

PS says ICT Bill due to be tabled in House

By Ben Onyasimi

THE Freedom of Information and Communication Bill 2008 (ICT) will be tabled in Parliament in the next two weeks.

Information Permanent Secretary Bitange Ndemo says his ministry has recorded tremendous progress in drafting the ICT policy that will be introduced in Parliament as a Bill.

Once passed into law, the 2008 ICT Bill will revitalise the practice of communication for development through the promotion of professionalism, internal checks and balances to ensure a responsible professional media that is a tool for

national development.

It aims at upgrading professional skills embedded in substantive analysis and strengthening of communication institutions for development.

The Bill also seeks to entrench the culture of communication for development through the promotion of policy and regulatory frameworks.

Other objectives include supporting the development of free and independent media besides developing capacities in development with emphasis on upgrading professional



Phogiso



Ndemo

skills for media practitioners.

Speaking yesterday at a Nairobi hotel during the launch of Communication for Development Project, the PS said his ministry will initiate dialogue with the media and

Members of Parliament on the need to pass the Freedom of Information Bill and the ICT Bill. He also called for a review of the Media Act to promote responsible journalism in the country.

Ndemo called on media practitioners to help in making the policy comprehensive and all inclusive before it

is tabled in Parliament for the first reading.

The PS urged journalists to develop a sense of impartiality in their reporting, saying inaccurate information may plunge the country into chaos.

Information and Communication minister Samuel Phogiso called on the media to strictly adhere to their Code of Ethics so as to promote objective reporting, patriotism and national development.

In a speech read by Ndemo, the minister said journalists must exercise good governance, legitimacy, accountability, competence and promote human rights and the rule of law as a way of safeguarding the environment and ensuring social inclusion.

This, he said, was the only way of making Kenya achieve the provisions of Vision 2030 and Millennium Development Goals by 2015.