



# UNITED PRESS FOR DEVELOPMENT NETWORK

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## Press Release

### ELECTION 2024 MEDIA COVERAGE:

#### REDRAW CAPPING OF JOURNALISTS OR FACE COURT INJUNCTION

[Accra - Ghana, 02/12/24] – The United Press for Development Network (UPDN) has observed with extreme concern and dissatisfaction the recent memo from the Electoral Commission (EC) of Ghana regarding media accreditation for the 2024 elections. The memo initially proposed severe limitations on media access to constituency and regional collation centres, citing space constraints, and later adjusted the accreditation numbers after consultations with the Ghana Journalists Association (GJA) and the Ghana Independent Broadcasters Association (GIBA).

While the increase from 3,308 to 4,500 accreditations is acknowledged, it is insufficient and does not address the broader implications of restricting the press. UPDN categorically states that this decision is:

- 1. Undemocratic:** The capping of journalists undermines the principles of transparency, accountability, and fairness that form the bedrock of democratic governance. Elections are a public process, and limiting media coverage compromises the electorate's right to timely and accurate information.
- 2. A Threat to Free Press:** The role of the media in ensuring credible elections cannot be overstated. Any attempt to restrict the number of journalists at collation centres stifles press freedom, a fundamental tenet enshrined in Ghana's Constitution.
- 3. A Barrier to Transparency:** Restricting access raises legitimate concerns about the integrity of the collation process and the potential for misinformation. Full media access is essential for promoting trust in the electoral process.

UPDN stands in unwavering solidarity with the GJA and supports its defiance of this undemocratic decision by the EC. We call on the following stakeholders to intervene and demand an immediate reversal of this directive:

- National Peace Council
- National House of Chiefs
- Ministry of Information
- Political Parties
- Ghana Independent Broadcasters Association (GIBA)
- Private Newspapers and Online News Publishers Association of Ghana (PRINPAG)
- Coalition of Domestic Election Observers (CODEO)
- Other Civil Society Organizations

**We demand the EC immediately revert to the previous unrestricted media access framework. Should the Commission fail to heed this call, UPDN is prepared to take legal action to ensure the rights of journalists and media houses are protected.**

The credibility of Ghana's 2024 elections depends on a free, independent, and unrestricted press. UPDN reiterates its commitment to defending press freedom and ensuring transparent electoral processes. We urge all media practitioners and stakeholders to remain vigilant and resolute in protecting our democracy.

**About UPDN:**

United Press for Development Network (UPDN) is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting press freedom, media development, and sustainable development across Africa. Through capacity building, advocacy, and networking, UPDN empowers journalists and media organizations to uphold professional standards, foster accountability, and advance the public interest.

**Signed**

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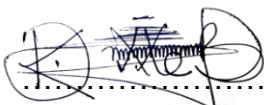
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