

Ministry of Information, Culture & Tourism, *The Analyst* row resolved

The Media Complaints Committee (MCC) has successfully arbitrated the apparent stand-off between the Government of Liberia and *The Analyst* newspaper, relative to the publication of a damning criticism of the government by former TRC chairman, Jerome Verdier, without a response from the government.

At a hearing held at the Press Union of Liberia last week, the committee heard from the government and the management of *The Analyst*, and recognised shortcomings by both parties, in respect of the 'right to reply.'

During the hearing, *The Analyst* acknowledged error in publishing claims against the government without providing a simultaneous right of reply. However, the committee accepted the paper's explanation that it had immediately promised itself to make the necessary correction by publishing the government's response to Jerome Verdier's criticisms.

In light of this, the committee concluded that the government's well circulated reaction to the publication, challenging the professionalism of the paper was rather embellished with harsh words apparently geared at an end to the complaint itself.

However, the committee also found *The Analyst* in further error for refusing to carry the government's rejoinder to a subsequent explanation of the government's complaint, noting that regardless of how critical a rejoinder is of a news media, it must be carried in keeping with ethics.

At the close of the meeting, the committee asked *The Analyst* to publish the government's reaction to the first [Verdier] story and the rejoinder to the opinion on the complaint under the doctrine of 'right to reply'.

The committee has meanwhile welcomed the participation of both parties at the highest levels in the resolution of this matter, emphasizing that "such gatherings are necessary to resolve issues of discomfort and provides further room to promote media freedom."

The meeting was attended by Stanley Seakor, managing editor of *The Analyst* and Isaac Jackson, deputy minister of Information for Public Affairs.

The MCC is a multi stakeholders' self-regulatory committee set up by the Press Union of Liberia to promote media freedom and professionalism in Liberia. Membership to the committee includes the media, the Bar Association, the Government, Civil Society, and Women groups.

Source: [allAfrica](#)

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