

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Independent Media Council of Somalia Condemns IGAD for Legitimising Oppressive “Somali Media Council”**

**Mogadishu, Somalia–21/Oct/2024** Today, the Independent Media Council of Somalia issued a strong condemnation of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) for its decision to legitimize an illegitimate and oppressive entity under the guise of the “Somali Media Council”.

Somali media practitioners have expressed shock and disappointment at IGAD’s decision to incorporate a representative from the so-called “Somali Media Council” in its awards system, thereby granting credibility to an entity that was established with the clear intention of suppressing journalists and independent media organisations in Somalia.

In a statement, the Independent Media Council of Somalia collectively stressed: “While IGAD claims to be promoting professional excellence in journalism, its actions today through this awards process have demonstrated that it is facilitating and legitimising an oppressive outfit.”

The Independent Media Council of Somalia calls on IGAD to immediately cease its efforts to legitimise this illegal and anti-media council. Such actions set a dangerous precedent that threatens to further oppress an already endangered media landscape in Somalia. Journalists in the country have long suffered from targeted killings, forced media closures and constant repression.

The Independent Media Council of Somalia urges IGAD to desist from any actions that lend legitimacy to this illegitimate council, which was formed in violation of the amended media law of 2020, and to instead uphold the values of press freedom and the safety of Somali journalists.

**END**