

**SPEECH BY MINISTER OF INFORMATION  
& CIVIC EDUCATION, HON. PATRICIA  
KALIATI, MP. DURING THE OPENING OF  
ADVANCED POLITICAL REPORTING  
TRAINING WORKSHOP AT CRESTA  
CROSSROADS HOTEL ON MONDAY,  
22ND OCTOBER, 2007 ORGANISED BY  
KONRAD ADONAEUR AND MALAWI  
INSTITUTE OF JOURNALISM**

- The Chairman of the Malawi institute of Journalism, Dr. Charles Mataya;
- The representative of Cooperating Partners, Konrad, Miss Martina Schwowski from South Africa;
- The Executive Director of the Malawi Institute of Journalism, Dr. Peter Mitunda;
- The Dean of Journalism and Media Studies at the University of Malawi Polytechnic, Mr. Grey Mang'anda;
- Resource persons Mr. Davis Mussa

and Mr Eldson Chagara;

- Members of the press;
- Distinguished participants at this training workshop;
- Ladies and gentlemen.

It gives me great pleasure to be the Guest of Honour at this very important training workshop on Advanced Political Reporting Skills for senior reporters.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I know that most of you have extensively reported on the work by us politicians that you think you know the game of politics better than those of us who practice it daily.

Ladies and Gentlemen, since the main goal in politics is to bring meaningful change or development, this workshop will assist us to bring positive development to our country. As journalists, we have a duty to report on

positive developments taking place around us.

Ladies and Gentlemen, you will recall that I emphasized on this point of reporting positive things a few months ago, when I went to present computers on behalf of MACRA at the Malawi institute of Journalism.

When a child is continuously told that he or she is hopeless and useless, the potential for that child to do anything good is killed slowly. Reporters who use negative stories on their front pages or as headlines of their radio news are prophets of doom. Yet can you say nothing positive is happening in Malawi?

Media has a duty to expose the efforts by government to enhance democracy, development programmes, fight corruption

among many others. Let us not forget that we are in a developing country where we are still fighting to improve on the basic needs of life such as food, water, education, health and environment among others.

Ladies and Gentlemen, may I call on the participants to this training workshop, which has been jointly organized by Konrad and the Malawi institute of journalism to take this training seriously. I have been informed that the theme of this workshop is ***Advanced Political Reporting.***

You have been called from various media houses without discrimination because you are all working for the common cause of informing, educating and entertaining Malawians.

I am aware that you are all coming from different media houses where you also serve various bosses with various political interests. I am also aware that you personally have your own political leanings.

However, this training workshop must remind you to discharge your duties impartially, objective and professionally. It is only by being professional that you can avoid to be taken to court for making baseless claims. I am sure that you will learn basic tenets of politics, with particular emphasis on our local brand of politics commonly called '**ndale**'

I, therefore, urge you to take advantage of this rare chance to learn the tactics that you need as reporters and news analysts or comment or editorial column writers. Knowledge of politics and why it is practiced

will inform you how to better handle us politicians.

You will also learn how to better report political conflicts differences in your newspapers or news bulletins. Reading some of your screaming headlines, one would be tempted to conclude that there was a war going on in Malawi.

This should not be the case. However, let me hasten to add here that there has been some positive stories from the media - for example during the recent Budget Stand –Off between government and the Opposition in Parliament. The Media did a commendable job on behalf of the voiceless people who wanted the proposed budget to be passed.

Ladies and Gentlemen, my Ministry is continuously striving to create a conducive

environment for a free press in Malawi. I believe that only a truly free press can report on fraud and corruption, agriculture and food security, democracy and human rights and so on and so forth. This is why you have noticed that my door has always been open to the Media and continues to be open to you all.

Ladies and gentlemen, with these few remarks, it is my pleasure to declare this workshop on Advanced Political Reporting Skills officially open.

I wish you good deliberations and I thank you all for your attention. May God Bless you all.

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