



Non-Governmental Organisations  
Coordinating Council  
(NGOCC)  
For Gender and Development

**PRESS RELEASE**  
**For Immediate Release**  
**22nd February 2017**

**NGOCC CONDEMNS HARASSMENT AND ARREST OF MUTINTA MAZOKA  
M'MEMBE BY THE POLICE**

THE Non-Governmental Organisations' Coordinating Council (NGOCC) condemns in the strongest terms the harassment and subsequent arrest of Ms. Mutinta Mazoka M'membe by the Zambia Police. We further wish to note that Ms. M'membe becomes the second female media proprietor facing harassment at the hands of state Police after the recent gross mistreatment of Ms. Kasoma Nyirenda.

After conducting an independent assessment and investigation of the recent event, it is clear to NGOCC that the police officers roughed up Ms. Mazoka M'membe, and in the process her dress was torn. She was also denied police bond for no reason that led her needlessly spending two nights in custody. Since the incident of Ms. Mmembe's harassment, the family is now living with armed police that have camped at their home day and night.

The impunity with which the M'membe family is being treated clearly points to a political witch-hunt, especially that Ms. M'membe is the proprietor of The Mast Newspaper, indicative that this is yet another government action to kill off the free press.

NGOCC wishes to reiterate that Ms. Mutinta Mazoka M'membe has rights as a woman and as a citizen, and the police had no right to arrest her in unclear circumstances. Just because the Police could not locate her husband (Mr. Fred M'membe) does not make her amenable to answer any charges unbeknown to her. She is an independent person and not the property of her husband and the police have no right to put her in police custody.

NGOCC stands to defend the rights of women including the right to freedom of expression and the freedom from police harassment.

ISSUED;

**For/NGOCC**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sara H. Longwe', written in a cursive style.

**Sara H. Longwe**  
**CHAIRPERSON**