**Garowe, Puntland – October 20, 2024:** In a historic and profoundly significant event, the Puntland Ministry of Information unveiled the Access to Information Act on October 19 at the Martisoor Hotel in Garowe. This milestone, steeped in the hopes and aspirations of the people, heralds a new era in the pursuit of transparency, accountability, and media freedom within Puntland. The atmosphere was charged with pride and emotion as key stakeholders and citizens alike witnessed a long-awaited step towards fostering an open and informed society.

Organized by the Media Association of Puntland (MAP) in collaboration with the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), the unveiling brought together an esteemed gathering of government officials, including Puntland’s Vice President, Ilyaas Osman Lugatoor; Minister of Information, Mohamud Aydid; Deputy Minister, Yacqub Abdala; and Director General Eng. Mohamed Isse, Ministers of health, agriculture, planning, energy and water, officials from the Puntland Parliament communication department and communication directors of the Puntland cabinet ministers, Puntland Presidential advisors.

along with representatives from United Nations, non-governmental organizations, local civil society groups, women’s organizations, youth groups, and concerned citizens.

Their presence underscored the profound impact of this law, not only on the media sector but on the entire society.

Mohamed Dahir, Chair of MAP, addressed the packed conference, expressing gratitude to the audience and emphasizing the day's significance as a testament to the power of collaboration and persistence. He stated, “Today, we stand at the threshold of a new chapter in Puntland's history—one where the right to information is recognized as a fundamental pillar of democracy. This law is not just a piece of legislation; it is a inspiration of hope for journalists, citizens, and reformers alike. Our collective efforts have transformed aspirations into reality, reminding us that through unwavering dedication and unity, we can indeed shape a brighter future for our society.”

Here I need a strong quote for the MAP chair????

With the unveiling of the Access to Information Act, an extraordinary victory for media freedom and public accountability has been won. Journalists will now be empowered with the tools to access essential government information, fostering a stronger, more transparent relationship between the government and the public. This act signifies a bold commitment to the principle that every citizen has the right to know, to question, and to hold their government accountable.