

PRESS RELEASE

Sunday, 03 May 2015

EU & UN FOR A JOINT VISIT IN MOROGORO ON THE OCCASION OF THE INTERNATIONAL PRESS FREEDOM DAY

Sunday, 03 May 2015; Morogoro: The Head of the Delegation of the European Union in Tanzania, Ambassador Filiberto Ceriani Sebregondi and the United Nations Resident Coordinator Mr Alvaro Rodriguez are on a two days joint visit in Morogoro. While in the region, the two diplomats visited development projects in Ifakara on Saturday, and are taking part in the International Press Freedom Day celebrations held on Sunday May 3rd, organized by the Media Institute of Southern Africa – Tanzania Chapter (MISA-Tan) together with other media stakeholders.

In **Ifakara**, the Head of the EU Delegation and the UN Resident Coordinator have visited a local community radio, Pambazuko FM, which is a beneficiary of the Capacity Development activities under the multi-donor funded Democratic Empowerment Programme (DEP). DEP is funded by the EU and other donors and is implemented by UNDP, UN-Women and UNESCO, in close partnership with the National and Zanzibar Electoral Commissions (NEC and ZEC). During the visit to Pambazuko FM has shared its experience with the diplomats on the production and dissemination of voter education programmes during the pilot voter registration exercises that took place in the district.

They have also visited the Ifakara Women's Weaver's Association where they have met with some of the beneficiaries of a project supported by the EU. The women have received training to improve production and marketing skills for higher sales and a more sustainable income. The EU and UN diplomats have witnessed the women at work and a display at their shop of different products made with pure cotton from the country. Also a discussion followed on the benefits and challenges the women have encountered as well as their plans in the weaving textile industry.

In **Morogoro**, on the occasion of the International World Press Freedom Day, Ambassador Filiberto Sebregondi presided over the events with media stakeholders as the special guest, where he has spoken on Press Freedom, and responsible journalism, of the importance of ensuring freedom of information, and gender parity in journalism. With reference to the newly enacted Statistics and Cybercrime Bills, he said *"We note that the civil society and the media houses have rung the alarm bell with regard to the recently passed Cybercrime Bill, as well as the Statistics Act. We trust that the Government was driven by the best intention and had the citizens' security at heart in drafting the new legislation. However we also remain concerned that some specific provisions will tarnish the reputation of Tanzania as one of the best democracies in Africa."* Speaking of Press Freedom he added, *"For the European Union, I want to stress the idea that in democratic societies freedom of expression must extend to ideas that may shock or disturb the State or any sector of the population. This freedom includes criticism of ideologies and beliefs, as well as satire. But we don't believe in freedom that incites violence or hatred."*



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Mr Alvaro Rodriguez, who is the Chief Guest of the Media event in Morogoro has called for continued efforts to develop a free, responsible and ethical media. He reminded the media that participation of women and people living with disabilities in the coming election is very important as it helps promote equal opportunities for all. *“As journalists you need to take note of these global changes, and challenges. Empower the youth with accurate information so that leaders are selected based on good judgment. You are part and parcel of ensuring democratic processes are followed, rule of law is respected and good governance prevails. This is an important year for journalists to engage in constructive analysis of issues and candidates.”*

The European Union and the United Nations celebrate with the world the shared fundamental principles of press freedom; to assess the state of press freedom throughout the world and to defend the media from attacks on their independence. It is also a day when the world pays tribute to journalists who have lost their lives in the line of duty.

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