



PRESS RELEASE: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EXCITING, EXPLOSIVE AND EDUCATIONAL DRAMA SERIES, “MY COUNTRY” HITS AIRWAVES

A new local produced dramatic mini series entitled “My Country” hits local television stations

Lusaka, 8th December –The National Governing Council (NGC) of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) in Zambia, with the *Every Voice Counts* campaign, premiered the mini-series “*My Country*” on MUVI TV and ZNBC this past week.

My Country, a 5 part mini series produced by Media 365 (producers of the critically acclaimed and award winning series, *Club Risky Business*) tells five stories in one when two world’s converge to spark a movement for change. It’s the story of how we are all interconnected and bound by the same ideals and goals for the future. It is the story of how the actions and decisions that we make can determine our future and our present.

In the genre of films such as “*Crash*” and “*Magnolia*”, the story follows a group of people from a diverse section of urban life as they navigate their lives and relationships in search of happiness and a better life. *My Country* features an ensemble cast including renowned actor Phakeni Makowani, Takondwa Nkonjera (of Big Brother fame) and Topsy Sikalinda and also introduces some amazing first time talent.

My Country mixes drama, action, romance, comedy and intrigue while also conveying a social message. As part of the communication initiatives of the National Governing Council, *My Country* seeks to tell the story of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), the impact it has on our lives and how we can all make a difference. Through this edu-tainment piece, it is hoped that knowledge and awareness of the APRM will increase and that people will be inspired to take action in the most appropriate ways. The story’s main message is that no matter who you are, you can make a difference.

My Country airs Sundays on MUVI TV at 17:30hrs, and on ZNBC on Mondays at 21:00hrs. The series will also be available online.

Further information:

***My Country* Synopsis**

My Country is about **Shabwa**, a journalist, who resigns from a successful career at a tabloid newspaper to pursue a greater calling to use his skill as a journalist to help change his community for the better. His mission is to establish an organization called Change Agents that will, train members of various communities as Citizen Journalists and use their voices (through print, radio and television) to report on issues in the community and advocate for the powers that be to keep their promises and

make development a reality. His ideals lead him to set up office in the heart of a Lusaka township, recruiting his out of work, aspiring filmmaker cousin **Emma** to aide him on his mission with the promise that it will fulfil their dreams. Through his odyssey he meets **Hillary**, an officer at the NGC who is eager and passionate about the APRM's possibility for change, **Chester**, a young senior manager at a private corporation involved to its neck in corporate malpractice, and **Ricky**, an ambitious final year secondary school student from a Lusaka township, who dreams of pulling his family out of financial strain.

Through the inter weaving stories of the characters, issues related to good governance, economic management, corporate governance and social economic governance, are revealed, highlighting what the APRM is and why it is important for all Zambians to get involved.

About the Every Voice Counts! Campaign

Targeted at all Zambians from diverse ways of life, the Every Voice Counts! Campaign aims to raise awareness and increase participation in the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) process in Zambia. The campaign will address the four focus areas of the APRM, democracy and good political governance, economic governance and management, corporate governance and social-economic governance.

The campaign features the *My Country* drama series, a television commercial entitled "Imagine featuring Zambian celebrities, Slap Dee, Cactus, Maiko Zulu, and Ruff Kid among others. The campaign also features a radio programme as well as a campaign website and facebook page.

About The African Peer Review Mechanism

The African Peer Review Mechanism is an important undertaking for Africa and its people. Its main purpose is to bring about positive change by encouraging the adoption of policies, standards and practices that will bring political stability, economic growth and sustainable development. The APRM encourages Africa and Africans, to adopt a culture of accountability and provides a means of addressing issues that can affect good governance such as corruption and misplaced priorities. The APRM is concerned with all areas of society and good governance, but in particular the following four areas:

- 1. Democracy and Good Political Governance*
- 2. Economic Governance & Management*
- 3. Corporate Governance*
- 4. Socio-economic Development*

Participation in the APRM is voluntary; a country must volunteer to be reviewed by signing a Memorandum of Understanding. In the APRM base documents this is termed 'Voluntary Accession'.

For the APRM to be effective, it requires the participation of all stakeholders in the country, including government, political parties, parliament, NGOs, private sector, academia, women's groups, trade unions and the community. This is because development of a country does not rest with the government alone; its citizens must actively participate to ensure the change they want to see. A key benefit of the APRM is that it allows participating countries to not only take account of their own policies and practices, and monitor progress towards improvements but also to learn from other African countries that have successfully implemented policies that have driven their growth.

The APRM enhances Africa's ownership of its own development agenda and process

About the National Governing Council

The National Governing Council (NGC) is the primary unit for implementing the APRM at national level. The NGC works with all stakeholders and members of the public and private sector, having consultations and discussions. The NGC is representative and members are drawn from private sector, women groups, persons with disabilities, academic, religious and faith based organisations, political parties, rural populations, trade unions and government to ensure it is an all inclusive team.

About Media 365

Media 365 is a fast-growing, dynamic media agency that focuses on strategy, marketing, communication and research services within the area of social change and development. Based in Lusaka, Zambia, the agency uses the guiding principles of social marketing to develop, implement and manage cause-related campaigns for local and international clients.

Contact:

Natasha Phiri

Operations Director

Media 365

Email: Natasha@media365.co.zm

Phone: 211 254 892/ 0978 418 140 / 0969 975 576

Morgan Mukwasa

Liaison

APRM Zambia Secretariat

Email: gs@governance.zm / mukwasamorgan@yahoo.co.uk

Phone: 211 252 492 / 0977 459 940

Visit:

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