

PROTECTING AND
EXPANDING THE RIGHT
TO FREEDOM OF
EXPRESSION FOR ALL

**Campaign
for Free
Expression**

Inhlase
CENTRE FOR INVESTIGATIVE
JOURNALISM

06 October 2022

Press Statement

eSwatini Free Expression Summit

The Inhlase Centre for Investigative Journalism and the Campaign for Free Expression have called journalists, artists, activists and others in eSwatini to a summit to discuss the state of free expression in the country.

The meeting hopes to deal with limitations on free expression and its impact on the country's national dialogues.

The gathering will focus on:

- The role of journalists and the value of a free and independent media
- The role of artists and cultural workers
- The right of access to information
- The right to protest
- Dealing with disinformation
- What can be done to enhance and protect free expression.

"It is concerning that emaSwati find it even much harder to speak freely in the aftermath of the political unrest. Individuals cannot get sufficient information on their own to make informed decisions on public issues, so they rely on the media to provide information. The media are an outlet for public discussion and opinion. How has the eSwatini media fared in fulfilling the functions of seeking the truth, educating the public, and serving as a watchdog in the current political situation? We hope this summit will provide all of us with the opportunity to find answers to this important question," said Inhlase's Vuyisile Hlatshwayo.

"In the current political climate, it is important that all citizens feel they can express their views and there is a free flow of reliable information in eSwatini," said one of the convenors, Anton Harber of CFE.

"We are deeply concerned that journalists are not always free to do their important work, that the right to protest is being compromised and many find it risky to speak out. This is damaging to the country, its people and its economy. We hope to deal with it and work out ways to enhance and defend the freedom to speak."

The meeting will take place at The George Hotel eSwatini on Thursday, 20 October 2022

Enquiries: Vuyisile Hlatshwayo on +268 7615 6605
Musa Ndlangamandla on +268 7658 9033

Inhlase is a non-profit and non-partisan investigative journalism centre that defends and advances the cause of freedom of expression and promotes open, accountable and participatory democracy in society.

CFE is a non-partisan, non-profit organisation dedicated to protecting and expanding the right to free expression for ALL in Southern Africa and enabling EVERYONE to exercise this right to the full.