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THE ESTABLISHMENT OF PRESS CLUBS AND ITS UNION IN TANZANIA

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Brief History

The Union of Tanzania Press Clubs (UTPC) was established by 12 press clubs, under the support of the United States of Information Service (USIS), in 1996. It was registered in 1997 and given a Certificate of registration No. SO 8976.

1.2. Vision

A democratic Tanzania fully embracing to a free, independent and robust media

1.3. Mission

To create an environment that enables strong efficient and effective Press Clubs in Tanzania which eventually contribute towards a democratic and just society.

1.4. Objectives

- i) To facilitate the operations of the Press Clubs to ensure efficiency and uniformity in the conduct of the business of its member press clubs by harmonizing their operational set up;
- ii) To represent member clubs in collective bargaining;
- iii) To build the capacity and ability of individual journalists, who are members of press clubs through training, research, study tours and meetings;
- iv) To promote and maintain code of ethics for media practitioners in promoting ethical reportage;
- v) To print and publish newsletters or any other publication and establish any electronic media, with the aim of fostering the objects of the Union and that of the member press clubs;
- vi) To liaise with other organizations (local and international), involved in marshalling press freedom, fight against corruption, poverty HIV and AIDS, violation of human rights and related matters;
- vii) To mobilize Press Clubs members, media and non-media organizations and the public, against practices, regulations and laws that infringe on the freedom of the press;
- viii) To mediate and resolve disputes and conflicts of members press clubs;
- ix) To conduct research with the aim of promoting media's role in catalysing development;
- x) To provide any other services that is not included in this Constitution.

1.5. Governance

The governance structure of the Union is based on the following structures:-

1.5.1. Members General Meeting

This is supreme policy making body comprising of three (3) leaders from all 27 press clubs. It meets every year and at every three (3) years elects a new Board of Directors.

1.5.2. The Board of Directors

This is a supervisory body, which oversees the Secretariat on the implementation of activities. It is comprised of:-

- Deo Nsokolo : President
- Jane Mihanji : Vice President
- Abdallah Abdulrahman Mfaume : Member
- Habel Chidawali : Member
- Stella Ibengwe : Member
- Salma Abdul : Member
- Anna Makange : Member
- Andrew Kuchonjoma : Member
- Frank Leonard : Member
- Pendo Mwakyembe : Member

To be a Board member you must be a press club leader in the following categories: a Chair, a Secretary General or a Treasurer.

1.5.3. The Secretariat

This is the implementation body, in charge of the day to day operations, comprising:-

- Abubakar Karsan : Executive Director
- Jackson Uiso : Finance Officer
- Victor Maleko : Program Officer: Training, Research and Publication
- Hilda Kileo : Program Officer: Press Clubs Development and Administration
- Winfrida Madeni : Accountant
- Mary Ngoboko : Office Management Secretary
- Graceana Michael : Office Assistant
- Hassan Zuberi : Driver

At the moment, we are in the process of employing a Procurement officer and Program officer: Resource Mobilization

2. PRESS CLUBS

Press Clubs are associations belonging to the journalists who are operating from regions. So far we have our press clubs in all regions in Tanzania Mainland and Zanzibar.

3. WHY FORM PRESS CLUBS

There were specific reasons as to why we formed press clubs. The major reasons were

- **Vast geographical area**

Our country is very vast with 947,303km². At that time there were 20 regions, of which a lot of activities were done in the capital Dar es Salaam.

- **Marginalization of journalists operating from regions.**

Although it was not purposefully done, journalists operating from the regions were not involved in training or any other activities, compared to those living in Dar es Salaam

4. COLLAPSE OF UTPC AND PRESS CLUBS

UTPC collapsed in 1997 due to lack of funding after, USIS Director was transferred to another country and the new one refused to support UTPC. Automatically the press clubs, except that of Mwanza Press Club.

5. WHY COLLAPSE

The collapse of UTPC was caused by its lack of vision in its structure. Press Clubs collapsed because their formation was just for a meeting point for journalists who are just waiting for the Big Uncle to come, to bring training.

6. PRESS CLUBS REORGANIZED

In 1998 on my capacity as the Chair of Mwanza Press Club, I supervised the long journey to reorganize press clubs and UTPC.

6.1. Press Clubs' responsibilities

- Promoting professionalism to members
- Provide social interaction to members
- Provide economic opportunities to members
- Conduct arbitration between journalists and their stakeholders
- Create awareness on the right to information to the public
- Support regional development

We built Mwanza Press Club along the new press clubs vision to the point, it was the best in the country by the year 2000. Slowly we steered the revival of press clubs in the country. By the year 2001 there were 19 press clubs.

7. PRESS CLUBS SUPPORT PROJECT

In the year 2001, I approached the Swedish Embassy in Tanzania, with the proposal Press Clubs support project. The embassy agreed to support us, through the MCT, for at that time I was a member of the Media Council of Tanzania.

The major components of the projects were:-

- Training to press clubs members

- Equipment support to press club
- Advocacy work for press clubs

8. REVIVAL OF UTPC

The revival of UTPC, started in 2001 whereby I was elected to be an interim Secretary General of UTPC, along with six (6) other journalists, who were charged with the responsibility of reviving UTPC.

By 2003 our committee achieved the following:-

- Produced a new constitution
- Registered additional members
- Produced the first UTPC Strategic Plan.

In that year, we held the first Members General Meeting which adopted the following:-

- A new UTPC constitution
- Adopted the first Strategic Plan
- Elected the first Board of Directors

It was that Board that appointed me to be the first UTPC Executive Director. At that time we had no funds so the Board directed me to look for funds to pay for my salary. The rest is history as I am here today sharing with you what we did.

9. HOW DID WE BUILD UTPC

9.1. Governance

- We produced a very good constitution
- We produced various operational manuals
- We put up an accounting system
- We produced a very good Strategic Plan 2011 – 2013 worth US Dollars 5millions for Three (3) years, and the current 2016 – 2020 worth 10 bil
- We employed very good staffs.

9.2. Intensive fundraising

- Ordinary proposal to donors
- Applying for various media activities
- Partnership with various national and international organizations
- Investigative journalism activities

10. IMPACTS OF UTPC/PRESS CLUBS ACTIVITIES

- 10.1.** 27 functional press clubs all over the country.
- 10.2.** Increased coverage of rural areas and regional areas.
- 10.3.** Our members provide 80% of stories/ features, TV and radio programs.
- 10.4.** Relationship among journalists and their stakeholders have improved significantly.

- Conflicts are being arbitrated /adjudicated at press clubs level
- Stakeholders request journalists through their press clubs
- Press clubs raise funds through hiring equipment, which we provide them
- UTPC link various stakeholders with press clubs

11. CHALLENGES

11.1. Funding in our Strategic Plan 2016-2020, we have a deficit of 5M US Dollars

11.2. In our country there is no Trade Union for Journalists

11.3. Media organizations are collapsing due to governance issues.

11.4. Draconian Media laws.

12. OPPORTUNITIES

12.1. Establishment of Daud Mwangosi Media Development Fund. We need your expertise to establish and maintain such a fund. Daud Mwangosi is the first journalist to be killed on duty in Tanzania. At the time of his killing he was the Chair of Iringa Press Club. We also need funds to engage competent lawyers to file a civil suit, against the Government of Tanzania, as Mwangosi was killed by a Government official.

12.2. Let us fundraise together to establish a project on Sustainable Development Goals. In the past during the Millennium Development Goals, the media was not properly used. It is our opportunity now to exert pressure, so that we will be involved in the promotion of SDGs.

13. CONCLUSION

I am happy to be here today, it was my dream that a day would come, I would stand before my colleagues so that I can share with you what we have done in Tanzania.

I would like to extend an invitation to all of you, to come to Tanzania to witness what we have done.

Let us share the lessons for our mutual benefit and development.

Thank you so much