



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Urgent Concerns Regarding Sensationalistic Reporting of Elmina Tragedy: Call for Ethical Journalism Practices**

**CYBERJAYA, 21 AUGUST 2023** — The [Communications and Multimedia Content Forum of Malaysia](#) (Content Forum), an industry forum and self-regulatory organisation committed to upholding responsible and ethical content, is concerned about recent news reports on the Elmina tragedy that featured graphic descriptions of the victims and the distressing state in which their bodies were discovered.

The incident, which took place on 17 August 2023 involved a tragic plane crash resulting in multiple casualties and injuries. While the event itself was undoubtedly devastating, the subsequent coverage provided by several news reports contained excessive and unnecessary graphic depictions, causing distress and concern among readers and industry professionals alike.

The Content Forum firmly believes in the crucial role of journalism in delivering accurate information while maintaining respect for the individuals involved, their families, and their loved ones. It is imperative that media outlets strike a delicate balance between providing essential details and exercising compassion when reporting on incidents of this nature.

We acknowledge the challenge of reporting on sensitive topics such as this, where numerous fatalities and injuries are involved. We also understand that relaying pertinent information to the public is paramount, including details provided by rescuers and officials on the circumstances surrounding recovery or discovery.

However, it is equally important for media outlets to exercise editorial discretion by considering the consequences of graphic descriptions on readers and the affected individuals and their families. Responsible reporting entails providing accurate information while avoiding sensationalistic elements, in order to maintain the utmost respect for the dignity and privacy of the victims and their loved ones.

This incident serves as a stark reminder of the ethical responsibilities entrusted to members of the press. The Content Forum urges journalists and news organizations to prioritize empathy and compassion alongside the pursuit of truth.

As an organization actively promoting ethical reporting practices, the Content Forum advocates for the adherence to the [Content Code](#) and other relevant codes of conduct to ensure accountability and the prioritization of ethical journalism standards.

In today's era of rapid information sharing, it is crucial for members of society to practice discretion when choosing their sources of news. Choosing publications that emphasize responsible and empathetic reporting can contribute to fostering a more compassionate and community-driven society.

Furthermore, we wish to underscore the importance for social media users to also exercise sound judgment and empathy when disseminating or reposting information pertaining to this tragedy and others like it. Just as responsible journalism is important, prudent content sharing also plays a crucial role in fostering empathy and encouraging ethical discourse. We advise social media users to consider the potential consequences of their posts on the individuals and families impacted by tragic incidences.

Together, we can create a media landscape that upholds responsible reporting and respects the dignity and privacy of those affected.

For media inquiries or more information about responsible journalism practices, please contact the Content Forum at [secretariat@contentforum.my](mailto:secretariat@contentforum.my).

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## **ABOUT THE CONTENT FORUM**

The Communications and Multimedia Content Forum of Malaysia (Content Forum) is a self-regulatory organization and industry forum registered under the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) and designated by the Communications and Multimedia Act 1998 (CMA'98) to oversee and promote self-regulation of content over the electronic networked medium. The Content Forum consists of key players of the content industry i.e., advertisers, advertising agencies, broadcasters, content creators/distributors, audiotext hosting services providers, advertising agencies, internet service providers and civic groups.

Aimed at facilitating self-regulation, which provides an additional layer of consumer protection that complements the legal framework, the Content Forum is committed to govern and promote the creation, distribution and consumption of electronic-networked content.

As an industry self-regulatory body, the Content Forum comprises of key members of the communications and multimedia content industry, including broadcasters, advertisers, content creators, internet access service providers and civic groups. This dynamic and robust representation of industry practitioners ensures that content standards continue to be developed with the objective of establishing a level playing field in the industry.

The Content Forum is responsible for the implementation and enforcement of the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Content Code ("the Content Code"). The Content Code was prepared by the Content Forum and first registered with MCMC on 1st September 2004. The Content Code is the principal source for industry self-regulation as it contains governing standards and best practices for content dissemination within the communications and

multimedia industry in Malaysia. The main objective of the Content Code is to outline procedures of self-regulation that provides the platform for creativity, innovation and healthy growth of a fast-evolving industry.

The Content Forum houses a Complaints Bureau that is empowered to address all complaints relating to content disseminated over electronic networks. The Complaints Bureau is empowered to investigate possible breaches of the Content Code, mediate disputes, adjudicate cases, publish orders and impose sanctions where necessary. The Complaints Bureau accepts complaints from industry players and the general public. Additionally, it plays an advisory role to any party that requires guidance on electronic content matters.

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**Issued by GO Communications on behalf of the Content Forum**

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