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Statement by the Media Workers Association of Grenada on World Press Freedom Day 2008

ST GEORGE'S, Grenada - On the occasion of the World Press Freedom Day 2008, the Media Workers Association of Grenada (MWAG) reiterates the importance of unfettered and vibrant media for the development of a democratic, free and open society.

A functioning democracy is unimaginable without a pluralistic media landscape, without a genuinely free and independent press and without the possibility that all citizens may exercise their rights to freedom of expression and access to information.

In this context, we recall once again the various commitments and promises undertaken by the Grenada Government and under the Principles of the Declaration of Chapultepec, and other similar treaties. We attach great importance to these values.

MWAG reiterates from its most recent statement that it shall not stand idly by and allow any political party, interest group or individual to trample on the rights of media workers.

MWAG is calling upon practitioners to continue to play their role, not just in carrying the news, but to be more aggressive investigators of issues in the nation.

The association remains committed to training and helping members achieve the highest possible standards.

The media remains the most debated institution in the country and moreso in this period where the nation is preparing for general elections. Therefore, the question of fairness and balance will be argued among political parties.

Freedom of expression is a fundamental human right, as outlined in article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that "everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; that this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers".

"World Press Freedom Day reminds both citizens and governments that they need to reaffirm this right "as an essential foundation of the information society", the statement said.