

December 3, 2021

THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY  
NATIONAL MEDIA COMMISSION  
ACCRA

ATTN.: GEORGE SARPONG (MR.)

Dear Sir,

RE: UNPROFESSIONAL AND INCITEFUL BROADCAST

We refer to your letter dated December 2, 2021, on the subject mentioned above.

We respond to the issues raised in your letter as follows:

- a) First and foremost, Chapter 12 of the 1992 Constitution guarantees the freedom and independence of the media with the requisite limitation contained therein. The Constitution provides for the establishment of the National Media Commission (NMC) to promote such freedom and independence of the media.
- b) Onua TV and Onua FM and by extension all other subsidiaries under the Media General Group, are mindful of the responsibilities of their broadcasts and publication to their listening and viewing public. Over the last 25 years, we have upheld the highest professional standard of journalism, and we will continue to do so.
- c) We, however, wish to raise an exception to the manner in which your letter under reference, sought to create an impression that the word(s) used by Blessed Godsbrain Smart, a.k.a. Captain Smart in the alleged broadcast “calls for insurrection against the state of Ghana and its institutions.” Most disturbing to us is how NMC, an independent body under Clause 167 of the 1992 Constitution and the National Media Commission Act, 1993 (Act 449) entrusted with ensuring the promotion of freedom and independence of the media will within 24 hours of the occurrence of the alleged broadcast and without just cause, write such a letter which seeks to pass “judgment” of an alleged wrong-doing on the part of Captain Smart, a journalist of Onua TV and Onua FM.
- d) NMC, in its haste to write to Onua FM/Onua TV, failed and/or neglected to comply with its settlement procedures prescribed by Act 449, 1993 in resolving complaints before the Commission. NMC, per its letter, seems to have concluded and delivered its decision on the matter as it concluded that the said broadcast by Captain Smart “calls for insurrection against the state of Ghana and its institutions.” Our position is that the NMC could only have come to this conclusion because it did not have the

full benefit of the alleged broadcast as the said broadcast by Captain Smart was taken out of context. In the said broadcast, Captain Smart called on specific individuals to “rise up and speak” against the e-levy as contained in the 2022 Budget Statement.

- e) In addition to your specific reference to the alleged statement by Captain Smart, which we state that you considered out of context, the opening paragraph of your letter stating broadly that “Part of your broadcast raises concern for peace and security in the country in a manner that demands immediate regulatory action”, creates the impression that Onua FM/Onua TV has been broadcasting other material that offends regulation. We are terribly surprised at this statement. In view of the fact that you have never cited an example of such broadcast to us, we see the broad statement as an attempt to make us cower in our work, and we find that most regrettable.

It is unfortunate for the NMC to prejudge and conclude on such a matter as contained in its letter without giving Captain Smart, Onua TV and Onua FM the opportunity to be heard.

As a stakeholder, we call on NMC to withdraw its letter under reference and to comply with the procedures under Act 449, 1993 in resolving these matters.

We assure you of our highest regard for the functions of NMC and also our resolve to uphold the highest professional standards as a media house.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

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Bismark Nana Apianti  
Head of Station Onua TV/ Onua FM

CC:  
The President, GJA  
The President, GIBA  
The President Private News Papers Association  
The Media