MAJOR STEVEN DUWA (Rtd), CHAIRMAN,

MEDIA CIVIC AND VOTER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DURING THE CLOSING OF

THE NATIONAL REVIEW CONFERENCE ON MEDIA AND ELECTIONS

6TH OCTOBER, 2020

- My Fellow Commissioners
- MEC Chief Elections Officer, Mr Sam Alfandika,
- Deputy Chief Elections Officer (Operations), Mr Harris Potani
- Management and staff from MEC
- The Director of Broadcasting at MACRA, Mr Fegus Lipenga
- The Chairperson of Media Council of Malawi, Mr Wisdom Chingwede
- The Chairperson of Bwaila Media Club, Mr Horace Nyaka
- The Chairperson of Nyika Media Club, Mr James Mwale
- Chairperson of Blantyre Press Club, Mr Blessings Kanache
- Directors, Managers and Editors from various media houses present here
- Ladies and Gentlemen

It is my great pleasure and privilege to make a few remarks on behalf of the MEC Chairman, Justice Dr Chifundo Kachale at the

close of this day-long review conference. The MEC chairman could have been here to close the review conference himself but had to leave for other official duties outside Lilongwe. Therefore, he has asked me to offer the closing remarks on his behalf.

Ladies and gentlemen, it has been a wonderful time to sit and reflect on how the elections were managed in the past, how various stakeholders played their roles and how we can improve in the management of future elections. This meeting has provided a lot of invaluable feedback and numerous ideas to consider as we prepare for futures elections.

Ladies and gentlemen, the Commission attaches and appreciates the role the media plays in the management of elections. It is in this regard that the Commission approached its cooperating partners for support to hold this review conference. I wish to thank you all managers for attaching the same importance and for staying throughout the meeting.

It is not an easy thing to bring together media managers from across the country and have them stay throughout the conference. As

media managers, you are busy persons with many things waiting for your attention. May I, on behalf of the Commission, therefore, commend you for availing yourselves for this important meeting.

Ladies and gentlemen, as media, you have a crucial role of informing and educating the public on all matters and our interest is elections. The stories you write and the programmes you broadcast are read or listened to by many people across the nation, which make you a very crucial partner in spreading electoral messages.

Taking into consideration this pivotal role, that is why the Commission always organizes media trainings, press conferences and uses other avenues to share information with the media so that you can perform effectively and better than before. It is only a well-informed media that can build an informed electorate. The media cannot give what they do not have.

As media managers you have the responsibility to ensure that what is being published or broadcast does not promote hatred, tribalism,

public disorder, hostility, violence, aggression, unrest, conflict or anything of this nature. Elections are an emotive process especially during campaign.

You will agree with me there are always statements made during political rallies which sometimes if not properly managed could lead to avoidable disturbances. You need to be cautious and sensitive to conflict in your reporting. You also have to ensure that you observe media ethics by balancing up news articles. Where you have an issue and you are in doubt, you are free to consult the Commission.

I mention the above issues because we currently have a by-elections process going on. There have been attempts to incite violence and it is our sincere expectation that the media will join hands with the Commission to quell the situation so that polling will be peaceful.

Ladies and Gentlemen, allow me to thank all the presenters for a job wonderfully done. They have done a very good job and let's give them a big hand. A lot of important issues have come out of the

presentations and plenary sessions. The Commission will have a critical look at all of the issues and recommendations and ensure that they are factored into our plans for future elections.

At this juncture I wish to appreciate the role by our Development Partners in the name of the UNDP, EU, DFID UK, Irish Aid and USAID for supporting this external review process through the UNDP managed basket fund. Without their support we could not have managed to hold this meeting.

It is now my honor and privilege Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, to declare this review conference closed.

I wish each one of you a nice and safe trip back home and duty stations

Thank you very much

May God bless you all