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FPI CONDEMNS ASSAULT ON JOURNALIST AT UPND EVENT IN LUSAKA.

Lusaka, April 19, 2026 - The Zambia Free Press Initiative (FPI) strongly condemns the attack on Power News Network journalist Alfonso Kasongo by suspected UPND cadres in Lusaka's Linda Compound.

According to reports and a video circulating online, which we have reviewed, Mr. Kasongo was assaulted while carrying out his professional duties. In the video, he is heard identifying himself as a journalist and pleading with the attackers not to harm him, yet the assault continued, with some cadres using taser guns on the defenseless journalist.

The attack on an unarmed journalist is unacceptable and represents a serious violation of press freedom and the rule of law.

Sadly, this incident is not isolated. Just last week in Mpongwe, journalists at a local radio station were reportedly harassed and attacked by UPND cadres in the presence of police officers. These recurring acts point to a troubling pattern of hostility toward the media that must be urgently addressed by the UPND and its leaders in government.

That such violence is occurring in the lead-up to elections raises even more serious concerns about the safety and independence of journalists during a critical democratic period. Media practitioners must be able to report freely and safely, especially at a time when the public depends on accurate and timely information.

Journalists have a constitutional mandate to inform the public without fear, intimidation, or violence. Any attack on a journalist is an attack on the public's right to access information.

We therefore call on the police to conduct a swift, impartial, and transparent investigation into the assault on Mr. Kasongo and to hold all perpetrators accountable, regardless of political affiliation. We further urge political parties, including the UPND, to publicly denounce such actions and ensure their members respect the rights and safety of journalists.

We further call on President Hakainde Hichilema to unequivocally condemn these acts and to call his party's cadres to order, and ensure an immediate end to the assault and harassment of journalists.



The Zambia Police Service must also uphold its duty to protect journalists and ensure that media practitioners can operate freely and safely in all parts of the country.

The FPI stands in solidarity with Mr. Kasongo and all journalists facing threats and violence in the line of duty. Press freedom is a cornerstone of democracy and must be protected at all times without interference.

Issued by:

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FPI