

# Zimpapers will continue to uplift, guard nation's interests

KADOMA, ZIMBABWE: Zimpapers will continue playing its part in uplifting and guarding the nation's common interests through its publications while making no apologies about that stance, Zimpapers chief executive Justin Mutasa has said.

Mutasa was responding to claims that Zimpapers publications were partisan.

He was speaking during a media workshop on election reporting organised by the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission in Kadoma. Participants had also raised concern over the Zimpapers' ownership arguing that it should not hold a view or support a common position.

"Zimpapers is a public-listed company and anyone can buy shares. We are not funded by the ministry of finance.

"We are a stable guided by the national interests which are one of our cardinal values and for that we make no apologies," he said.

Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC) representative, Allan Ngoro Chiweshe said the broadcaster was pushing a national agenda to serve future generations. He said the inclusive government was not funding digitisation and upgrading of equipment in line with SADC guidelines before the 2013 deadline.

Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) chairperson, retired Justice Simpson Mutambanengwe said there was need to rally people around a common interest for Zimbabwe.

"Leaders were very comprehensive when coming up with the GPA because it spells out what we consider as the common good of the country and its citizenry." he said.

Justice Mutambanengwe said there was need to create a platform where the issue will be discussed.

ZEC deputy chairperson, Joyce Kazembe said Zimbabwe's national values were in our history.

The high level workshop, bringing together heads of media houses including top management and the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission on the role of the media in promoting peaceful and professionally run elections, attracted chief executive officers and editors from the print and broadcast media and is expected to lay the foundation for the two entities to play a complementary role in ensuring a smooth electoral process.

Officially opening the workshop, Justice Mtambanengwe described the media as major stakeholders in the electoral process that ensure elections are conducted freely and fairly.

"We expect that from this workshop, the media clearly understands the electoral laws governing the conduct of elections in the country," he said.

Justice Mtambanengwe said there was need to build trust between the media and the electoral body through shunning of divisive language and coverage that promotes antagonism.

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