



NAIROBI, KENYA, June 03, 2022.

Statement on The Presidential Debates 2022

We have taken note of the statement issued on June 2, 2022 by the WSR Presidential Campaign team advising their candidate against participating in the Presidential debates.

The Kenya Presidential and Deputy Presidential Debates is jointly organised by Media Owners Association, the Media Council of Kenya and the Kenya Editors' Guild among various other stakeholders in the electoral process. Debates for presidential candidates have become a tradition of Kenya's democracy and a regularity in our electoral cycles. The guidelines governing the debates were developed in 2017, tested and validated through various processes, and remain a public document.

For a country that has so many diverse political voices, debates have become the place for clarity of priorities, public policies, ideas and other development aspects key to the Kenyan people. The debates play a significant role in the way we choose our leaders. During these debates, the public gets to listen to the candidates and gauge what their priorities could be once they assume office. In that way, they catalyse issue-based elections; provide an opportunity for candidates to debate, interact and engage; and enable Kenyans to make informed decisions.

Planning for the 2022 debates has been underway since 2021 and are currently at very advanced stages. Specifically, we have involved various stakeholders, including presidential aspirants – including the WSR Presidential Campaign – to map their expectations. In these consultations, we will continue to ensure the debates are as inclusive and representative as possible. Indeed, for us to take our country forward, it behooves us to work together rather than threaten processes that are important to the country. In this regard, the 2022 Kenya Presidential Debates will proceed in **July 2022** and we will shortly announce the details on how Kenyans can participate.

A panel of senior editors from across the media industry has been established to provide stewardship of the content aspects given how critical the debates are to ensure the public interest obligations are served and that the debates embody the principles of fairness, integrity, independence and accountability as enshrined in the Presidential Debates Guidelines.

We reassure the public and stakeholders in the electoral process that we will give Kenyans quality issue-based Presidential and Deputy Presidential Debates that will enable their decision making and effective participation in this year's election.

Clifford Machoka
Head of Presidential Debates Secretariat

About The Presidential Debates Secretariat

The Presidential Debates Secretariat is a joint organ of the Media Owners Association, the Media Council of Kenya and the Kenya Editors' Guild. The Secretariat organizes Presidential Debates during election years and has done so over the last 10 years in 2013 and 2017.

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