

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

# Pressing for Freedom

20 Years of World Press Freedom Day

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# Pressing for Freedom

20 Years of World Press Freedom Day

Editing provided by William Horsley

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## Table of Contents

JOINT FOREWORD BY DIRECTORS-GENERAL OF UNESCO Irina Bokova (2009 – present), Koichiro Matsuura (1999-2009),

Testimonial from Kunda Dixit, 2000-2005 Jury Member

Testimonial from Remzi Lani, 2005-2007 Jury Member

**BUILDING A CIVIL SOCIETY FOR PRESS FREEDOM** 

A testimonial from the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) by Joel Simon

Fighting those who move to silence, repress and censor: A testimonial from ARTICLE 19 by Agnes Callamard

**CONSOLIDATION PERIOD:** 

Press freedom's growing fight:

and Federico Mayor (1987-1999)

LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS	1
UNESCO's mandate to promote the free flow of ideas	1
Gathering in Windhoek: Birth of the Windhoek Declaration – 1991	1
Post Windhoek: The momentum continues with the establishment MISA and IFEX –1992	1
Establishment of World Press Freedom Day by United Nations General Assembly – 1993	1
3 May 1991 – A Day to Remember, a Reason to Celebrate by Henrikas Iouchkiavitchious, Assistant Director-General (1990-1999) for Communication, Information and Informatics, UNESCO	1
3 May, a resounding tribute paid to Africa by Alain Modoux, Assistant Director-General (1999-2001) Communication and Information, UNESCO	1
Over the years: World Press Freedom Day Themes (1994-2012)	2
Establishment of UNESCO Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize	2
Testimonial from Ana Maria Busquets de Cano, President, Fundación Guillermo Cano Isaza	2
Testimonial from May Chidiac, 2006 Laureate	2
Testimonial from Monica Gonzalez Mujica, 2010 Laureate	3
Testimonial from Peter Preston, 1999-2001 Jury Member	3

35

37

41

42

44

A long and fruitful journey in support of freedom of expression:  A testimonial from Inter American Press Association (IAPA), by Julio Muñoz	46
A constant struggle: A testimonial from International Federation of Journalists (IFJ)	
by Beth Costa, General Secretary	48
Twenty years of IFEX and World Press Freedom Day: A testimonial from IFEX by Kristina Stockwood	50
There can be no press freedom where journalists must work in fear of their lives: A testimonial from International News Safety Institute (INSI) by Rodney Pinder	52
And We Say No!: A testimonial from International Press Institute (IPI) by Alison Bethel McKenzie	54
Doubts did not stop us: A testimonial from Gwen Lister, co-founder of The Namibian and founding member of the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA)	56
For the existence of all others: A testimonial from Reporters Sans Frontières (RSF) by Christophe Deloire	58
The right for communities to communicate: A testimonial from World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC) by María Pía Matta	60
The right that underpins all rights: A testimonial from World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers (WAN-IFRA) by Vincent Peyrègne	62
UNESCO: A Partner for Press Freedom: A testimonial from World Press Freedom Committee by Ronald Koven	64
LOOKING FORWARD	67
Safety and impunity: One of the most pressing issues facing	
freedom of expression and press freedom	68
Testimonial by Kate Forbes, Journalist with BBC News Africa Desk	68
Testimonial by Mohamed Odowaa, Somali journalist	70
Special section of gender issues in freedom of expression and press freedom in the past 20 years	73
Searching for women in African media, by Diana Senghor, Director of the Panos Institute of West Africa and President of the UNESCO Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize Jury in 2012	

Defamation laws, a lack of legislation to better protect journalists and the need to have freedom of information laws  Fragility of press freedom and legal development, by Toby Mendel, Centre for Law and Democracy	76
Internet and censorship: a look at online press freedom	78
Voices that echo through the Internet, by Ben Wagner and Cynthia Wong, European University Institute and Human Rights Wa	tch
Blurring of the frontier between citizen journalists and professional media: a look at the rise of citizen journalism	80
Journalists, stop innovating: Verify! by Julien Pain, Editorial Manager for France 24 The Observers	
Selected text by the UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, Frank La Rue	82
ANNEX	
Annex I – Declaration of Windhoek 3 May 1991	85
Annex II – Resolution 4.3 adopted by the UNESCO General Conference at its 26th Session in 1991	88
Annex III – Resolution 29 "Condemnation of violence against journalists"	89
Annex IV – Selected Joint Messages on the occasion of World Press Freedom Day	91
FOOTNOTES	94



#### TAWAKKOL KARMAN

Tawakkol Karman, 2011 Laureate for the Nobel Peace Prize delivering the keynote speech during the World Press Freedom Day 2012 in Tunis, Tunisia

## Joint Foreword

#### BY DIRECTORS-GENERAL IRINA BOKOVA, FEDERICO MAYOR AND KOÏCHIRO MATSUURA

"Pressing for Freedom: 20 Years of World Press Freedom Day"

or 20 years, May 3 has been a day when the world celebrates freedom of expression and stands together for its protection. This is the spirit of the 1991 Declaration of Windhoek, whose anniversary the United Nations General Assembly chose for World Press Freedom Day. UNESCO was instrumental in framing the Windhoek Declaration and works today to promote freedom of expression across the world.

We have experienced a revolution over the last 20 years. Newspapers have gone online and publish today through a multitude of media. The 24-hour news cycle has become the norm embraced by most networks, with news broadcasted around the world every minute of every day. Blogging, tweeting, and podcasting have opened vast new channels for sharing information and fostering expression. Citizen reporters are increasingly leading the news cycle, using mobile phones, especially in disaster and conflict areas.

The transformation of the media landscape has created exciting opportunities for exchange and dialogue, and for sharing knowledge and information. However, it has not translated into stronger respect for fundamental freedoms. Today, it has never been more urgent to promote and protect the fundamental human right enshrined in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This objective guides all UNESCO's action, in both the real and the virtual worlds. Our position is firm—freedom of expression and access to information

are crucial building blocks for democracy, development and dialogue.

We have seen real progress over the last 20 years. Increasing numbers of countries have put in place freedom of information laws. With some noticeable lapses, we have seen a rise in the acceptance of professional and ethical standards in journalism. More and more national media systems are moving in the direction of self-regulation. Organizations to defend press freedom have flourished at the local, national and global levels, and are working across the board — to enhance the protection of journalists' safety and end impunity, to promote media self-regulatory mechanisms and provide advice on media legislation and policy. UNESCO has worked closely with a great many of these organizations.

At the same time, old challenges remain strong, and new threats to freedom of expression are emerging. Far too many countries continue to criminalize expression, and journalists continue to be penalized with prison terms for libel. The complete decriminalization of libel remains a fight we must take across the globe. Most tragically, the safety of journalists, media workers and social media producers is worsening year after year, with the number of deaths increasing. In 2012, UNESCO issued a record number of condemnations of such killings, the majority of which concern journalists reporting on local corruption and criminality, silenced to keep misconduct from being revealed. Too many journalists still find

themselves in prison for the wrong reasons. Too many are forced to flee their countries. The digital era has given rise to new obstacles to information and novel forms of censorship.

The information revolution is a fact—it is estimated that we now generate 2.5 quintillion bytes of data each day. We must now work for this to become a knowledge revolution for all people, across all societies. This is essential for building inclusive, knowledge societies for sustainable development in the century ahead. This requires more inclusive access, and, especially, new forms of media literacy. As societies become more dependent on the Internet, online privacy rights and

security raise difficult questions that affect everyone—from governments, the private sector to individuals.

The Windhoek Declaration stated that "consistent with article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the establishment, maintenance and fostering of an independent, pluralistic and free press is essential to the development and maintenance of democracy in a nation, and for economic development." In times of change, this statement has never been more relevant. For 20 years, UNESCO has worked on the frontline of the struggle for freedom of expression and press freedom. Our convictions remain as firm today as ever before. The "free flow of ideas by word and image," as stated in our Constitution, remains a pillar of human dignity, lasting peace and sustainable development.

THE GOLDING

Irina Bokova

Koïchiro Matsuura

Federico Mayor

























# Laying the foundations

## UNESCO's mandate to promote the free flow of ideas

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is the United Nations specialized agency with the mandate to promote and defend freedom of expression as well as its corollary, freedom of the press. UNESCO's Constitution adopted in 1945 calls on the organization to foster "the free exchange of ideas and knowledge" and the "free flow of ideas by word and image." Today, this imperative remains as relevant as ever, including to the Internet. UNESCO is committed to raising awareness among Member States, civil society and other partners on issues of freedom of expression both online and offline including safety of journalists, and urges governments to act on attacks on journalists to prevent a culture of impunity from taking root. The Organization also promotes quality journalism through strengthening of professional and ethical standards, as well as providing advisory services on media legislation including freedom of information laws. For UNESCO, press freedom is wider than freedom of the media. It is the right of each individual to exercise their freedom of expression in amplified form. The media are a beneficiary of this broader right and also a barometer of ordinary individuals' freedom to address a public. But press freedom also entails an ethos of expression not only of mass communication but of truthful expression in the public interest. And this requires an environment conducive to freedom, including the safety of journalists, pluralism, and professional independence.

UNESCO's flagship program of drawing attention to freedom of expression and press freedom as fundamental human rights for all is reflected in its annual celebrations of World Press Freedom Day every 3 May since 1993. This has also been a period in which the Organization has each year awarded the UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize to a person, organization or institution that has made an outstanding contribution to the defence and promotion of press freedom, especially when this has been achieved in the face of danger.

"THE
JOURNALISTS
WHO HOLD
THE MIRROR UP
TO YOU DO SO
PUBLICLY AND
AT GREAT RISK
TO THEMSELVES.
THAT IS OUR
CALLING, AND
WE DO NOT
SHIRK IT"

Lasantha Wickrematunge (2009 Laureate)

## Gathering in Windhoek: Birth of the Windhoek Declaration (1991)

World Press Freedom Day, celebrated internationally every 3 May, is a date which celebrates the fundamental principles of press freedom; a date to evaluate press freedom around the world, to defend the media from attacks on their independence and to pay tribute to journalists who have lost their lives in the exercise of their profession. Press freedom is the right to publish, and is relevant to print media, broadcasting and the Internet.

The origins of World Press Freedom Day arise from a declaration signed by a group of African journalists

who gathered at a UNESCO seminar on "Promoting an Independent and Pluralistic African Media" that was held in Windhoek, Namibia from 29 April to 3 May 1991. The conference focused on the role of a free, independent and pluralistic media in light of the constant pressures and violence faced by media professionals working in Africa, amongst other conflict zones, and it was deliberately planned to coincide with the recent liberation of Namibia and the early period after the end of the Cold War.

"THERE IS MUCH FEAR
BUT THE DUTY OF
JOURNALISTS IS TO
DISARM THE FEARS
AND INFORM THE PUBLIC
ABOUT THE THREATS
THAT AFFECT THEIR
DAILY LIFE"

Monica González Mujica

(2010 Laureate)

The Windhoek Declaration is seen as a crucial affirmation of the international community's commitment to freedom of the press and the freedom of expression. It upholds press freedom as a fundamental human right, as enshrined by Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and stresses the ecosystem of media essential to fostering successful participatory democracies. The Declaration proclaims that "the establishment, maintenance and fostering of an independent, pluralistic and free press is essential to the

development and maintenance of democracy in a nation, and for economic development."

The conceptualization of press freedom in the 1991 Windhoek Declaration gave UNESCO a unifying perspective to replace that of the New World Information and Communication Order which had failed to find common ground amongst the Member States, being seen by some as too state-centric. Importantly, the Windhoek perspective continues to imply an important role for governments, but within firm parameters of *freedom*, *pluralism* and *independence*. States should be proactive in protecting journalists and advancing opportunities for citizens to exercise freedom of expression. And states should avoid controlling the media, and avoid having a state monopoly on the media. Instead, governments have a role in ensuring that there are not private media monopolies in the market. Further, the Windhoek view

on pluralism points to states ensuring legal and practical support of sectors such as public service and community media. Windhoek's view on independence means, however, that states should not use any such support, or governmental advertising, as a tool to undermine media autonomy or to compromise independent regulatory authorities.

The three key elements of Windhoek have enabled UNESCO to promote press freedom in a holistic sense, and based on the following understandings:

- Media freedom as regards the legal and statutory environment in which journalists and the news media operate. Key to press freedom here are: the legal status of freedom of expression and press freedom; whether news media regulation amounts to political licensing; whether journalism is censored or banned/blocked: whether criminal defamation and other laws are used against news media and journalists; including whether the profession is subject to licensing. Freedom of information is a significant aspect of the environment, as are legal dispensations on privacy rights and self-regulation, online and offline. Safety of journalists is also a major issue, because it is an indicator of the extent to which media freedom is protected. Also as part of media freedom, non-state actors, especially "Internet intermediaries", have a responsibility to protect the rights of their users.
- Pluralism is mainly a matter of economic ownership and control, and citizen choice. It also refers to the types and numbers of media outlets available in a particular society, and how this relates to public regulation of ownership and media support. Pluralism means there should be a media landscape with public, private and community media services. It also points to the importance of the diversity of journalistic content both on- and

off-line, and an end to gender bias that leads to male-centric media.

• Independence is not only autonomy of journalists from outside political or commercial interference, but especially the existence of self-regulatory mechanisms and the degree of professional autonomy. As the original Windhoek Declaration recognized, independence is reflected in the practical ethics and the strength of journalists' professional organisations. An ecology of organisations that supports autonomous journalism through advocacy, training, etc. is also a factor impacting on independence. Independence impacts on the performance of journalism (including whether there is self-censorship), and especially on the quality of information.

If media freedom refers to the impact on the press freedom environment from the top, independence highlights the bottom-up actions for press freedom.

The value of an integrated perspective can be seen in the interdependence of the three Windhoek elements of freedom (including safety), pluralism and independence. For example, laws that enable freedom of the media are hollow if journalists are not safe from threats, and their attackers operate with impunity. Monopolies (whether from state-owned or private media) put strong limits on the value of media freedom to a society, while contents that are not diverse do a disservice to media audiences. Even when there is media freedom, safety and pluralism, a system can still lack independence and ethical journalism. Thus, in promoting press freedom, UNESCO seeks to draw attention to the need for all three elements to be in place: media freedom, pluralism and independence.

The Windhoek Declaration also suggests specific concrete initiatives to help reach this goal in Africa

such as the development of cooperation between private African newspapers; the creation of separate, independent national unions for publishers, news editors and journalists; the creation of regional unions for publishers, editors and journalists; the development and promotion of nongovernmental regulations and codes of ethics in each country in order to defend the profession more effectively and ensure its credibility; and the creation of a data bank for the independent African press for the documentation of news

items essential to newspapers.

In a joint message delivered on 3 May 2001, on the occasion of World Press Freedom Day, former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Mary Robinson, and former UNESCO Director-General Koïchiro Matsuura remarked that "the Windhoek Declaration became the first in a series of commitments, region by

(Bulgaria, 1997).

region, to uphold the freedom of people everywhere to voice their opinions, and their access to a variety of independent sources of information." Windhoek inspired similar declarations in Alma Ata (Kazakhstan, 1992), Santiago (Chile, 1994), Sana'a (Yemen, 1996) and Sofia

Declaration was its influence in securing recognition of an international day for press freedom. Following the recommendation of the 26th session of UNESCO's General Conference<sup>1</sup> in 1991, the United Nations General Assembly<sup>2</sup> decided in December 1993 to celebrate World Press Freedom Day every 3 May to commemorate the anniversary of the historic deliberations in Namibia.

But perhaps the most tremendous impact of the Windhoek

It remains today an enduring gift from Africa to the globe.

"THE WHOLE POINT IS TO MAKE THE AUTHORITIES KNOW THAT THE PUBLIC WILL NOT ALLOW THEM TO OVERSTEP THEIR LIMITS"

Eynulla Fatullayev (2012 Laureate)

#### WORLD PRESS FREEDOM PRIZE CEREMONY ON 3 MAY

From left to right: President of Tunisia, 2012 Laureate Eynulla Fatullayev; UNESCO Director-General, Irina Bokova President of the Jury of the

#### UNESCO-GUILLERMO CANO Post Windhoek: The momentum continues with the establishment of <sup>2012</sup> MISA and IFEX

Moncef Marzouki; In Africa, the Windhoek Declaration constituted a watershed moment. The meeting in Windhoek resulted in the creation of the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) one year later. MISA was set up with the mission Prize, Diana Senghor to serve as a vehicle to advocate for and realize the vision outlined in the Windhoek Declaration. The organization has gone on to establish chapters across the Southern African Development Community region, and today it continues to serve as a public alarm service about press freedom violations in southern Africa. UNESCO and MISA continue to collaborate closely to promote a free and pluralistic media as essential for development and good governance3.

> In 2001 UNESCO and MISA hosted the Windhoek Declaration +10 Conference, which adopted the African Charter on Broadcasting and which also contributed to the eventual African Commission of Human and Peoples' Rights Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression in Africa in 2002. Further, in 2011 the two organizations' collaboration helped give rise to the Declaration for an African Platform on Access to Information (APAI).

> The momentum unleashed by Windhoek in 1991 also fuelled the creation of the International Freedom of Expression Exchange (IFEX)4, a worldwide coalition of free speech and free media advocates. The objectives of IFEX are to contribute to the cause of human rights worldwide in the field of freedom of expression, freedom of speech, and free flow of information; to support the creation of organizations for freedom of expression in developing countries and to contribute to the development of adequate communications technologies; as well as to establish a reliable global source of information on freedom of expression.



IFEX was established in 1992 in Montréal, Canada with a dozen leading free expression organizations uniting to devise a coordinated mechanism to expose free expression violations. Today, IFEX is composed of more than 90 independent organizations worldwide. IFEX's global network of action and information sharing provides both a powerful and necessary tool in fighting for press freedom. By uniting, IFEX members gain influence, leverage and authority. UNESCO has played a pivotal role in helping to promote IFEX across the globe via its International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC), and to this day the two organizations work in close collaboration to promote press freedom.

#### **Establishment of World Press** Freedom Day by United Nations **General Assembly in 1993**

3 May was proclaimed as World Press Freedom Day by the General Assembly of the United Nations in December 1993 following a UNESCO Recommendation adopted at the twenty-sixth session of its General Conference in 1991.

The World Press Freedom Day has the following key functions<sup>5</sup>:

- To serve as an occasion to inform citizens of violations of press freedom—a reminder that in dozens of countries around the world, media including the Internet— are censored, suspended, blocked, and closed down, while journalists, editors and publishers are harassed, fined, attacked, jailed, and even murdered.
- To encourage and develop initiatives in favour of press freedom, and to assess the state of press freedom worldwide across all media platforms.
- To serve as a reminder to governments of the need to respect their right to press freedom.
- To be a day of reflection among media professionals about issues of press freedom and professional ethics.
- To be a day of support for journalists who are targets for the restraint or persecution for exercising press freedom.
- It is also a day of remembrance for those journalists who lost their lives in the exercise of their profession.

The celebration of the World Press Freedom Day further affirms the idea of the fundamental human right to freedom of expression as stated in Article 19 of the 1948 Universal Declaration on Human Rights, that "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers." It is a right elaborated in the Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) as well as the three

regional human rights treaties that are Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), Article 13 of the American Convention on Human Rights and Article 9 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights.

Freedom of expression is a crucial element in fostering and maintaining democracy, development, and dialogue. Press freedom is a cornerstone of human rights and guarantees other basic liberties due to its unparalleled capacity to encourage transparency and good governance. Access to information makes it possible for citizens to hold their officials accountable and to take informed decisions to ameliorate their conditions. World Press Freedom Day serves as a crucial annual reminder of the importance of this right as well as its fragility and our

responsibility to protect it.

"PEOPLE SOMETIMES
PAY WITH THEIR LIVES
FOR SAYING ALOUD
WHAT THEY THINK. IN
FACT, ONE CAN EVEN
GET KILLED FOR GIVING
ME INFORMATION. I AM
NOT THE ONLY ONE IN
DANGER"

Anna Politkovskaya (2007 Laureate)



#### Henrikas Iouchkiavitchious

Henrikas Iouchkiavitchious was named Assistant Director-General for Communication. Information and Informatics, at UNESCO in September 1990. He has worked in several media (television and radio) and was member of the USSR Union of Journalists. He is a full member of the International Academy of Electrotechnical Sciences, corresponding member of the Russian Engineering Academy; Honoured Academician of the Russian Academy of Information; Doctor Honoris Causa of the International Institute for Advanced Studies in Systems Research and Cybernetics (Canada), member of the British Royal Television Society; and Trustee of the International Institute of Communications

### 3 May 1991 – A Day to Remember, a Reason to Celebrate

By Henrikas louchkiavitchious

oday, very few individuals, organizations or governments would argue against the importance of press freedom and the key role of free media in a democratic society. Yet, let us not forget that only two decades ago this was not the case.

At the time, the great political divide of the century was becoming history, but some ideas of the Cold War were still very much alive, including the so called "New World Information and Communication Order" (NWICO). The fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989 coincided with the adoption by UNESCO's General Conference of a new communication and information policy, which reaffirmed the Organization's commitment to its constitutional aim of promoting the "free flow of ideas by word and image", while promoting capacity-building in developing counties so that they can become equal partners in the world information exchanges. For the first time the governments of the world, many of which were far from being press freedom supporters, recognised officially that a free and pluralist press was a cornerstone of democracy, indispensable for the progress of societies. However, this policy was yet to be translated into concrete action.

This is when I joined UNESCO, in August 1990, to become one of such "translators" as head of the Communication, Information and Informatics Sector. I must say that some NGOs and even some colleagues met my appointment with suspicion. A high-ranking official of the Soviet TV and Radio, in their mind, could not be a promoter of press freedom. And yet, together with Alain Modoux, Director of Public Information and later Director of the Freedom of

Expression Division, but also with Alain Hancock, Claude Ondobo, Torben Krogh and many other colleagues, we managed to do a lot. But first and foremost I would like to pay tribute to Federico Mayor, the then Director-General of UNESCO, whose personal commitment and unwavering support to press freedom was crucial to our progress. I remember one occasion when a Member State was putting enormous pressure on him to change his decision on the award of the World Press Freedom Prize. But he never gave in, not once during his 12 years in office.

Of course, making progress and gaining credibility in such a sensitive area was only possible through active cooperation with press freedom NGOs and professional media organizations, such as the World Press Freedom Committee, the Committee to Protect Journalists, the International Press Institute, the International Federation of Journalists and the World Association of Newspapers, among others. They have been our close partners in all press freedom initiatives.

The 1991 Windhoek Seminar became a first major step for UNESCO on the road to press freedom and media pluralism worldwide. Organized together with the UN Department of Public Information, the Seminar discussed the problems of the African print media, revealing the facts of intimidation, imprisonment and censorship across the continent, and leading to many concrete projects to promote press freedom and support media development. Since then, similar seminars have taken place in all the regions of the world. The

day of the adoption of the Windhoek Declaration – 3 May – is celebrated annually as World Press Freedom Day and, since 1997, is coupled with the award of the World Press Freedom Prize. Thousands of journalists and media professionals have been trained, hundreds of press freedom initiatives and networks launched, and dozens of major international conferences on the subject organized. Today, the issue is high on the agenda of the UN System, including the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity, endorsed by the UN Chief Executives Board last April. But in the beginning, there was Windhoek.

Unfortunately, we cannot celebrate victory yet. Hundreds of journalists continue to be killed, imprisoned or tortured every year, and the ghost of NWICO keeps reappearing in different parts of the world, requiring us to remain vigilant and to multiply our efforts. But we can and should celebrate all the work already done and all the sacrifices made in order to achieve, one day, press freedom and media pluralism worldwide. We can and should celebrate Windhoek.



#### Alain Modoux

Alain Modoux worked 24 years for the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). In July 1989, he joined UNESCO where he held several senior positions in the communication field. Best known within the media industry for his commitment to press freedom, he is, inter alia, the architect of the UNESCO proposal which led to the decision by the General Assembly of the United Nations to proclaim 3 May "World Press Freedom Day.

## 3 May, a resounding tribute paid to Africa By Alain Modoux

he proposal to establish an international day devoted to press freedom emerged some 20 years ago in Windhoek (Namibia), at the Seminar on Promoting an Independent and Pluralistic African Press. This historical gathering organized by UNESCO and the United Nations brought together some 60 African independent journalists who were in the vanguard of the democratic process that had gradually gained ground on the African continent in the aftermath of the Cold War. The seminar was concluded on the 3rd of May 1991 with the adoption of the Windhoek Declaration that has since become a reference text of international scope laying down the pre-conditions for the establishment of media freedom, media pluralism and independence. The proposals made by the journalists included the suggestion that UNESCO and the United Nations establish a day devoted to the promotion of press freedom

The process from the proposal's inception at the Windhoek Seminar until its final acceptance by the General Assembly of the United Nations in New York took two and a half years. A first and decisive step was achieved in Paris on the occasion of the General Conference of UNESCO, in November 1991, which reacted very favourably to the report of the Director-General of UNESCO on the outcome of the Windhoek Seminar. The General Conference invited him to extend to other regions of the world the action taken so far in Africa to encourage press freedom and "to transmit to the UN General Assembly the wish expressed by the Member States of UNESCO to have 3 May declared International Press Freedom Days". Bolstered by the unanimous will of

the Member States, the Director-General forwarded their wish to the Secretary-General of the UN, with the hope that Boutros Boutros Ghali would bring the matter without delay before the UN General Assembly.

The UN Secretary-General, who was known as a respected lawyer, decided to follow the procedural path and sent the proposal to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) for consultation. Then, there was a great risk that the matter would be undermined by political bargaining and that the harmonious unanimity among the States in Paris would be upset in Geneva. As it happened, a group of African delegates to the ECOSOC took the matter in hand and convinced their peers that the proposal had stemmed from Africa and that upholding the fundamental principle of press freedom was of extreme importance for the future of the democratic process on the continent.

In the end, the ECOSOC agreed to support the UNESCO proposal and cleared the way for the General Assembly to decide "to declare 3 May World Press Freedom Day" (Decision 48/432 of 20 December 1993). In choosing the date of the anniversary of the adoption of the Windhoek Declaration the international community paid a resounding tribute to Africa, in particular to the African journalists who gathered in Windhoek for their pioneering role in the struggle for press freedom.

"IMAGINE ONE DAY THE WORLD WITHOUT JOURNALISTS. IT WOULD BE A WORLD LIVING IN SILENCE, A PARTY FOR CRIMINALS, AN INCENTIVE FOR CORRUPT AND ABUSIVE POLITICIANS. A DAY WITHOUT JOURNALISTS IS WHAT WE ARE AWAITING IF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY DOESN'T REACT ADEQUATELY IN FACING THE SILENCING OF THE WOMEN AND MEN REPORTERS WHO SHOW THE VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS."

(Lydia Cacho, 2008 Laureate)

#### Over the years: World Press Freedom Day themes (1994-2012)

In the past 20 years UNESCO has taken the opportunity of World Press Freedom Day to spotlight the role of the press and freedom of expression in the promotion of dialogue, development, and democracy. These themes were selected usually in response to current world developments, including changes in the media landscape such the rise of the of the Internet and of user generated content via social media, as well as shifting political landscapes such as the Arab Spring movement. The following is a selection of some of the themes that UNESCO has chosen to highlight over the years. The theme sets the focus for the many commemorations of the Day worldwide.

Media in Violent Conflict and Countries in Transition (2000, 2002, 2004). In times of conflict and post-disaster situations, the media's responsibilities for independent and pluralistic reporting are more important than ever. They can help to prevent the worst atrocities. But when belligerents see freedom of expression as an enemy to their cause and the media as a tool for propaganda, journalists who attempt to report in a non-partisan way face pressure, manipulation, intimidation or even elimination. And when they are forced to leave the cycle of violence does not end. The only remaining eye-witnesses—aid workers and local residents—often become the next targets.

In the aftermath of war the establishment of a free and independent press offers a way out of mistrust and fear, and entry into an environment where true dialogue is possible because people can think for themselves and base their opinions on facts. The media's work to provide reliable and credible information in conflict and post-conflict zones and in countries in transition can contribute to the essential processes of reconstruction and reconciliation. Press freedom is not a luxury, nor is it a secondary goal to be obtained in post-conflict countries. On the contrary, it is a means through which stability can be achieved and peace built and maintained.

Media and Good Governance (2005). What does good governance mean? The term implies a two-way process that includes all members of society, as opposed to a topdown system. In a White Paper, the European Commission cited five principles that underpin good governance: openness, participation, accountability, effectiveness, and coherence.7 Independent and pluralistic media serve as indispensible vehicles to help achieve these aims. Openness in society requires guaranteed access to information by the people. In this vein, freedom of the press should not be viewed solely as the freedom granted to journalists to report. It also includes the public's right of access to knowledge and information, which is vital for any democracy to function optimally. The need for open and free media is integral to the United Nations Member States in the Millennium Declaration, which calls for participation and transparency in decision-making, nondiscrimination, empowerment and accountability in the quest for development.

Media's power lies in its ability to serve as a watchdog to monitor, investigate, and criticize the government's actions. The link between the media and good governance is indisputable as media enable essential checks on the government and give voice to public concerns by providing an effective platform for discussion. In order to promote democracy, media must be allowed to function independently and pluralistically. However, some government officials fearing criticism of their actions continually seek ways to conceal them from the public by stifling the press. To counter the crippling effects of a government sliding towards poor governance, concrete actions must be taken in order to guarantee freedom of the press, such as the repeal of criminal defamation laws, addressing inadequate journalism training, media monopoly, attacks on journalists, and ensuring access to information sources and public records.



Media, Development and Poverty Eradication (2006). The United Nations Millennium Declaration cites poverty eradication as its number one priority, setting 2015 as the deadline by which the number of people living in extreme poverty should be reduced by one half.8 A free and independent media is among the key requisites necessary to accomplish this goal. Media freedom and poverty eradication are inextricably linked. The World Bank also recognised that freedom of expression and development go hand in glove. As former World Bank President James D. Wolfensohn put it, "free press is not a luxury," but instead, "at the core of equitable development."9 Nobel Prize laureate in economics Amartya Sen also famously declared that "in the terrible history of famines in the world, no substantial famine has ever occurred in any independent and democratic country with a relatively free press."10

**Freedom of Information and Empowerment of People (2008, 2011).** In the past 20 years the increase in the number of countries with freedom of information laws has been a bright spot in the fight for freedom of expression. In 1990 there were just 13 countries with national freedom

of information laws, but now freedom of information legislation exists in over 100 countries. Article 19 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant for Civil and Political Rights guarantees the freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas11. Information is vital. We make many choices each day that affect our lives based on the information that is available to us. The quality of the decisions we make is dependent upon the quality of the information we receive. When we lack access to information we are forced to make decisions in ignorance. Consider the consequences of an uninformed electorate going to the polls, or when information is blocked or manipulated in times of political crisis or ethnic strife UNESCO Director-General Irina Bokova describes freedom of information as going "hand-inhand with the complementary notion of freedom of expression" in its role in underpinning democracy. 12

Access to information is important when it comes to the empowerment of people because it ensures government transparency by "throwing open the curtains that conceal what happens in the corridors of executive power, thereby exposing officialdom to public scrutiny and accountability." When government behaviour is put on public display its excesses are curbed and public input can be incorporated. Freedom of information laws and a culture of openness are crucial for guaranteeing legal environments in which free and independent media can thrive.

#### Media, dialogue and mutual understanding (2009).

Globalization has led to increased exchange and interaction among people and communicating across cultural differences has become a primary challenge in today's world. At the core of this challenge is "nurturing a media culture that responds to diversity not with denigration, but with dialogue." In this regard media has an important role to play. The UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, adopted in 2001,

acknowledges cultural diversity as a common heritage of humanity and recognizes its potential in promoting intercultural dialogue. Cultural references determine our identity as well as the manner in which we perceive others and ourselves, shaping the way we interact with the world. "The media greatly influences not only what we think, but also how we act." It stresses, however, that culture cannot be invoked as a legitimate rationale to override the universal right to freedom of expression.

Media professionals should be aware of their power in using their freedom of expression to increase dialogue and mutual understanding by following a code of ethics, and never forgetting to hold themselves accountable to these standards. When covering conflict, journalists must strive to remain impartial and objective in order to avoid reinforcing stereotypes and misunderstandings.

Respecting cultural differences while preserving freedom of expression will always remain a source of tension in any democratic society. Yet, acerbic or harsh speech is every individual's fundamental right unless it is with the intention of inciting discrimination, hostility or violence. Without the guarantee of press freedom and the existence of free and independent press, the processes for dialogue and mutual understanding would never see the light of day.

21st Century Media: New Frontiers, New Barriers, New Voices (2011, 2012). The unfolding of the first major revolution of the 21st century in the Arab Spring movement beginning in late 2010, was greatly amplified with the aid of the Internet and social media tools that allowed information production and sharing to bypass censorship and filtering systems, and for information to circulate further and faster than ever before. A case in point is the rapid spread of a video of Mohamed Bouazizi, a self-immolating street vendor in Tunisia fuelled by social media.

New frontiers of media have also resulted in wider public access to information, the enrichment of news with local content and the rise of citizen reporting, which gives the users unprecedented possibility to interact and directly intervene in the production of information. It also provides a fresh and innovative way for the government to communicate with its citizens. "In this way, media freedom has amplified and multiplied each individual voice. As media freedom grows, the strength of the new voices grows in tandem, and their calls for social transformation and positive political change become an unstoppable force." <sup>16</sup>

Yet with the emergence of new frontiers, new barriers in regard to the diffusion of new media have also sprung up. The growth of the Internet has also notably increased surveillance power, creating new threats to professional news media and citizens and raising concerns over the difficulty of guaranteeing free and unhindered flow of information. Popular social networking and microblogging sites, while giving ordinary users a voice, can also be used by elements opposing freedom of expression to identify and locate or even arrest citizens. Privacy invasions can hinder freedom of expression, while invisible filtering and blocking of news and debate undermines access to information.

New media is also challenging the world of traditional media and at times questioning its relevance to the 21st century. However, "new media technology should instead be seen on a continuum with, rather than in any fundamental opposition to, earlier media"17. After all, "Internet technologies allow for journalism that is deepened, enriched and empowered by interactivity by means of hyper-links, peer-to-peer file exchange, enhanced content, increased depth and multi-media forms of storytelling". In this regard new media should not be viewed in isolation from old media, and press freedom should be ensured and guaranteed to both forms.

## TWENTY YEARS OF WORLD PRESS FREEDOM DAY



#### Safety of Journalists and Impunity (2003, 2007, 2013).

The issue of safety of journalists, media workers, and social media producers has been a recurring theme in World Press Freedom Day and rightly so, as at least 600 journalists have lost their lives in the past decade alone. In 2002, partly in response to the terror attack in the United States of America on 11 September 2001, the year's World Press Freedom Day focus was on the heavy toll paid to terrorism by media personnel. In 2007, the focus was on the safety of journalists in conflict zones, in response to the 69 journalists' death in the preceding year in Iraq. The Director-General of UNESCO of the time, Mr Koïchiro Matsuura noted that "never in recorded history has there been such a large-scale killing of journalists". The mass killings of journalists would be repeated on 23 November 2009 in what is now known as the Ampatuan Massacre, where 32 journalists and media workers were slain in a single day. And again, in 2012, we saw mass killings happening in Syria where 41 journalists, the vast majority of whom were locals, paid the ultimate price for bringing news and information to the world.

While constituting the most serious attack on press freedom, the killing of journalists is just the tip of an iceberg. Media professionals systematically face numerous other threats including intimidation, kidnappings, harassment, and physical assaults. Furthermore, in nine out of ten cases of killings of journalists the perpetrators of the crimes go unprosecuted, either because no proper investigations are conducted, or because a State simply decides to ignore these atrocities altogether. Impunity not only impedes the path of justice, but it also reinforces future such threats to press freedom. Unpunished violence incites further violence and intimidation. Attacks against media professionals should be regarded as abuses against the society at large as they violate the fundamental human right to freedom of expression.

Since 1997 UNESCO's Director-General has condemned the killings of journalists, in line with Resolution 29 adopted by UNESCO's General Conference at its 29th session. UNESCO Resolution 29 on "Condemnation of Violence against Journalists" calls on all Member States to remove any statute of limitations on crimes against persons when such crimes are "perpetrated to prevent the exercise of freedom of information and expression". The Medellin Declaration, issued at the 2007 World Press Freedom Day celebrations in the Colombian city of that name, explicitly calls on Member States to investigate all acts of violence of which media professionals are victim and to prosecute those who commit crimes against journalists.

Today, Member States are encouraged to inform the UNESCO Director-General, on a voluntary basis, of the actions taken to prevent the impunity of the perpetrators and to notify the Director-General of the status of the judicial inquires conducted on each of the killings condemned by UNESCO. The information is then reflected in the biannual Director-General's Report on the Safety of Journalists and the Danger of Impunity. The lessons since 1997 are that no single organization can be able to solve the issues of safety and impunity on its own. Therefore in 2011 UNESCO spearheaded a new ambitious initiative, the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity which was endorsed by the UN Chief Executives Board in April 2012. The plan aims to mobilize the collective strength and expertise of Member States, various UN Bodies, inter-governmental and nongovernmental organizations, professional organizations, media houses, and academia to tackle these pressing issues of our times

#### Establishment of UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize

Guillermo Cano Isaza was born in Bogota (Colombia) on 12 August 1925. On 17 December 1986, he was assassinated at the entrance to the office of *El Espectador*, where he had served as editor since the age of 27. The newspaper's building was destroyed in a bomb attack three years later.

The murder of Guillermo Cano is a highly significant example of the crimes against journalists which have gone unpunished. Cano was a victim of drug trafficking mafias, whom he fearlessly denounced and whose harmful effects on Colombian society he cautioned against. On 17 December 1986 two hired killers waited for him by the newspaper's exit and fired the eight shots that killed him.

The magistrates in charge of the investigation became the object of threats and bribes, with some being murdered for rejecting such bribes. The life of Guillermo Cano, his courage, his embodiment of independent journalism and the tenacity with which he fought for his country are an example of the best contribution that a free journalist can make for the world.

Guillermo Cano's career-long commitment to diversity of opinion and the circumstances of his death symbolise the price paid by too many journalists worldwide for exercising their profession. The fact that crimes against journalists, for the most part, go unpunished makes them even more alarming.

The UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize was established in 1997 on the initiative of UNESCO's Executive Board and is formally conferred by the Director-General of the Organization on the occasion of World Press Freedom Day, on 3 May. The selection of the Laureate is deliberated by an independent international panel of 12 Jury, consisting of two distinguished news professionals from each of the six regions as defined by UNESCO.



#### UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize

Named in honour of Guillermo Cano Isaza, an assassinated Colombian journalist, the Prize is intended to honour a person, organization or institution that has made an outstanding contribution to the defence and/or promotion of press freedom anywhere in the world, especially when this has been achieved in the face of danger.

It is intended to reward journalists who have shown dedication in the name of freedom of expression and information, and to afford them the international recognition they deserve.

#### UNESCO/GUILLERMO CANO WORLD PRESS FREEDOM PRIZE 1997-2012

From left to right and from top to bottom:

- 1997 Gao Yu, China
- 1998 Christina Anyanwu, Nigeria
- 1999 Jesus Blancornelas, Mexico
- 2000 Nizar Nayyouf, Syria
- 2001 U Win Tin, Myanmar
- 2002 Geoffrey Nyarota, Zimbabwe
- 2003 Amira Hass, Israel
- 2004 Raúl Rivero, Cuba
- 2005 Cheng Yizhong, China
- 2006 May Chidiac, Lebanon
- 2007 Anna Politkovskaya,
- 2008 Lydia Cacho Ribeiro, Mexico
- 2009 Lasantha Wickrematunge, Sri Lanka
- 2010 Mónica González Mujica, Chile
- 2011 Ahmad Zeidabadi, Iran
- 2012 Eynulla Fatullayev, Azerbaijan

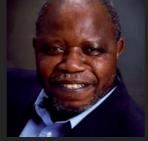
































#### Ana María Busquets de Cano

#### President of the Fundación Guillermo Cano Isaza



Ana María Busquets de Cano is the President of the Fundación Guillermo Cano Isaza. The foundation is named after her late husband Guillermo Cano Isaza, a Colombian journalist who was murdered in front of his place of work, the daily El Espectador, by hitmen linked to Colombia's drug cartels. In

1997 UNESCO created an annual prize that bears his name—the UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize—which serves to honour a person or institution that has done outstanding work in defending the freedom of the press.

n 1996, 10 years after the assassination of Guillermo Cano Isaza, director of the daily newspaper El Espectador of Colombia, the Foundation which bears its name wanted to pay him an international tribute that would perpetuate his work as a journalist, exemplary citizen and downright honest man.

His Curriculum Vitae, recording his persistence in defending human rights and freedom of the press and his struggle against the harmful effects of drugs and those who deal in them, was submitted for consideration to UNESCO just when it was looking for a name for the international award of freedom of the press that had just been instituted.

For my family, the Foundation Guillermo Cano Isaza and Colombia itself, it was a great honour and we were greatly moved by the choice of Guillermo Cano Isaza from among all the famous figures of history, philosophy and communication worldwide. His courage, integrity and dedication, demonstrated through so many years of work, persuaded UNESCO to choose his name, and for us this signified the recognition that he deserved.

Ever since that time, every year, we have met extraordinary people who have not hesitated to sacrifice their well-being, health, personal economic situation and even their lives to denounce, inform, report and warn about whatever form of oppression or ill afflicted citizens in their countries. They are all people who sounded the alarm, just as Guillermo Cano Isaza did, about injustice or abuses of governmental power which flourished because of negligence or self-protective networks among those who hold authority or power.

We have met some of the award winners and been able to express our affection and gratitude for the value and significance of their work, and ALL THE AWARD WINNERS DESERVE A SPECIAL PLACE IN THE HISTORY OF WORLD COMMUNICATIONS AND EACH IS AN EXAMPLE TO OTHERS WHO DEDICATE THEMSELVES TO THIS DIFFICULT TASK IN ORDER TO CARRY ON, INDOMITABLY, REPORTING TO PEOPLE WHAT THEY NEED TO KNOW SO THEY CAN LIVE THE WAY THEY DESERVE: IN A FAIR SOCIETY WITH EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES.

for their contribution to society and journalism. Unfortunately, several of the winners were unable to receive their well-deserved awards, either because they were not allowed out of prison or because they died accomplishing what they considered to be their duty. They will always be in our hearts.

All the award winners deserve a special place in the history of world communications and each is an example to others who dedicate themselves to this difficult task in order to carry on, indomitably, reporting to people what they need to know so they can live the way they deserve: in a fair society with equal opportunities. The UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize has not only become the best stimulus for professional journalists around the world who work with responsibility and who genuinely serve their communities. It is also a beacon of hope to whole populations, and a warning to the enemies of democracy who seek to silence or censor the practice of journalism.

Through these years we have been to many countries with different cultures, creeds and races and everywhere we have always felt the same appreciation for the UNESCO Award. For us it is always especially significant for the recognition of the person who gave it its name.

#### Dr May Chidiac

#### Lebanon, 2006 Laureate



May Chidiac is Founder and President of the May Chidiac Foundation-Media Institute (MCF-MI) and the 2006 UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize Laureate. She was a television journalist at the Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation (LBC) and one of the station's main television anchors until

an assassination attempt against her. She is also the recipient of the Courage in Journalism Awards presented by the International Women's Media Foundation in 2006 and the Legion of Honour at the Elysée Palace in 2007, and was named one of the International Press Institute's World Press Freedom Heroes in 2010.

hen I chose journalism as a career 30 years ago it was a conscious choice to follow my heart, not my head. Even at the young age of 17, I knew what risks awaited me as a journalist in war-torn Lebanon. Lebanon was at that time renowned for being the only Arab country in which freedom of speech and expression was a constitutional right granted to all of its citizens. But to be a journalist with a mission to defend Lebanon's

freedom and independence was intolerable to the forces involved in that bitter conflict. Still my passion for Lebanon was too strong to be suppressed. Nothing would have made me choose another career. Nothing would have made me less antagonistic towards the occupiers of my country. Nothing would have made me less supportive of those who were dying in the front lines to protect my right, and that of every single Lebanese, to speak, act and live in freedom.

This is how I started my career as a radio news broadcaster at the "Voice of Lebanon" radio station. I later moved to work as a reporter, news anchor and host of a political talk show at the "Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation International—LBCI" where I became, apparently, too loud to be tolerated and too stubborn in the face of threats. Hence the attempt to silence me by an explosive placed under the seat of my car on the 25th of September 2005. I sustained severe injuries, losing an arm and a leg, but I survived the attack, my life was saved.

Looking back at those days and comparing them to the general situation of journalists in Lebanon today it is obvious that a lot has changed, especially after the withdrawal of the Syrian troops and regaining independence. It is a well-established fact that democracy and its practice directly implies a larger if not the largest scope of freedom of all kinds. And

## TODAY THE LEBANESE MEDIA IS ABLE TO PRACTISE ITS ROLE AS THE FOURTH ESTATE EFFECTIVELY AND FREELY. NO THREATS, NO TABOOS, NO PRESSURE AND MOST IMPORTANTLY NO PRE-CENSORSHIP.

that is exactly what changed in Lebanon after we regained our freedom.

Today the Lebanese media is able to practise its role as the fourth estate effectively and freely. No threats, no taboos, no pressure and most importantly no precensorship. The television station that was shut and had its license withdrawn during the Syrian mandate over Lebanon due to its outspoken opposition of that regime regained its license after the Syrian withdrawal, and started broadcasting again. Many of the topics that were considered taboo—and if raised would have led to prison, torture or death—have now become just like any other piece of information which can be communicated, discussed and criticized with no barriers except those of common society norms. An example of such previously taboo topics was any attempt to discuss Syrian internal issues which could reflect on Lebanon. Actually, defying this particular taboo by discussing it on my talk show on the morning of the 25th of September 2005 was exactly the reason why I was attacked in the afternoon of that day. Today, however, the internal Syrian conflict is an everyday matter, discussed on all sorts of Lebanese media whether to criticize the Syrian regime or to support it.

In the end no price is too high to pay for one's convictions, beliefs and freedom. This is why, after

ten months of numerous operations, treatments and rehabilitation programs, I returned to the TV screen in a prime time political talk show called "Bi Kol Joraa", which translates as "With Audacity". I followed this move with a book entitled: "Heaven can wait"

During my career I have been the proud receiver of several awards and prizes, including Le Prix de la Francophonie pour la Liberté d'expression, the UNESCO Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Award in 2006, and in May 2007, I was honoured to be given the medal of Chevalier de l'Ordre de la Légion d'Honneur by the President of the French Republic, Jacques Chirac, at the Elysée Palace. Meanwhile I continue my job as a professor of mass communication art at Notre Dame University. In November 2009, I established the May Chidiac Foundation Media Institute (MCF-MI), which supports the development of knowledge and media production industries through which we can provide our young generation with the necessary foundations to foster freedom of expression, human rights, democracy, and good governance. Relying on a large community of supporters, and great partnerships with international institutions, including UNESCO, MCF-MI is working to reinforce the values of freedom of expression and world press freedom.

#### Mónica González Mujica

Chile, 2010 Laureate



Monica González Mujica is a Chilean journalist and the 2010 UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize Laureate. She fights for human rights, freedom of expression and an end to economic fraud. As a journalist Mónica has always shown bravery. For years she investigated and denounced

human rights violations and General Pinochet's financial misdeeds. Now that Chile has returned to democracy, Mónica continues her work as a journalist and at the same time runs the Centre of Journalism and Investigation in Santiago.

Soledad Martinez is 22 years old. She lives in a slum on the outskirts of Santiago, Chile, where the poor dream of one day opening the window and not seeing only rubbish dumps and cement. They also dream of being able to go outside without fearing drug gangs whose disputes with bullets and knives leave occasional victims among neighbours. After that happens, routine returns and nobody goes to jail. That's how it works. Nobody betrays narcos. It can cost you dearly.

Soledad knows. Yet she does not feel suffocated by being unable to denounce those who sell drugs in her neighborhood. She never felt she didn't have full freedom of expression. By hearsay she knows that the dictatorship ended just before she was born. That General Augusto Pinochet remained in power 17 years without anyone asking him to do so. That sometimes soldiers with their faces painted entered homes and destroyed everything. That many protested in the streets and that it always ended with prisoners and even deaths. In her town there are several who never came back

She, however, has only known a system in which a president is elected by the majority, and where nobody is officially impeded from expressing discontent. But what is the use of all this freedom if Soledad's life has been devastated by the absence of a right that should be hers?

She has studied very hard and her mother, who cleans offices and is a separated head of household, has managed to send her to university. A passport to a better life. Soledad would be the first in her family to obtain a university degree. She chose nursing. She got a state-backed loan to pay for the tuition. As she crossed the entrance of the Universidad del Mar she knew that reaching the goal depended only on her. Her

chosen university had over 20,000 students and was one of the biggest in the country.

Three and a half years have passed. Now the Universidad del Mar is on the verge of closure because of the excessive profits that its owners have kept aside at the expense of the quality of the teaching. Soledad, in the fourth year of her university studies, must now face the fact that her course will not lead to a career working in hospitals. Many of her teachers do not even hold a university degree and they provide a poor quality of education. Her skills are lacking and she won't be properly trained to treat patients.

Soledad can write and even shout out that the owners of the Universidad del Mar are fraudsters. Many students have done so. Soledad's problem, and that of hundreds of thousands of students from the most vulnerable sectors, is that no state institution warned them that they were entering a very expensive university whose poor academic quality did not match its high fees. On the contrary, the label of being "certified" by the responsible state authorities was displayed by this university, and others with similar characteristics, as a guarantee of their academic excellence.

And now Soledad owes several millions thanks to the state-backed bank loan that she got at an interest rate of six percent, and knows that even if she obtains the degree it will be useless. She has no money to pay off her debt and to change universities, and she has almost no classes to attend. But she must continue to pay back the loan. Like hundreds of thousands of other young Chileans, Soledad has become a prisoner of the higher education market, and all this has happened in a democracy.

Her dreams and those of her mother have collapsed. Soledad's hope for a better life has died. Yet no-one speaks the truth—that the State failed her, because she had no access to information about these realities.

Parliamentarians are not blaming themselves for having allowed the Universidad del Mar and similar institutions to sell entrance accreditations during 22 years of democracy, as was revealed in a journalistic investigation by CIPER (the Journalistic Research and Information Centre) which led to a lawsuit. Neither they do they criticize themselves for failing to prevent and punish the owners of the private universities who violate the Constitution by enriching themselves to an extreme degree while abandoning even minimum standards of education.

The owners of media do not question themselves, either, for having informed people—in paid advertisements —that private universities were a great opportunity and a real instrument for advancement and social change. "Seven out of ten college students are first generation" is the slogan that Chileans have heard for years. To Soledad, as to hundreds of thousands of young Chileans, freedom of expression means nothing. It is a dead letter. As dead as the article of the Constitution that prohibits profit in higher education. What is starting to make sense to them is freedom of information. The lack of it has not left a death toll. But it has created a mountain of buried dreams and shattered lives among the most vulnerable.

In Chile, the key battle for the right to access timely and accurate information is just beginning. We are being watched by different parts of Latin America because they have the same problem as us.

#### Peter Preston

United Kingdom, Jury Member of the UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize from 1999-2001



#### **Peter Preston** is

a British journalist and author. He joined *The Guardian* in 1963 and was its editor for twenty years, from 1975 to 1995. He is a prolific columnist addressing a wide range of political and social issues. Peter Preston was also a member of the Scott Trust from 1979 to 2003, Chairman of the International Press Institute from 1995 to 1997,

and Chairman of the Association of British Press Editors. He served as the Jury Member of the UNESCO/ Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize from 1999-2001.

resounded around the world because it captured the spirit of a time, 22 years ago, when freedom seemed on the march. The Cold War was over; the Wall had tumbled; the old puppet masters of East and West had left the stage; and Nelson Mandela was negotiating the end of apartheid. Who could fail to be hopeful amid so much unimaginable upheaval? Journalists everywhere felt inspired. Governments, too, chose liberalisation not repression. It was a moment of tumultuous change.

And now? The moment has not entirely passed. World Press Freedom Day, embodying the ideals of Windhoek, has become a pivotal point to pause and peer forward every year—to see, inevitably, an imperfect future, but one still worth celebrating. Of course there are remnants of the old Soviet empire where freedom moves slowly, if at all. Of course you can journey round Africa, South America, Asia, and find countries that throttle freedom of expression. Of course the press itself, weakened by economic crisis and under pressure from exponential digital growth, is more thoughtful and apprehensive. But never underestimate the fundamental strength of humanity's love of freedom—or technology's ability to sustain that love.

In the West it is often said (almost as received wisdom) that the Internet is killing the printing press, that the worldwide web will obliterate newspapers. Perhaps, although when the World Association of Newspapers looks for hard evidence in 76 different countries it finds newspaper circulation overall rising by 1.1 percent in 2011; and, crucially, it also finds print sales rising most strongly in Asia —and the Middle East. Read all about the Arab Spring! Read with fervent attention when society is changing. Some 2.5 billion people on Planet Earth do it month in and month out. Which means that the Internet may be journalism's new, true friend after all.

The whole force of the Windhoek Declaration was to prise the levers controlling freedom of expression from

SO WORLD PRESS FREEDOM DAY, FOR ME AT LEAST, HAS BECOME A DAY WHERE READERS AS WELL AS WRITERS HAVE THEIR OWN FREEDOM TO FIGHT FOR. MONOPOLIES CAN BE CEASELESSLY INTERROGATED, OVER-MIGHTY GOVERNMENTS CONSTANTLY QUESTIONED.

governmental clutches. It aimed to put editors, on behalf of their readers, back in charge of the information flows of democracy. It demanded pluralism in ownership patterns so that no monolithic companies could take over the printed work and bend it to their own narrow purpose. And, of course, the digital revolution provides vital means to those ends. There may be vast new technological companies—service providers, social media operations, researchers and manufacturers—out there: but cyberspace, gobbling ideas at a bewildering pace, has a means of cutting them down to size amid a constant buzz of competition. The pluralism is endemic. More, because the opportunity to tweet,

to blog, to lobby and argue is there to be used by anyone with broadband access, the traditional reader, in newspaper terms, is becoming a publisher in his or her own right.

So World Press Freedom Day, for me at least, has become a day where readers as well as writers have their own freedom to fight for. Monopolies can be ceaselessly interrogated, over-mighty governments constantly questioned. It is a different, more complex and challenging freedom that we have to help succour now—and maybe we shall soon need a Windhoek 2 to defend it

#### Kunda Dixit

Nepal, Jury Member of the UNESCO/ Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize from 2000-2005



Kunda Dixit is one of the Nepal's leading journalists and editors as well as an international authority on the press in Asia. He is founder editor and publisher of the Nepali Times and co-publisher of Himal magazine. Kunda Dixit was Asia-Pacific Director of the Inter-Press Service from 1990 to 1996 and Director of the

Panos Institute South Asia from 1997 to 2000. He served as a Jury Member of the UNESCO/ Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize from 2000-2005.

Like many other things in life, you don't know how important press freedom is until someone takes it away from you. Freedom of expression is such a wholesome concept no-one could possibly be against it. Yet press freedom is threatened around the world, and not just in totalitarian states.

There are many myths about press freedom, and another one is that it protects the rights of journalists. Not so. Freedom of expression is actually the right of all citizens, journalists are just the defenders of the public's right to know.

For many of us doing day-to-day journalism in fragile states and transitional democracies press freedom is not just a ideal. In Nepal, our publication has been threatened by both the extreme left and the extreme right for upholding the values of press freedom, democracy and non-violence. In December 2008, our office was vandalised by goons belonging to the ruling party who physically assaulted staff members and me. The attack on our publication was trivial compared to what journalists in Nepal and other parts of the world have to face in their pursuit of independent journalism. As a jury member of the Guillermo Cano-UNESCO Press Freedom Award for five years in the 2000s, I was struck by the courage and fortitude shown by many nominees from all over the world in their pursuit of the truth. Some paid for it with their lives, others were gravely wounded, and many were tortured and imprisoned.

The other myth about press freedom is that it is threatened only in repressive states. In fact in democracies, too, civil society and media have to be vigilant about the media being squeezed by politicians, state institutions and the market. In these countries the media is part of the political-industrial complex where the press is often used to propel politicians to power. Demagogues get elected because their jingoism and populism is magnified by a media beholden to them, and when they assume office they proceed to dismantle the very institutions that got

THREATS TO MEDIA FREEDOM DON'T JUST COME FROM TYRANTS AND DICTATORS, THEY COME FROM OWNERS WHO SEE IT AS JUST ANOTHER BUSINESS, FROM UNDER-MOTIVATED JOURNALISTS, AND PUBLISHERS WHO PREFER TRIVIA BECAUSE IT IS CHEAPER AND SAFER THAN DOING SERIOUS IN-DEPTH JOURNALISM.

them elected so as to perpetuate their rule. Press freedom and democracy are two sides of the same coin. If one is weak, the other side is also weakened. An independent, strong media supports democracy and vice versa.

Over-commercialisation of the media industry has also led to what John Pilger calls 'censorship by exclusion' where negative, unpalatable news are dropped because of advertising pressure. Thus the public service role of media is severely undermined.

In Nepal, when an autocratic regime tried to censor our newspaper we went to press with white spaces where the paragraphs were expunged. Radio stations that were ordered not to broadcast news, only music, started defiantly singing the news from their studios.

Press freedom doesn't come with any warranty; it has to be defended by its maximum application even in countries with long traditions of free press. Threats to media freedom don't just come from tyrants and dictators, they come from owners who see it as just another business, from under-motivated journalists, and publishers who prefer trivia because it is cheaper and safer than doing serious in-depth journalism.

#### Remzi Lani

Albania, Jury Member for the UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize from 2005-2007



Remzi Lani is the Executive
Director of the Albanian Media
Institute, an independent
organisation set up in 1995
to assist the Albanian media
to strengthen professional
standards. He is also a key
figure in the Balkan media
sector, having served as the
first president of the South
East European Network of

Media Centres and Media Institutes, as well as a journalist, editor and human rights activist. He served as a Jury Member for the UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize from 2005-2007.

t was certainly a great honour and a special experience to be part of the jury of the Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize for three years from 2005 to 2007. I would also say that I was particularly lucky to be in Medellin, in the city where El Espectador started to publish. For a journalist from a small country like Albania, which until a bit more than 20 years ago had in place the most repressive and isolated regime in Europe and where

freedom of the press was a heresy, the World Press Freedom Day is a Freedom Day.

The UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize is certainly the most well-known and prestigious award a journalist can receive today. For the Jury Members, it is a very difficult choice, almost an impossible one. Unfortunately and fortunately. Unfortunately because authoritarian regimes that oppress freedom of expression are still numerous. Fortunately, because journalists that courageously fight this oppression are even more numerous.

Out of the three colleagues that we honoured I was able to meet only one. Cheng Yizhong was not allowed to participate in the ceremony of May 3, 2005. May Chidiac was able to come to Colombo in 2006, but in a wheelchair, after surviving the attempt at her life in Beirut. Anna Politkovskaya was honoured posthumously in 2007 for her incomparable courage.

The Press Freedom Day has quickly become part of the calendar and this is a great achievement. While we honour a name with the Great Prize, we reflect on the challenges of freedom of expression in the present days and in the days to come, in authoritarian I BELONG TO THAT PART OF THE WORLD WHERE REPRESSION BELONGS TO THE PAST, BUT PRESSURE IS PRESENT TODAY; WHERE MEDIA IS FREE, BUT NOT INDEPENDENT; WHERE MEDIA CLIENTELISM IS THE RULE RATHER THAN THE EXCEPTION.

regimes and in democratic systems, in traditional media and in new media.

I belong to that part of the world where repression belongs to the past, but pressure is present today; where media is free, but not independent; where media clientelism is the rule rather than the exception.

While we raise our voice against the enemies of freedom of expression that jail and murder journalists, I believe we also must address more seriously the ones that erode freedom of expression day by day, with advertising, with money. While we raise our voice against censorship, we must not forget about self-censorship and soft censorship, which are also obstacles on our road to freedom.





# Consolidation Period: Building a Civil Society for Press Freedom

WORKING TOGETHER TO BUILD THE FOUNDATION FOR A MUTUAL PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN UNESCO AND NON-GOVERMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS REPRESENTING CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE FIELD OF FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND PRESS FREEDOM

# Fighting to those who move to silence, repress and censor

## Agnès Callamard

**Executive Director of ARTICLE 19** 



Agnès Callamard is the Executive Director of ARTICLE 19, an international human rights organisation promoting and defending freedom of expression and access to information globally. She founded and led HAP International (the Humanitarian Accountability Partnership) where she

oversaw field trials in Afghanistan, Cambodia and Sierra Leone and created the first international self-regulatory body for humanitarian agencies committed to strengthening accountability to disaster-affected populations.

A RTICLE 19 has witnessed the space for freedom of expression both open and close over the past two decades.

Over 1000 journalists have been killed and many more bloggers, protesters and human rights defenders been threatened, attacked, disappeared and murdered for shining a light in dark places. In 1993 56 journalists were killed, and more than 120 were killed in 2012. ARTICLE 19 is challenging impunity and working on the ground to protect journalists and human rights

defenders in many of the most dangerous places including Mexico, Somalia, Russia and the Gambia.

Media regulation has drastically changed, with an end to state media in many countries, establishment of press self-regulation, a liberalisation of the media market, and the boom in digital and online broadcasting. But defamation remains a key threat to press freedom around the world, as only 20 countries had decriminalised defamation by 2012. ARTICLE 19 has set standards for a pluralistic media and supported legal reform around the world, analysing hundreds of draft bills and regulations. It has responded to the revolutions in much of the Middle East and North Africa by assisting in the development of new democratic constitutions, laws and regulations.

The politics of fear following 9/11 has led to the growth in national security and anti-terrorism legislation, implemented the world over by established democracies and dictatorships, and used too often to censor and repress. ARTICLE 19 has drawn a line in our Johannesburg Principles as to what states can legitimately do to protect national security and tackle terrorism, and our line is now widely used.

Various groups have pushed for censorship of ideas and opinions that they find offensive or insulting. Concepts such as "defamation of religion", "traditional

values" or "right not to be offended" have emerged and challenged the universal value of freedom of expression. Against this trend, ARTICLE 19 has led a global campaign against defamation of religions and blasphemy laws. We have developed revived standards on free speech and equality, and advocated against gender-based censorship and for the equal right of LGBT<sup>19</sup> people to free speech.

The right to information has expanded exponentially: there were 17 countries with a right to information law in 1992, compared to 99 in 2012. This means that over five billion people can challenge corruption and abuse of power. ARTICLE 19 has campaigned on the ground for these laws and has been at the forefront of showing how information is vital for development, sexual and reproductive health, and good governance.

The Internet has brought enormous opportunity, creating new spaces where diverse voices can

be heard and ideas communicated. States have responded with laws and conventions that block and filter content, and encourage private companies to censor first. ARTICLE 19 has expanded its 20 years of legal expertise to include the online world, developing new standards and legal references tools to respond to the exponential transformation of global communication.

The birth of World Press Freedom Day created a vital moment to remind governments to respect commitments to press freedom. Twenty years on, and it is more vital than ever before. The past decade has seen a range of new challenges that we could not have imagined two decades ago.

In this new climate World Press Freedom Day must be a rallying point; we must continue to take our fight to those who move to silence, repress and censor.

WE HAVE DEVELOPED REVIVED STANDARDS ON FREE SPEECH AND EQUALITY, AND ADVOCATED AGAINST GENDER-BASED CENSORSHIP AND FOR THE EQUAL RIGHT OF LGBT19 PEOPLE TO FREE SPEECH.

# Press Freedom's Growing Fight

## Joel Simon

Executive Director of the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ)



Joel Simon is the Executive Director of the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) since 2006. The CPJ is an independent, nonprofit organization that promotes press freedom worldwide. Joel Simon has written widely on press freedom issues for publications including Slate, Columbia Journalism Review,

The New York Review of Books, World Policy Journal, Asahi Shimbun, and The Times of India. His analysis of press freedom issues is featured regularly in major media.

hen UNESCO launched the first World Press Freedom Day in 1993, Turkey was on its way to becoming the world's leading jailer of journalists; Somalia, with 5 journalists killed, was among the top three most dangerous countries in the world for the press, and a young, idealistic Ethiopian journalist named Eskinder Nega was arrested for anti-state activities. In nearly 90% of cases of journalists murdered in 1993 the killers of journalists were never prosecuted.

Skip ahead two decades and Turkey has again topped the list of countries where journalists are imprisoned for their work—nearly 50 according to CPJ research; Somalia's death toll of 12 for 2012 made it second behind Syria in journalist killings and Eskinder Nega is in prison in Ethiopia for the ninth time. He now faces an 18-year sentence. In more than 90% of cases, killers of journalists have not been prosecuted.

Faced with such stasis and decline, it is easy to overlook that fact that a great many developments have changed the press freedom landscape since 1993—even some victories. In the case of Turkey, campaigning by local and international advocates led to the eventual release of all 78 journalists in prison in the mid-nineties. It would be another 15 years before journalists would be arrested in high numbers there again.

Likewise, Cuba's Black Spring, unleashed in 2003 with the jailing of 29 journalists, including UNESCO Cano laureate Raul Rivero, came to an end after eight years. Sustained international pressure and unrelenting local activism led Cuban authorities to release the last of its detained journalists in April 2011, though in most cases under the harsh condition of exile. In 2012, CPJ reported no Burmese journalists in prison for the first time in 16 years.

Indonesia's esteemed *Tempo* magazine reopened in 1998 after a four-year closure under former President Suharto, marking a new era of openness for the media. Nigeria's press emerged in the late nineties from a period of publishing clandestinely under military rule to become one of the most robust in the region.

The press in these countries continues to face challenges and such advances don't offset the many horrors for journalists that took place over the last 20 years: the assassinations of 59 journalists in Algeria from 1993-1995; executions by rebel forces in Sierra Leone; record media casualties in Iraq in the years following the US-led invasion and the slaughter of 32 journalists in Maguindanao, the Philippines, in 2009, to name some of the bloodiest.

Nor do they do much to mitigate new threats to the media, as campaigns of violence and intimidation by militias, organized crime and others operating outside the rule of law rival state-led terror and censorship. Meanwhile, 20 years of new technology has chipped away at state control over information, but that technology is also used to stifle and sabotage the reporting process and spy on those who collect and disseminate information

But these changes do exhibit the combined power of local and international pressure. In 20 years hundreds of journalists have been released from custody, and although impunity remains consistently the norm perpetrators have nonetheless been convicted in more than six dozen murders of journalists. News is produced and spread in greater volume than ever before. Much of this would not have happened without the clamour of protest.

Since 1993 the freedom of expression community has grown and galvanized. We must continue to grow our efforts, if nothing else so that Eskinder Nega does not pass another World Press Freedom Day behind bars.

NEWS IS PRODUCED AND SPREAD IN GREATER VOLUME THAN EVER BEFORE. MUCH OF THIS WOULD NOT HAVE HAPPENED WITHOUT THE CLAMOUR OF PROTEST.

# A long and fruitful journey in support of freedom of expression

Julio E. Muñoz

Executive Director of the Inter American Press Association (IAPA)



Julio E. Muñoz is the
Executive Director of the Inter
American Press Association,
IAPA (English acronym for
Sociedad Interamericana
de Prensa, Inc.), which is a
nonprofit organization devoted
to defending freedom of
speech and freedom of the
press in the Americas. It was
formally founded in 1946. The

IAPA currently has approximately 1,400 member publications with a combined circulation of over 43,000,000 plus a comparable online readership.

since the 1993 proclamation of World Press Freedom Day, the IAPA has undertaken a long but fruitful journey in support of freedom of the press and information in the Western Hemisphere.

In 1994 the IAPA's Declaration of Chapultepec, based on the concept that "There should be no law or act of government that may limit freedom of speech or of the press, whatever the medium", established the importance of freedom of expression and related norms for Latin American democracies

However the spirit of the Declaration of Chapultepec has gone further over the years. With the help of other central IAPA initiatives, such as the Project against Impunity for crimes against journalists launched in 1995, and the constant monitoring of the state of press freedom in the continent, the Declaration has fostered the enactment of laws supporting access to public information in 19 countries. Until 1999, only the United States and Canada had a similar kind of legislation in the Americas.

Thanks in part to IAPA's efforts, five Latin American countries reformed their penal code to decriminalize defamation and turn it into a matter of civil law, and 11 nations eliminated insult laws that protected elected officials from public criticism.

IAPA's work, which has also been joined by national and international counterpart organizations and IAPA partners, has resulted in other significant legislative changes, such as the 2002 Access to Information Act in Mexico. That law came into being following the first mega IAPA conference in the country that led to the formation of a local group that drove the initiative.

The events in Mexico were followed by the enactment of new legislation in Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala,

Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru and the Dominican Republic. In Brazil, the Press Law that had been in force since the military dictatorship was repealed in 2009.

The IAPA has been an active partner in the Inter American Human Rights System, and since 1997 the organization has filed 29 emblematic cases of murders of journalists with the Inter American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR).

The seeds of the Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression of the Organization of American States (OAS) were planted in 1997, when more than a dozen international organizations converged in Guatemala during the international conference "Unpunished Crimes against Journalists" sponsored by the IAPA. The outcomes of the joint commitment made by conference participants extended beyond the borders of the Americas to reach UNESCO, which was already engaged in the battle against impunity, and in November 1997 it passed Resolution 29 urging its member States to adopt

the principle of non-criminalization of journalistic offences, to promote legal reforms and fulfil their responsibility to investigate relevant cases.

The contributions of the IAPA to the efforts of UNESCO can be found in the 1994 Santiago Declaration, the 2003 and 2005 World Summit on the Information Society, and the 2007 Medellin Declaration. In this new stage, the IAPA is pleased to support UNESCO in launching the United Nations Action Plan to improve the safety of journalists and combat impunity, driving laws and mechanisms favourable to freedom of expression and information and the application of international principles and rules, including some referred to in the 1997 Resolution 29.

Finally, in the framework of the 20th anniversary of World Press Freedom Day, the legacy of the IAPA in support of the inalienable rights of freedom of expression and of the press is embedded in the very heart of the struggle for these fundamental rights in the Western Hemisphere.

THERE SHOULD BE NO LAW OR ACT OF GOVERNMENT THAT MAY LIMIT FREEDOM OF SPEECH OR OF THE PRESS, WHATEVER THE MEDIUM.

# A constant struggle

#### Beth Costa

General Secretary of the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ)



Beth Costa is the General Secretary of the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ). The IFJ is the world's largest organization of journalists. First established in 1926, it was re-launched in 1946 and again, in its present form, in 1952. Today the Federation represents around 600,000 members in more than

100 countries. The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) believes that press freedom requires a constant struggle to guarantee the professional independence of professional media practitioners. The need to create such an environment is reflected in the IFJ mantra that 'there can be no press freedom when journalists live in fear, corruption and poverty'.

Press freedom still faces formidable challenges across the globe which the IFJ and its affiliated organisations grapple with on a daily basis at the national, regional and global levels. However, the inception of World Press Freedom Day has provided over the last 20 years an opportunity to bring into sharp focus the pressing issues in a given country and region.

During this period, the IFJ has mobilised its members to highlight some of the pressing issues of journalists' concerns. In this regard, we have dedicated World Press Freedom Day to campaign against repressive media laws in the Arab World and Middle East by a publication titled 'Breaking the Chains', which catalogues cases of journalist detained on charges related to their professional activities.

The annual event has also helped to organise campaigns to address crisis situations such as the massive arrests of journalists in Iran (2009) and Turkey (2011).

Over the last two decades the IFJ has recorded horrific figures of killings of journalists, most of them in targeted attacks against media professionals. The need to improve the safety of journalists has led the IFJ and its affiliates to spearhead a campaign aimed at pressing governments into providing journalists and media workers with adequate protection. This campaign resulted into the Resolution 1738 which was unanimously adopted by the United Nations Security Council in 2006.

However, journalists are still facing high levels of violence which have only been matched by the sheer

bravery by courageous journalists who put their life at risk to champion press freedom. Among them is Lasantha Wickrematunge of Sri Lanka, who was posthumously awarded the 2009 UNESCO/ Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize

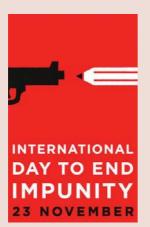
The overriding factor fuelling this deadly violence is the still prevailing culture of impunity of crimes targeting journalists. The IFJ has worked to end this impunity and has initiated the annual International Day against Impunity, which was adopted by IFEX in its General Meeting which took place in Lebanon in 2011.

THE OVERRIDING FACTOR FUELLING THIS DEADLY VIOLENCE IS THE STILL PREVAILING CULTURE OF IMPUNITY OF CRIMES TARGETING JOURNALISTS.

# Twenty years of IFEX and World Press Freedom Day

#### Kristina Stockwood

Campaigns and Advocacy Coordinator of IFEX



Kristina Stockwood is the Campaigns and Advocacy Coordinator of IFEX, the International Freedom of Expression Exchange network. As violations of the right to free expression continue, so do the efforts of the membership of IFEX, which has emerged as a strong global opposition to forces challenging this right. IFEX was created in 1992 in Montréal, Canada when a dozen leading free expression

organisations came together to create a coordinated mechanism to rapidly expose free expression violations around the world

FEX and World Press Freedom Day almost share a birthday. IFEX was born in 1992, one year after UNESCO adopted 3 May as World Press Freedom Day. UNESCO supported IFEX from its debut as a network of a dozen international free expression NGOs, and that support helped IFEX grow to be the

world's leading global network of free expression organizations, with members in over 60 countries.

Each year, people everywhere turn to IFEX to find out how the world is celebrating the day [http://ifex.org/wpfd/]. From local events focusing on specific attacks on press freedom, to online activities that attract participants from around the globe, IFEX members continue to commemorate 3 May each year in their own way.

Over the past 20 years we have launched campaigns on issues that lie at the very heart of press freedom, including the decriminalization of libel laws, protecting digital freedom, and ending the killing and jailing of journalists, writers, activists and others who are targeted for exercising their right to free expression.

For IFEX and its members, the issue of impunity for crimes against free expression is paramount. In 2011, IFEX established 23 November—the anniversary of the 2009 attack in the Philippines that left 32 journalists and media workers dead—as the International Day to End Impunity (http://www.daytoendimpunity.org/). This campaign targets the system that enables

crimes against those who speak out, and its goal is to end those violations. In 2012, when UN agencies met in Vienna to work on efforts to implement the UN Plan of Action to safeguard the lives of journalists.

Press freedom is essential to democracy. Since IFEX was founded, many dictatorships have fallen—including Indonesia and Nigeria in the 1990s, and Tunisia and Egypt during the recent Arab spring uprisings. IFEX members have been at the forefront of campaigns to fight for press freedom under those repressive governments. In the 1990s, we campaigned for justice when Nigerian writer and environmental activist Ken Saro-Wiwa was murdered by his own government.

In January 2011, the efforts of the IFEX Tunisia Monitoring Group, a coalition of 21 IFEX members that has campaigned for free expression in Tunisia for eight years, were rewarded when journalist Fahem Boukadous was released from jail following the ousting of President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. They could never have imagined that the new president would be human rights activist Moncef Marzouki, and that they would be marking World Press Freedom Day with him during the official UNESCO ceremony in Tunis on 3 May 2012. However Tunisia is also a reminder that we can never assume that progress toward press freedom cannot be reversed, often much more quickly than those rights are attained.

The world we live in now is different from the year when World Press Freedom Day was launched. While the tools we have to share information and act in defence of free expression have evolved dramatically, IFEX's commitment to defending and promoting free expression and press freedom remains constant.

FOR IFEX AND ITS MEMBERS, THE ISSUE OF IMPUNITY FOR CRIMES AGAINST FREE EXPRESSION IS PARAMOUNT.

# There can be no press freedom where journalists must work in fear of their lives

## Rodney Pinder

Former Director of the International News Safety Institute (INSI)



Rodney Pinder is former
Director of the INSI
(International News Safety
Institute). INSI is a unique
coalition of news organisations,
journalist support groups
and individuals exclusively
dedicated to the safety of
news media staff working
in dangerous environments.
INSI's purpose is to create

a global safety network of advice and assistance to journalists and other newsgatherers who may face danger covering the news on international assignment or in their own countries.

here can be no press freedom where journalists must work in fear of their lives"

UNESCO recognised this truth many years ago and now stands in the vanguard of the global journalist safety campaign. Often alone amongst world organisations, UNESCO has campaigned consistently, especially for an end to impunity, which permits nine

out of ten killers of journalists worldwide to escape justice.

The International News Safety Institute (INSI) was set up by a coalition of news organisations, journalist support groups and individual journalists out of concern at the rising death toll of news media workers around the world. Launched on World Press Freedom Day 2003, it is a unique organisation, solely concerned with news media safety matters.

INSI has worked closely with UNESCO on various safety and safety-related projects around the world, where journalists and other news media staff are most in danger. UNESCO has sponsored INSI safety projects, where scores of journalists received professional hostile environment training free of charge in their own countries and regions.

Working with INSI and renowned psychiatrist Dr Anthony Feinstein, UNESCO also financed a survey of the effects of trauma on journalists in extreme danger in their own countries. The survey, the first of its kind, found that Mexican journalists, killed and harassed by criminals and corrupt security authorities, experience levels of trauma comparable with international war correspondents.

UNESCO also supports INSI's work specifically for the safety of women journalists, who face their own unique threats.

Most importantly, UNESCO launched the UN Plan of Action , an inter-agency journalist safety initiative—with which INSI is glad to be associated. INSI is compiling safety guidance for journalists, governments and security forces under the programme.

Little can be achieved in the field of journalist safety without the full cooperation and coordination of all UN agencies and the support of member states, some of which are guilty of the worst excesses against the news media. UNESCO, especially under its new leadership, has not flinched from this hugely difficult task, working determinedly and diligently, often behind the scenes. Finally, and at long last, it may now be on the threshold of great achievement for journalist safety worldwide.

INSI is grateful for UNESCO's efforts in this politically fraught and often hostile environment. Every journalist in danger in the world and every citizen who wishes to live in a free and open society will be in UNESCO's debt if success is finally achieved.

LITTLE CAN BE ACHIEVED IN THE FIELD OF JOURNALIST SAFETY WITHOUT THE FULL COOPERATION AND COORDINATION OF ALL UN AGENCIES AND THE SUPPORT OF MEMBER STATES, SOME OF WHICH ARE GUILTY OF THE WORST EXCESSES AGAINST THE NEWS MEDIA.

# And We Say No!

#### Alison Bethel McKenzie

Executive Director of the International Press Institute (IPI)



Alison Bethel McKenzie is the Executive Director of the International Press Institute. She has over 25 years' experience in journalism as a reporter, bureau chief, senior editor and trainer. She oversees IPI's strategic vision and is responsible for the overall leadership of the staff in the implementation of IPI's goals,

the overall administration and development of the organization and its press freedom activities, and the financial management of IPI. IPI's Death Watch tracks journalists and media staff who were deliberately targeted because of their profession, either because of their investigative reporting or simply because they were journalists.

or 20 years, the International Press Institute has joined UNESCO in its celebration of World Press Freedom Day on May 3.

We celebrated World Press Freedom Day when the media in Eastern Europe was experimenting with its newly gained freedom after the fall of the Iron Curtain, and IPI supported the transition from statecontrolled to public and private media.

We celebrated World Press Freedom Day when journalists in South Africa were beaten and intimidated while reporting on the run-up to the country's first free elections, which marked the end of Apartheid. Not only were we there to monitor the elections, but we brought the world's leading editors, publishers and journalists together to witness the nation's change.

We celebrated World Press Freedom Day when journalists were killed while covering the Kosovo conflict, perceived as legitimate targets; and when IPI and its members discussed the role that media had played, and could play, in the Middle East peace process after the historic signing of the Israeli-Palestinian Oslo Accords in 1993

We called for press freedom, on May 3, when the shadows of hate speech threatened to prompt state regulation in South East Europe's recently reformed media landscapes, after the end of the Yugoslavia wars.

We called for press freedom, and the right of journalists to practise their profession without fear, after Anna Politkovskaya, Hrant Dink and Lasantha Wickrematunge were killed; and after Nedim Sener, Yoani Sánchez and Gao Yu were jailed.

We called for press freedom, and urged the world to do the same, when the regimes of Ben Ali, Mubarak, and Gaddafi were toppled, knowing that press freedom and the people's power to demand respect for their rights is key to ending any dictatorship.

When scores of governments around the world were strengthening their anti-terrorism provisions in reaction to the so-called 'War on Terror', and in doing so using the law to prosecute, intimidate and silence journalists, and to jail them for disseminating information and opinions, we reminded governments, on May 3, that press freedom is a universal, inalienable right.

Ever since its inception, World Press Freedom Day has been a day on which to remind the world that press freedom must never be compromised: not in the name of anti-terrorism measures and not in the name of political stability; not in the name of economic achievements and not even in the name of peace; and certainly not in the name of patriotism, nationalism or religious chauvinism.

Now is the time to remind the world that hundreds of journalists are attacked or killed every year in the line of duty by those who know that killing a journalist is the most ruthless, direct way to ensure that sensitive information will never be distributed, or by those who view journalists as high-profile easy targets, and want to send a brutal message.

Every year we say "No!" to the killing, kidnapping or imprisoning of journalists because of their work; we say "No!" to the use of criminal defamation laws to silence the press and to excessive state secrecy, privacy and libel laws solely aimed at protecting those in power. And we say "No!" to any attempt to turn the media into a powerful tool for the ruling elites rather than an empowering tool for those who do not have a voice.

On May 3, just like every day of the year, IPI is proud to join with our colleagues to raise awareness globally about press freedom. We are also proud to congratulate UNESCO on 20 years of training the spotlight on this most crucial of all freedoms, and we look forward to 20 more years of World Press Freedom Day.

# Doubts did not stop us

#### Gwen Lister

Co-founder of Namibian and founding member of MISA



Gwen Lister is a Namibian journalist, publisher, apartheid opponent and press freedom activist. She co-founder of *The Namibian* and was founding member of the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA). She has received several media awards, including the International Press
Freedom Award from the US-

based Committee to Protect Journalists. In 2000, International Press Institute (IPI) named her one of 50 World Press Freedom Heroes of the past 50 years.

t was April 1991. The Cold War was over. Namibian independence was just a year old. The Apartheid empire was crumbling and there was an aura of newfound optimism and a feeling at last that democratic change was going to come.

The Eighties in southern Africa had witnessed the rise of "guerrilla" typewriters, as they later became known. Journalists who had enough of white South African apartheid domination or the uncompromising control by authoritarian African governments over the means of information, had begun to assert their independence. Often this came at a price.

The "movement" against state control of media and the insistence on independent journalism, uncoordinated

as it may have been, was something close to my own heart and also to the hearts of other pioneering journalists, mainly in the field of print. "Alternative" or "independent" media had sprung up in various African countries as a response to the repressive environment. Several journalist seminars, organized mainly by the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation and the Africa Groups of Sweden and other Nordic initiatives, gave opportunity and impetus to like-minded free press advocates from several African countries to begin a discussion on the importance of these freedoms as well as an independent press.

Soon after, when UNESCO sponsored a seminar on the role of a free, independent and pluralistic press in Africa in Namibia's capital, Windhoek, aspirations for a free and independent African press would crystallize in the adoption of the Windhoek Declaration on May 3 1991.

From my perspective as founding editor of *The Namibian*, a newspaper that came into being in 1985 at the height of South African occupation of Namibia, and (as our choice of the name made clear) to advocate self-determination and independence for what was then known as "South West Africa", May 3 had great significance.

A broad cross section of Africa's media had taken a clear stand on their role. They needed a rallying point and the Windhoek Declaration provided it.

UNESCO's Alain Modoux, with the support of then Director-General, Federico Mayor, was the driving force behind the meeting, and it was largely due to his tireless efforts in lobbying African governments that much of the "who's who" of African independent media were able to attend the conference in Windhoek, with some exceptions. Efforts to secure the release of the jailed editor of Kenya's Nairobi Law Monthly, Gitobu Imanyara, did not succeed; but intervention on behalf of jailed Pius Njawe, the courageous editor of Le Messager in Cameroon, meant that he was able to attend.

While I was officially chair of the seminar, Njawe and the other two co-chairs played a more than equal part, as I recall running the gauntlet from the conference venue to our newspaper offices to heed the call of the daily deadline.

Not everyone was in agreement. In the corridors staunchly pro-government journalists, still trapped in the time warp of the New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) from which UNESCO was beginning to extricate itself, warned about the "dangers" of independence and Western influence over Africa's media. But the doomsayers failed to dampen the euphoria or slow the momentum for change.

I recall the camaraderie and tremendous spirit between the campaigning journalists as many of us met, some for the first time. That the roots of the formation of the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) were planted there was no surprise, as these like-minded activists opted for continuity and collaboration. I realized that not only was I the first woman newspaper editor in southern Africa, but also the only one in the founding ranks of MISA's governing council. I appreciated the solidarity once again as they elected me Chair of that media advocacy organization, a lesser known but still historic achievement in the field of media in southern Africa, which has mostly been dominated by men. In fact, if my memory serves me well, I myself and two journalists from Malawi and Ghana were the only three women out of nearly 100 participants.

As the seminar culminated in the adoption of the Windhoek Declaration, it also had deeper resonance on other continents and countries with similar Declarations adopted elsewhere.

We didn't realize it at the time, but the Windhoek Declaration has been a significant contribution from Africa to the rest of the world. The fact that the day of its adoption, May 3, was later recognized by the UN General Assembly in 1993 as World Press Freedom Day, is something we African journalists need to take pride in—the fact that we initiated a worldwide movement, and one for media freedom.

## For the existence of all others

## Christophe Deloire

Executive Director of Reporter Without Borders (RSF)



Christophe Deloire is a French journalist, writer and editor. He is the Executive Director of Reporter Without Borders (RSF) since July 2012. After starting his career in television at TF1, LCI and Arte, he worked for nearly ten years for the weekly magazine *Le Point*, in the Home News/Life section and then on the political

investigation pages. He is also the author of eight books on investigative journalism, several of which were published by Albin Michel and have become bestsellers.

wenty years. Nearly 7,300 days. Happy birthday! In 1992, Reporters Without Borders (RSF) invented World Press Freedom Day. The following year, UNESCO brought its weight, legitimacy and universality<sup>20</sup>. This day is now celebrated (almost) everywhere on the planet. Twenty years (or so) is the amount of time that the Burmese journalist Win Tin spent in prison. For an idea—one that we defend: "freedom of the press is fundamental because it is

the one that is needed to verify the existence of all the others."

Our community of ideas can boast of having defended, released, extracted, saved, made known and promoted men and women who are fighting around the world to bring the light of information despite propaganda and violence. From the Oslobodenje newspaper in Sarajevo to the Eritrean Radio Erena today in Paris, from the Russian journalist Sergei Kuznetsov, on hunger striker in 1989, to the Chinese intellectual Liu Xiaobo who was awarded a prize by RWB six years before he obtained the Nobel Peace Prize in 2010, our organization has always demonstrated courage and lucidity in our actions.

No one can forget the physical danger that continues in many countries, where state oppression is replaced by, or added to by, that of mafias, cartels, armed groups and tribal or religious militias. The human cost of information remains high. But who could have foreseen, at the creation of this event, the new challenges to the exercise of journalism in an era of global communication disrupted by the Internet? The jails are not emptied, the old propaganda still exists, but the technological control of data and communications, the editorial supervision through

bosses, shareholders or even advertising, the stifling of freedom by legal frameworks behind a mask of legitimacy, all this forces us to rethink the defense of this freedom. Not to mention the subtle establishment of self-censorship regimes or the pressure for entertainment.

Mobilization is needed against modern forms of censorship. The "Arab Spring" has taught us the effectiveness of social networks and the citizen Internet in the service of information and of mobilization against tyranny. This historic moment also allowed us to discover new and more and more sophisticated ways of gagging the web. This censorship exists not only in authoritarian regimes. Citizen and global information also inconveniences the governments of countries considered democratic. The ethics of technology companies are now at issue. International vigilance must speak out against the commercial interest of those who would like to provide the highest bidding regimes with the technical

means to impede the free flow of information, ideas and opinions.

The Internet has shaken the codes and practices of the traditional press, both written and audiovisual. Faced with competition by sites and online media, what will happen to the business model of information? The concentration of media companies too often appears as the only viable horizon for newspapers, radio and television chains facing the crisis and the volatility of the public. This strategy is hostile to pluralism. The construction of media in economic and industrial consortiums generates conflicts of interest that affect the production of in-depth information and the responses to citizens' questions.

Since freedom of information is not a corporatist freedom, since citizens without a press card now engage in seeking information and suffer the consequences, we recommend in the future naming 3 May as World Freedom of Information Day.

THE "ARAB SPRING" HAS TAUGHT US THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SOCIAL NETWORKS AND THE CITIZEN INTERNET IN THE SERVICE OF INFORMATION AND OF MOBILIZATION AGAINST TYRANNY.

# The right for community to communicate

#### María Pía Matta

President of the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC)



María Pía Matta is the President of the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC). AMARC is an international nongovernmental organization serving the community radio movement, with almost 4 000 members and associates in 110 countries. Its goal is

to support and contribute to the development of community and participatory radio according to the principles of solidarity and international cooperation.

ommunity radio stations have fought a long and determined battle for the right to communicate. Often they have faced the arbitrary allocation of frequencies by regulatory bodies, which distribute rights to the airwaves with commercial or technical bias while ignoring their human rights obligations.

In affirming the universal right to the free flow of information, international law has established that the right to freedom of expression is two-way, individual and social. It includes the right to

disseminate information and the right of others to receive it without any hindrance. It is not a declamatory right, but involves having the technical means for its exercise. This dimension of the right requires the State to promote it, as it enables public debate, allowing different viewpoints to be expressed and to be challenged, thus exposing the powerful to the opinions and the questioning of the weak, so enabling a dialogue which is the essence of democratic life.

Article 13 of the American Convention on Human Rights states the conditions that give legal status to freedom of expression: there is the right to receive, disseminate and seek out information and opinions through any media. This brings us to two principles of universality: one regarding the individual and another concerning media outlets.

The state has more obligations than mere abstention from censorship. To fulfil their human rights obligations, states must not allow indirect constraint mechanisms, such as the abuse of control over newspapers or radio and TV frequencies. Regardless of the nature of the medium, what matters is to protect the exercise of freedom of expression.

Sometimes it is argued that the state's only obligation in broadcasting is to manage radio and TV transmissions as if they were traffic systems, without

worrying about the balance of representation in those broadcasts. However, authoritative bodies such as the United Nations and the Organization of American States (OAS) insist that the purpose of regulation is to promote diversity and pluralism.

To advance the process of recognition of Community Radio Broadcasters, in 2008 AMARC presented the "Principles for a Democratic Regulatory Framework for Community Radio and TV," a guide to implementing regulations which are compatible with international human rights standards. It urges societies, through their governments, to comply with one of the recommendations of the "Declaration on Diversity in Broadcasting", issued in December 2007 by the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Opinion

and Expression together with the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Representative on Freedom of the Media and the Rapporteurs for Freedom of Expression of the OAS and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR).

That joint Statement said that community broadcasting must be "expressly recognised as a distinct form of media", must benefit from "fair procedures for obtaining licenses" and must be allowed to have access to financing and advertising. These are all necessary to promote the development of community broadcasting and any impediment contradicts those principles.

COMMUNITY RADIO STATIONS HAVE FOUGHT A LONG AND DETERMINED BATTLE FOR THE RIGHT TO COMMUNICATE.

# The right that underpins all rights

## Vincent Peyrègne

Chief Executive Officer of the World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers (WAN-IFRA)



Vincent Peyrègne is Chief Executive Officer of the World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers (WAN-IFRA). WAN-IFRA represents more than 18,000 publications, 15,000 online sites and over 3,000 companies in more than 120 countries. Its core mission is to defend and promote press freedom, quality journalism

and editorial integrity and the development of prosperous businesses.

itobu Imanyara, editor and founder of Kenya's Nairobi Law Monthly, did not attend the historic meeting in Windhoek, Namibia, on 3 May 1991 that became the inspiration for World Press Freedom Day. While his African journalist colleagues wrote the statement of free press principles now known as the Windhoek Declaration, Gitobu was languishing in a Kenyan jail.

The Kenyan authorities had imprisoned him for daring to write about the formation of a new opposition political party. Whilst in prison, Gitobu received the Golden Pen of Freedom, the World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers' (WAN-IFRA) annual award that recognises individuals who have made an outstanding contribution to the defence and promotion of press freedom.

During the following two decades, Gitobu served as a democratically elected member of Kenya's parliament and the Pan African Parliament. He has worked tirelessly to ensure that journalists in emerging democracies are free to write the news without fear or self-censorship.

Like Gitobu, WAN-IFRA believes that a free press is at the very core of the right to free expression. It provides a frontline defence when it comes to safeguarding access to knowledge and information as defined in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The conviction that free and independent newspapers play an indispensable role in maintaining free societies and guaranteeing human rights has been at the heart of the organisation for over 60 years.

WAN-IFRA marks World Press Freedom Day every year by encouraging the world's press to explore with their audiences the issues surrounding press freedom. In 20 years, we have witnessed the fall of regimes in the North Africa, the emergence of democracies in Eastern Europe and the opening up of countries such as Myanmar, where free speech was anathema. Through its press freedom programmes such as Media In Danger, events like the Arab Free Press Forum and

the Declaration of Table Mountain campaign in Africa, which seeks to repeal criminal defamation, WAN-IFRA is working to defend and promote press freedom and the economic independence of newspapers as an essential condition for that freedom.

Achieving our aims is neither easy nor straightforward. But the commitment to fighting in defence of rights and freedoms intended for all, yet enjoyed by so few, should inspire everyone concerned with human rights to promote a free and independent press worldwide.

A free press provides a window through which all the abuses of this most fundamental of rights can be revealed. It affirms that to criticise, hold to account and call to justice those in power is the right of the many and not the few.

Put simply, freedom of expression is the right that underpins all rights.

Yet despite 20 years of promoting press freedom through World Press Freedom Day, media employees around the world, face physical violence and persecution of all kinds, whether from public officials, criminals or terrorists. Assaults are daily—and often deadly—for those who challenge governments, report on conflict, or investigate corruption and crime.

The 2012 Golden Pen of Freedom Laureate, Anabel Hernández, is no stranger to investigating crime and corruption in her country Mexico, where too many crimes against journalists and publishing houses remain unsolved. Ms Hernández said upon receiving the award, "As a Mexican journalist, receiving the Golden Pen of Freedom tells me WAN-IFRA and its members refuse to remain indifferent to the slaughter of journalists and freedom of expression in Mexico, and that their joint denunciation will pressure the international community to stop this from continuing".

The international community can show its support for journalists in all countries who face harassment or impunity by ensuring governments adopt the United Nations Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity. WAN-IFRA will be working with its global membership to encourage all governments to support this plan.

We also urge the media community worldwide to vigorously defend the right to freedom of expression and access to information, particularly in this digital age, in which governments from both established and emerging democracies, as well as those regimes who believe journalists are a scourge to be eradicated, are finding new and ever more sophisticated ways to silence critics.

## **UNESCO: A Partner for Press Freedom**

#### Ronald Koven

#### World Press Freedom Committee



Ronald Koven has been the World Press Freedom Committee's European Representative since 1981 and is also its acting director. He was the Political Correspondent of the International Herald Tribune, Foreign Editor and Paris Correspondent of The Washington Post, and Paris

Correspondent of The Boston Globe.

entral to World Press Freedom Day has become UNESCO's annual World Press Freedom Prize, given to a brave practitioner of the free flow of information which is enshrined in UNESCO's Constitution as basic to its mission.

The Prize does not only honour journalistic courage. It has also come to symbolize UNESCO's own dedication to defending and furthering press freedom as the essential corollary of freedom of expression.

Attacks—both physical and political—on journalists and the press in all its forms (print, broadcast, and online) by authoritarians, criminals and even heedless or unthinking democrats remind us that

press freedom is fragile and needs a constant effort of renewal

At the end of the 1980s, UNESCO Director General Federico Mayor reinstated UNESCO's dedication to freedom of expression after a period in which it had seemed to side with those who sought international restrictions on press freedom. The perception that UNESCO was on the side of press restrictionism had threatened the Organization's future as the United States and Britain suspended their membership. Mr Mayor's successors, Koichiro Matsuura and Irina Bokova, have followed and broadened the path he reopened, to the point that UNESCO has become a champion of press freedom and a vital ally for its advocates.

The Windhoek Declaration of African journalists attending the first of five UNESCO regional seminars on independence and pluralism of the press was an early link in the chain of interaction established between UNESCO and the civil society groups advocating press freedom.

Mr Mayor's new strategy of favouring press freedom was formalized by UNESCO's member states at a General Conference held in Paris as the Berlin Wall fell in autumn 1989. As the news from Berlin emerged, acceptance of the Mayor approach was negotiated in a memorable all-night negotiating session in a

small basement meeting room of UNESCO HQ where former Senegalese Education Minister Iba Der Thiam faced off at one end of a long conference table with Swiss Ambassador François Nordman. Sitting at the centre of the table mediating between the two were Denmark's late journalist-diplomat Torben Krogh and the Spanish ambassador to UNESCO. World Press Freedom Committee (WPFC) representatives sat against the wall behind the conferees, passing notes to Krogh.

Soon afterward, in December 1989, the Coordinating Committee of Press Freedom Organizations\* met in Paris and decided to challenge Mr Mayor to show that the new rhetoric would be matched by deeds. They asked him to convene a first formal group encounter at UNESCO between newly independent East European editors and journalists emerging from semi-clandestinity with their Western counterparts. Mr Mayor agreed, and I went on a quick tour of the Baltic states, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary to identify the new press leaders to invite. UNESCO Public Information Director Alain Modoux designated Bulgarians and Romanians he knew from his previous job as information director of the International Committee of the Red Cross He chaired the East-West journalists' encounter in February 1990.

During that meeting African delegates to UNESCO called on Mr Mayor not to forget, in the enthusiasm for the new press freedom in Eastern Europe, the Organization's commitment to aid African media development. He immediately told the East-West gathering that UNESCO would sponsor a similar meeting with African journalists the next year. It was decided to hold it in Windhoek, capital of a newly free Namibia.

On the initiative of Niger, the Windhoek Declaration on press freedom adopted by African press leaders

(and largely drafted by the late Cameroonian editorpublisher Pius Njawe) was formally endorsed by UNESCO's member-states in their General Conference in the fall of 1991

UNESCO followed up the African regional seminar with a series of journalists' gatherings for press independence and pluralism in Asia (Alma Ata, Kazakhstan), the Americas (Santiago, Chile), the Arab world (Sanaa, Yemen), and Europe (Sofia, Bulgaria). Each seminar concluded with a journalist-drafted press freedom declaration, later endorsed by governments at UNESCO General Conferences.

At the suggestion of WPFC, the Sofia Declaration of 1995 ending the cycle of regional meetings became the first UN system text calling for press freedom on the Internet to be recognized in international law on the same basis as press freedom for traditional news media. The stage was set for UNESCO to continue in the new era of digital technology as a partner for the world media in furthering press freedom in cyberspace.

Whatever the pressures—often strong and real—each successive Director-General has pledged to uphold the annual choices of an independent jury of leading world journalists to honour an example of courage in journalism. This has served to seal the partnership between UNESCO and a free press.

\*Then comprising the Commonwealth Press Union, FIPP (International Federation of the Periodical Press), International Association of Broadcasting, Inter-American Press Association. International Press Institute, North American National Broadcasters Association, World Association of Newspapers, and WPFC.





#### SAFE TO SPEAK

Media campaign for World Press Freedom Day 2013. To follow on social media: #PressFreedom #LibertadDePrensa #WPFD

# Looking forward

"I WILL NEVER REGRET SPEAKING MY MIND.
[...] I HAVE TO BE THE VOICE OF THOSE WHO ARE
NOT HERE ANYMORE. THIS IS NOW MY MISSION.
NOTHING WILL EVER STOP ME FROM SAYING THE
TRUTH AND WHAT SHOULD BE SAID."
(May Chidiac, 2006 Laureate)

# Safety and Impunity: One of the most pressing issues facing the freedom of expression and press freedom

#### Kate Forbes

Producer for BBC News Africa



Kate Forbes is the producer for BBC News Africa based in Johannesburg, South Africa. She writes for BBC News online. Ms Forbes was one of the women journalists featured in the book No Woman's Land about women journalists who faced various dangers in carrying out their professional work. A voice

down the line is shouting "A waste, a waste Kate! It's such a bloody waste!"

ysterical sobs subside as my partner slowly gets to grips with the death of his friend, journalist Marie Colvin. She died this year in Syria, where Japanese correspondent Mika Yamamoto also lost her life, and Syrian journalist Mona al-Bakkour lost hers. For those left behind, there is no glamour in death.

At some point, after every incident with a female journalist the debate turns to whether women should be there in the first place. For me, the quality of the work done by those women proves that they should.

I just have to look at the wall in my office to remember that tragedy does not discriminate. There is a small gold plaque there bearing the name of my predecessor Kate Peyton, the former Africa producer for the BBC. She was shot and killed in Somalia. A woman, but above all a good journalist, in the wrong place at the wrong time.

I didn't know Kate, so it is not my story to tell. But it affected us all deeply.

It's a reminder, for journalists both male and female. A reminder that a story is just a story. But of course it's easy to forget that at the time.

In Eastern Libya, running the BBC's operation just before the NATO bombing raids started, I had little time to reflect on the tragedies and triumphs of women who have gone before me. But I did experience the same dilemmas. Most days we travelled to the front line. In the evenings we'd come back and tales of 'near misses' would be shared with colleagues from other networks, illustrated sometimes by their bulletmarked cars.

Networks will always try to outdo each other. But does putting ourselves in ever more dangerous situations really tell the whole story? We know war is dangerous. So do our audiences and readers. What is the rest of the story that we need to tell? Having the confidence to ask these questions is not given out with a journalism diploma.

Front line footage is the most exciting. "Near misses" can win awards. And covering a fluid front line in Eastern Libya for over two weeks, there were a lot of 'near misses'. But not much analysis. On a crackling satellite phone line in Benghazi, I listened to my editor in London summing it up perfectly: "Haven't we seen enough Bang Bang?" he asked.

As a young field producer, I am very much the understudy to many women in news who are braver and more experienced than I. I'm lucky to have been given training and advice by some of them. Wearing a sturdy belt gives you precious extra seconds in an attempted assault, as I found in Congo, and paying attention to local dress codes is essential. Heeding the automatic assumption that any male with you is the boss? Not so important. But there are rules, which it helps to follow.

During the ongoing anti-austerity riots in Greece, anarchists and policemen formed a formidable barrier, which seemed to snake back on itself with alarming unpredictability. The anarchist protestors hate journalists as they think we are organs of the state, and just next to me a photographer got too close to them. He was grabbed and beaten viciously with his own camera, until it broke on his jaw. We were chased away from this gruesome spectacle with baseball bats. I found myself alone. Pushed and shoved, I lost my footing, trapped in between advancing lines of plastic-shielded riot police and the mob. I was grabbed by my shirt and dragged out of harm's way. A Greek journalist who worked for Mega TV planted me safely against a wall "This is no place for a girl like you" he said as he walked away.

I felt annoyed and disillusioned. Maybe he was right. But as the adrenaline ebbed, I knew it wasn't to do with being of the weaker sex. It was to do with the basic rule of riots. There are rules that keep you safe. And one of them is: Never let yourself get in between the protestors, and the police.

To hold in our minds those who have gone before us. To take advice from those we admire. To have standards for safety, and people who care. Those are privileges I have, that I would like all journalists to have, particularly female. Then stories won't ever be 'no place for a girl like you'.

#### Mohamed Odowaa

#### Former exiled Somali journalist



Mohamed Odowaa is a former exiled Somali journalist who left the country in early 2007 and later returned to Mogadishu; he currently reports for the Deutsche Presse Agentur (DPA) and several other international media outlets, and a local popular radio station called Radio Kulmiye.

ournalists here in Somalia are the targets of conflicting groups and our country has become one of the most dangerous countries to work independently as a journalist. Oftentimes, ordinary Somalis especially the war-affected people are not even able speaking freely about their experiences in front of the camera due to fear of reprisal attacks by warring factions.

Some challenges the journalists face here are blatant, others concealed, and some of them follow traditional methods to silence free media or just critical voices. If you are a journalist and want to search for the truth about something here in Mogadishu and that thing is against the interests of the warring

factions—whether al-Shabaab, pirates, progovernment militias, the self-styled administrations of Puntland or just Somaliland—you can be either arrested or killed in cold blood. No groups, whether they are the politicians or those business people in the black market, want the truth out.

We have also witnessed many severe challenges, like the lack of recognition of the rights of free speech in Somalia—especially affecting the journalists who give a voice to the voiceless—as well as repeated arrests and harassments by the Puntland and Somali government authorities, and the impunity and lack of redress for rights violations experienced by media workers.

Despite the assassinations and daily death threats, some journalists have opted to remain in the country to share our inside view of the fighting with the Somali community and the outside world.

We often have to deal with the horrific events of warfare, which we cannot avoid if we are to report truthfully and without bias. Our reporting activities, which often show armed groups such as clans, Islamist militants, power-hungry politicians and warlords in a very negative light, can attract reprisals such as physical harassment, intimidation, arbitrary detention and, at worst, torture and death.

# Safety and Impunity: One of the most pressing issues facing the freedom of expression and press freedom

From 2007, the al-Qaeda linked al-Shabaab insurgent group started what seems to have been a campaign against private media companies that refused to collaborate with them, looting several radio stations and taking equipment as well as targeting journalists, many of whom were assassinated in the capital. This was terrible!

The group banned music on radio stations, saying that playing music was a sin and against the Islamic sharia law. A few inexperienced Somali journalists were also brainwashed by Islamists and joined the group's looted radio stations and became real Al-Shabaab journalists. Those Al-Shabaab journalists have been facilitating many more killings of journalists.

They also call up their previous fellow journalists like me, threatening us and telling us to advertise the stories about al-Shabaab and its war with Somali government and foreign troops— the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) forces.

Furthermore, those on all of the warring sides in the country want to stop reporters from taking video or photos of their combat losses or documenting them freely.

Between 2007 and 2009 that had tragic results, as several of my close friends, including Ali Imaan

Sharmaarke, the owner of our station HornAfrik Radio and TV, and veteran colleagues Mahad Ahmed Elmi and Said Tahil Ahmed were murdered separately in front of me because of their profession.

In that time I was also receiving a death threats, which in August 2009 led me to leave Somalia for Uganda. At around the same time many of my colleagues also left journalism because they received the same threats from different groups including the Islamists' militia, Al-Shabaab.

I cannot adequately describe my experiences in a few words, but during my stay in Uganda as an exiled journalist I really felt bad because I lost my identity as a journalist.

I was also no longer able to keep watch on the enemies of the press freedom, who are also the enemies of our society. I realised that I wanted to end that situation so I ventured out and returned to Mogadishu in April of 2011. Still now I receive death threats through phone calls almost every day, and sometimes text messages too. The callers warn that you will be assassinated. I fear for my life whenever I go out to pursue my day to day duties.

So you have to be vigilant all the time. I want to tell the truth about our nation and to do so means risking one's life. Our nation now has democratic aspirations and journalists are the eyes and ears of this war-wracked community.

In September of 2012 we lost several talented colleagues in a deadly suicide attack at a restaurant in Mogadishu. Many armed pro-government militias are operating in many parts of Mogadishu, with illegal checkpoints where local journalists also face harsh intimidation on a daily basis. The Somali government is too weak to take much direct action against its soldiers, who are not properly paid.

Poor journalism has also fuelled hostility to the media in our country, so media workers need to be more professional.

Journalists working in pro-government radio and satellite television stations broadcast anti-militant propaganda and are usually under constraints themselves, in their local stations or nearby, subject to daily threats against their lives by militants.

Journalists from independent media outlets face frequent physical attacks, their equipment is confiscated and they are arrested, not only in Mogadishu but also in the areas of mini-states like Puntland, Somaliland, and Ahlu-Sunna Waljamaa and Galmudug state of Somalia.

The self-appointed administrations in both Puntland and Somaliland have issued several criminal defamation suits against members of the independent press. They often place popular broadcasters under house arrest and detain journalists.

In 2012, 18 media workers were killed in Somalia on account of their journalistic work, making it Africa's deadliest country for journalists, according to international press groups.

Our murdered colleagues were fine journalists who reported on the atrocities which are commonplace in our country. Since the recent change in the country's political leadership we are calling on the new government to investigate those killings. Somali journalists take incredible risks in their daily reporting lives.

Journalists in the capital, Mogadishu, work under extremely difficult circumstances and routinely face violence, threats and intimidation that prevent them from carrying out their work freely, with the result that important news often goes unreported.

# Searching for Women in African Media: Gender Issues in Freedom of Expression and Press Freedom in the Past 20 Years

## Diana Senghor

Director of the Panos Institute of West Africa (PIWA/IPAO) and President of the UNESCO Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize Jury



Diana Senghor is the Director of the Panos Institute of West Africa (PIWA/IPAO) and President of the UNESCO Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize Jury in 2012. She has been the Editor-in-Chief of a number of West African magazines, such as Family and Development, and Living in Another Way, as well as an

Assistant Professor in Anthropology at the Cheik Anta Diop University in Dakar, Senegal.

n an ordinary day in March 2013 in Dakar. A quick glance at the four major national newspapers: Wal Fadjri, Sud Quotidien, Le Soleil, and The Observer. In the first 12 pages, with 14 photos: not a single woman. How about the second 12 pages, with 23 photos? Only men? The answer is yes, at least for humans, because there is also a photo of a cow (illustrating an article on cattle rustling). In the next third, with 32 pages and 34 photos, three are "mixed" photos and there is one photo of a woman. In the last 16 pages, with 25 photos, two are of women. There are four more photos of women but they are in advertisements (for an airline and for private lessons). I also look at the names: less than one out

of 15 are women. From the perspective of the press:

"Media pluralism" with its corollaries and various forms of expression—the plurality of media outlets, the diversity of opinions, the professionalization of journalists—is celebrating its 20th anniversary. Some of the papers which I looked through this morning did not exist 20 years ago. So how has this pluralism benefited women as the "objects" of media and as "actors" in print business?

My morning reading is not a caricature. It is symptomatic. Marginalization and worse: the obscuring of women remains a feature of West African media landscape and of African media in general.

Quantitatively, the space dedicated to women is ridiculously low. The regional study "Women in the Media" by the Panos Institute in West Africa (PIWA), with an analysis conducted in Burkina Faso over a period of one month examining 1035 articles published in ten newspapers, reveals that only 150 articles (15 percent) specifically addressed issues related to women. Only 3.7 percent of the "front pages" related to women, as against 23 percent of "news in brief" items (the subject appears not to deserve any deeper reflection).

Equally bad or worse than this "quantitative" imbalance, are the "qualitative" aspects—bias, prejudice, and also taboos—that distort and denigrate the image of women in the media in disconcerting ways.

The second most generous topic for women (10 percent) is "political" and "institutional". Here there is no trace of the "ordinary" woman, that is, the poor woman taking care of children, at times isolated, and increasingly the breadwinner of the family. The woman in the media belongs to the elite.

"Patriarchal" prejudice: women appear most frequently in minor news stories and human interest stories. More often than not, women are depicted as evil (linked to infanticide, adulterers or even rape—because journalists not only like to pass judgement but regularly find mitigating circumstances in favour of rapists). At best, women appear as victims. (The only social context where women appear more frequently than men is in reports about disability ...). Yet, many phenomena that affect the health, safety and dignity of women remain taboo subjects. These are generally matters within the domestic sphere including domestic violence (incest, paedophilia). The gloves are off for the media, though, when it comes to homosexuality between consenting adults.

In the last 20 or 30 years, the biases in the media have undoubtedly evolved, along with the shifting cultural prejudices. On the one hand, the society has, in some respects, become more conservative (compliance with "traditional" or "religious" precepts is as rigid as it is questionable in its historical legitimacy—specifically the normalization of polygamy). But on the other hand, the media has begun to highlight, with courage and efficiency, certain taboos (genital mutilation and even incest were the subject of several lengthy series of debates on radio stations in Dakar).

The status of women media professionals also remains out of balance. In seven African countries, women are two to seven times less likely to be represented than men in all aspects of the media<sup>21</sup>. And the presence of professional women is also much lower in purely journalistic functions, as well as at middle and top management levels. The famous "glass-ceiling" evidently applies here. Again, certain prejudices come into play: A married woman reporting at night? A young journalist "brazenly" interviewing an old political elephant? Where is the shame?).

It is the same even in new media (online media, use of social networks, or proliferation of citizen journalism). In most countries we can count on the fingers on our hands the number of women active in the blogosphere.

Nevertheless, the closets where women had been hidden are opening up.

In the past 20 or 30 years the media sector has had only a handful of women pioneers and "women stars" on radio and television<sup>22</sup>. Even if the percentage of women in the profession today hovers around only 30 percent, the flowering of newspapers has over the past two decades led to an extraordinary increase in the number of women journalists. Many of these women have had the opportunity during the "African Media Spring" to create their own media outlets23. This explosion in numbers is in part due to the creation or reactivation of African organizations for professional media (APAC, FEMEDEV, Genderlinks), and the slightly less symbolic participation of women in the management bodies of journalistic associations (such as SYNPICS, WAJA). Furthermore, several women were appointed to head media regulatory bodies including in Burkina Faso, Niger, Senegal, and Mozambique.

But more fundamentally, it is the progressive and contagious development in the region of local radio communities from the late nineties which has—finally!—included the voices of women: of ordinary women. Today in almost all West African countries we can find some radio stations dedicated to women. But more importantly, most community radio stations have some programmes that are specifically

intended for women, and more interestingly, that organize debates on gender relations. While these radio debates, interactive or not, are not always fully disengaged from the current environment, the possibility of them affecting change and subverting the old order is very real. The director of the community radio station "Radio Ansongo" in northern Mali can testify to this: Upon entry into the city in 2012, the Islamists threatened to cut off her tongue before they took over the radio station which she herself created.

Finally, some community radio channels, with the support of organizations such as CAPI, are working to develop more interactivity with their audiences through "citizen radio clubs". These clubs are managed by local organizations, where the views of listeners about the contents can be heard, and debates among the community and with local authorities can take place, including a chance to make rebuttals. Radio clubs run by women's organizations are the most active. Women in high-resolution: At last! What remains to be done is to multiply and connect these pluralistic public spaces and to entrust to women the organization of the "mainstream" media as a human right.

# The Fragility of Press Freedom and Its Legal Development

## Toby Mendel

Executive Director of the Centre for Law and Democracy



Toby Mendel is the Executive Director of the Centre for Law and Democracy, an international human rights NGO that focuses on providing legal expertise regarding foundational rights for democracy, including the right to information, freedom of expression, the right to participate and the rights to

assembly and association. Prior to that, he was for 12 years Senior Director for Law at ARTICLE 19, a human rights NGO focusing on freedom of expression and the right to information. He has provided expertise on these rights to a wide range of actors and worked as a senior human rights consultant with Oxfam Canada and as a human rights policy analyst at the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

t is easy to forget how far we have advanced over the last 20 years in terms of press freedom and freedom of expression. In 1993, the formerly Communist countries of East and Central Europe were just starting to put in place the frameworks which today see ten of them among the 27 members of the European Union. One-party States and military

dictatorships were more the norm than the exception in much of the rest of the world, and the Arab Spring was not even a distant hope.

Despite extremely important and significant overall advances, a number of key legal challenges remain. While the number of countries with laws giving individuals a right to access information held by public bodies (right to information or RTI laws) has soared from 17 at the end of 1993 to more than 90 today, the number of countries which do not have these laws still exceeds the number of those that do. Many countries have still not adopted RTI laws despite having made a commitment to do so, becoming persistent "refusers", while some other countries have adopted very weak laws.

Several years ago, I was helping officials at the justice ministry of a certain country to prepare an RTI law. A few months later I met one of the officials at a conference and asked her how the law was progressing. She replied, sadly: "The beautiful lady we prepared has been stripped bare." The country has still not adopted even this 'bare' law.

Progress over the last 20 years in terms of defamation law reform has been patchy and much remains to be done. A large majority of countries still have criminal laws which envisage imprisonment for defamation, even though the UN Human Rights Committee

has made it clear that this is not compatible with international law. In many countries, defamation laws are stacked against defendants, provide for special protection for officials or allow for massive damage awards which have a chilling effect of freedom of expression.

National security laws are another area where respect for freedom of expression remains weak and the last ten years have seen backsliding in many countries. Secrecy in the name of national security has increased and prosecutions for national security breaches have gone up, while protections against unwarranted surveillance have diminished. Several governments are proposing to adopt new, comprehensive national security secrecy laws, usually in the face of massive civil society opposition. A proposed law in one country, which would have

imposed the death penalty for certain breaches, has been delayed but not defeated.

A very disturbing development over the last 20 years has been the massive increase in attacks against journalists and others in retaliation for exercising their right to freedom of expression. This form of criminal behaviour has grown in both severity and scope in recent years, with more countries witnessing killings and with the relatively new phenomenon of attacks on RTI activists.

As we commemorate 20 years of World Press Freedom Day, there is much to celebrate. But serious challenges remain. Those who value freedom of expression and freedom of the media cannot become complacent. The gains of the last 20 years, while impressive, still need to be defended and further entrenched.

NATIONAL SECURITY LAWS ARE ANOTHER AREA WHERE RESPECT FOR FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION REMAINS WEAK AND THE LAST TEN YEARS HAVE SEEN BACKSLIDING IN MANY COUNTRIES.

# Voices that echo through the Internet

## Ben Wagner and Cynthia Wong

European University Institute and Human Rights Watch





**Ben Wagner** is a Researcher at European University Institute

**Cynthia Wong** is a Senior Researcher on Internet and Human Rights at Human Rights Watch.

he Internet has been a crucial enabler for freedom of expression. Together with other digital technologies it has brought extraordinary benefits for media freedom, allowing journalists and non-journalists alike to seek, receive, and impart information in the digital public sphere. While Internet technologies have posed considerable challenges for large publishers, they have also given

an ever-increasing number of people the ability to make their own voices heard.

While it is a fallacy to assume that the Internet causes revolutions, it is equally absurd to suggest that communications technologies play no role. The Arab uprisings of 2011 are a poignant reminder of how the Internet can promote media freedom, but also serve as a tool to restrict it. The medium used by demonstrators to organize protests and bring medical supplies to Tahrir Square was also used by governments to suppress peaceful demonstrations and expression, and pinpoint human rights defenders for arrest, harassment, even torture.

The voices echoing through the Internet may sound threatening to those in power. The less regard autocrats have for human rights, the less prepared they are to allow their own citizens to speak their minds, whether on the Internet or in the street. Syria, Egypt, and Tunisia were all preparing augmented Internet censorship and surveillance systems when protests broke out. Access to censorship and surveillance technologies made by European and North American companies was a key enabler of human rights violations during the Arab uprisings. The US has made Internet freedom a cornerstone of its foreign policy, along with Europe with its No

Disconnect strategy — but neither policy initiative has done much to prevent authoritarian governments across the Middle East and around the world from gaining access to censorship and surveillance technologies. Nor has there been enough movement toward setting robust regulatory standards for corporate human rights practices in the technology sector more broadly.

In truth the Internet is no less man-made than the Arab uprisings. Many actors and choices are involved in building the Internet's architecture and technologies, and embedding values within them. Beyond governments, technology companies in particular have a responsibility to address the human rights impact of their operations as journalists and citizens increasingly rely on their services.

Technology design and construction choices should not be based on economic or national security considerations alone. Broader societal interests are at stake—protecting fundamental rights, ensuring human security, and, by no means least, guaranteeing media freedom. Decisions about the Internet's architecture will define the capacity of the Internet to enable media freedom: Will journalists and sources be able to protect their privacy online? Can citizens use new forms of social media to defend human rights and hold their governments accountable without fear of illegal surveillance or reprisals?

These and other questions have been crucial in debates in 2012 at the Internet Governance Forum in Baku, the World Conference on International Telecommunications in Dubai, and the European Parliament's Digital Freedom Strategy, among the important policy forums of the year. After the fall of Zine el Abidine Ben Ali in 2011 a pressing question for Tunisia is how to design and govern the Internet to promote human rights. The same question applies far beyond Tunisia: What kind of Internet are we creating and how can we ensure that it promotes human rights in decades to come?

WHILE IT IS A FALLACY TO ASSUME THAT THE INTERNET CAUSES REVOLUTIONS, IT IS EQUALLY ABSURD TO SUGGEST THAT COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGIES PLAY NO ROLE.

# Journalists, stop innovating: Verify!

A look at the rise of citizen journalism from the perspectives of mainstream media and of citizen journalists

## Julien Pain

Creator and editor-in-chief of the interactive website and programme The Observers on the international news channel FRANCE 24



**Julien Pain** is a journalist specialized in the editing and verification of amateur images.

Journalism is changing, we repeat over and over again. Our viewers' habits evolve with the unbridled pace of technological progress. In a world where billions of photos are posted on Facebook each month and where YouTube opens its own television channels, traditional media have indeed much to do if they want to retain a role in this world of ever-expanding information.

However, despite the hackneyed cliché about the crisis of journalism, media are innovating today more than ever before. Every day new versions of websites and new apps for mobile and tablet devices appear, to adapt even better to consumers' news habits. But is this race for innovation the only way to give meaning to journalism? Faced with the deluge of amateur content, images, testimonials, or analyses by users, is journalists' only salvation in "novelty", in

the absolute necessity to reinvent its profession on a daily basis?

Let us stop for a moment on the lost race we are on. Let us stop running like headless chickens in pursuit of the Great Google, and let us ask ourselves this simple question: what's the point of a journalist? To invent Android, iPhone and Windows 8 apps that can read news reports in 76 languages? Or to make sense of the overabundance of content, to verify the images that everyone transmits without knowing the source, to investigate and uncover new information?

Professional journalism is necessary not because it is able to adapt to its customers' habits, which is an economic obligation, but because it is intrinsically linked to the proper functioning of democracy. Because without verification of information, there is no reliable information. And without reliable information, the user remains a customer, but cannot be a responsible citizen and voter capable of understanding the world around them.

This does not mean that journalists can continue to work as they did even five years ago. It is particularly inconceivable to neglect content produced by Internet users. To take only the most recent examples, how can we deal with the conflict in Syria or protests in Tibet without the information and images smuggled

out by activists? Television stations, in particular, now know that amateur images provide them with two kinds of accounts that they can no longer do without. Today it is mobile phones that often film very sudden, unpredictable events, such as a tsunami or a terrorist attack. The journalist arrives in these cases only after the incident. His or her images are indeed clearer, but they do not show the moment when the wave hit the coast. Then, amateurs show us what a state, or sometimes even businesses, would like to hide. To go back to the case of Syria, it is because journalists are non grata there that local activists organized themselves to tell the war.

But the Syrian case is also a glaring example of the need for journalistic work on the content produced by amateurs. Not because the video of activists in Homs or Damascus are of poor quality. Television adapts perfectly to such images when they are strong. In contrast, traditional media have a duty to verify the information sent to them before passing it on to their audiences. Giving accurate information is not only an issue of the credibility of our media. It is the DNA of our profession and the justification of its existence in our society.

Yet Syrian activists, like most amateurs filming current events, have a political agenda. Their primary goal is not to provide true information but to advance a cause. This is not to denigrate the work and courage of these amateur videographers, who sometimes risk their lives to shoot a few minutes of footage. And it is also certain that when it comes to propaganda and lies, their enemy, the Syrian regime, is right up there. However, journalists have an obligation to be critical of the information provided by the rebels, as much as that of Bashar al-Assad.

Verifying the authenticity of pictures and of allegations circulating on the web is hard work, which takes time and sometimes requires specific journalistic skills. Finding the first person who posted a video, identifying the place and the date of the clip, and detecting changes or inconsistencies in image requires experience and sometimes even particular technologies. This work also has a cost to the media. Establishing the specialised group known as the "Observers", for example, was a substantial investment for France 24. An investment that may at first seem less directly lucrative than an iPhone app. And yet let us hope that in the longer term, investing in the reliability of one's newsgathering antennae is a bet at least as winning as technological innovation. Giving balanced and verified information will not stop Google executives from considering us as the Cro-Magnons of the Internet, but let us always remember that this is the creed that justifies our profession.

# Selected quotes from the UN Special Rapporteur

on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression

## Frank La Rue

**UN Special Rapporteur** 



Frank La Rue is the UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression since 2008. A Special Rapporteur is an independent expert appointed by the Human Rights Council to examine and report back on a country situation or a specific human rights theme.

Amongst his or her responsibilities are transmitting urgent appeals to Member States on alleged violations of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, undertaking fact-finding country visits, and submitting annual reports to the Human Rights Council and UN General Assembly.

n Ensuring the Safety of Journalists and Media Workers<sup>24</sup>—Despite provisions in international human rights law, including the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which guarantee the rights of journalists, journalists continue to be targeted for disseminating "inconvenient" information.

The problem lies not in the lack of international standards, but in the inability or unwillingness of Governments to ensure the protection of journalists.

While armed conflict situations may place journalists at risk, the majority of attacks against journalists take place outside of armed conflict situations. Individuals who cover public demonstrations, report on issues such as corruption, human rights violations, environmental issues, organized crime, drug trafficking, public crises or emergencies are placed at particular risk of violence.

Central challenges in relation to human rights violations committed against journalists include various forms of intimidation, physical attacks—including abductions and killings— arbitrary detention, as well as impunity and the use of criminal laws to imprison and intimidate journalists.

The presence of such risks deters journalists from continuing their work, or encourages self-censorship on sensitive matters. Consequently, society as a whole may not be able to access important information.

Female journalists face additional risks, such as sexual assault, mob-related sexual violence at public events or sexual abuse in detention or captivity. Due

to social, cultural and professional stigmas, many of these attacks are not reported.

On Combating Impunity of Crimes against Press Freedom<sup>25</sup>—The precarious situation of journalists is further exacerbated by a culture of impunity. Failure to undertake effective investigations and to prosecute those responsible for attacks against journalists perpetrates further violence and undermines the ability of journalists to report on similar matters in the future.

Necessary resources must be dedicated to preventing and investigating attacks, or bringing those responsible to justice. Special measures should be put in place to deal with attacks and to support journalists who are displaced by attacks.

The protection of journalists and combating impunity requires context-specific measures that address the specific risks in each situation and effectively addresses the root causes of attacks.

The Special Rapporteur thus welcomes the initiative to the United Nations Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity and looks forward to its effective implementation.

On Internet and Online Safety<sup>26</sup>—Given that the Internet has become an indispensable tool for realizing a range of human rights, combating inequality, and accelerating development and human progress, ensuring universal access to the Internet should be a priority for all States.

There is a tendency to monitor, filter and block excessively and abusively, not for legitimate reasons but for illegitimate aims and scopes, for example when governments are trying to use these controls to limit criticism.

As the Special Rapporteur is deeply concerned by increasingly sophisticated blocking or filtering mechanisms used by States for censorship, he calls upon States that currently block websites to provide lists of blocked websites and full details regarding the necessity and justification for blocking each individual website.

The emergence of "online journalists" and so-called "citizen journalists" has enriched the media landscape by increasing access to sources of information, stimulating informed analysis and promoting the expression of diverse opinions, particularly in moments of crises.

The Special Rapporteur is deeply concerned by harassment of online journalists and bloggers, such as illegal hacking into their accounts, monitoring of their online activities, arbitrary arrests and detention, and the blocking of websites that contain information that are critical of authorities. Such actions constitute intimidation and censorship.

The right to freedom of expression should be fully guaranteed online, as with offline content. If there is any limitation to the enjoyment of this right exercised through the Internet, it must also conform to the criteria listed in Article 19, paragraph 3, of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. This means that any restriction imposed as an exceptional measure must (i) be provided by law, which is clear and accessible to everyone; (ii) pursue one of the legitimate purposes set out in article 19, paragraph 3, of the Covenant; and (iii) be proven as necessary and the least restrictive means required to achieve the purported aim.

# PRESS FREEDOM IN CARTOONS

Tunisian cartoonist, Belkhamsa Chedly illustrated these cartoons during the World Press Freedom Day in Tunis, Tunisia in 2012.



# **Annex**

## Annex I - Declaration of Windhoek 3 May 1991

ENDORSED BY THE GENERAL CONFERENCE AT ITS TWENTY-SIXTH SESSION – 1991

We the participants in the United Nations/ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Seminar on Promoting an Independent and Pluralistic African Press, held in Windhoek, Namibia, from 29 April to 3 May 1991,

**Recalling** the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,

**Recalling** General Assembly resolution 59(I) of 14 December 1946 stating that freedom of information is a fundamental human right, and General Assembly resolution 45/76 A of 11 December 1990 on information in the service of humanity,

**Recalling** resolution 25C/104 of the General Conference of UNESCO of 1989 in which the main focus is the promotion of "the free flow of ideas by word and image at international as well as national levels".

**Noting with appreciation** the statements made by the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Public Information and the Assistant Director-General for Communication, Information and Informatics of UNESCO at the opening of the Seminar,

**Expressing** our sincere appreciation to the United Nations and UNESCO for organizing the Seminar,

**Expressing** also our sincere appreciation to all the intergovernmental, governmental and nongovernmental

bodies and organizations, in particular the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which contributed to the United Nations/UNESCO effort to organize the Seminar.

**Expressing** our gratitude to the Government and people of the Republic of Namibia for their kind hospitality which facilitated the success of the Seminar,

#### Declare that:

- Consistent with article 19 of the Universal Declaration
  of Human Rights, the establishment, maintenance
  and fostering of an independent, pluralistic and
  free press is essential to the development and
  maintenance of democracy in a nation, and for
  economic development.
- By an independent press, we mean a press independent from governmental, political or economic control or from control of materials and infrastructure essential for the production and dissemination of newspapers, magazines and periodicals.
- By a pluralistic press, we mean the end of monopolies
  of any kind and the existence of the greatest possible
  number of newspapers, magazines and periodicals
  reflecting the widest possible range of opinion within
  the community.

- 4. The welcome changes that an increasing number of African States are now undergoing towards multiparty democracies provide the climate in which an independent and pluralistic press can emerge.
- The worldwide trend towards democracy and freedom of information and expression is a fundamental contribution to the fulfilment of human aspirations.
- 6. In Africa today, despite the positive developments in some countries, in many countries journalists, editors and publishers are victims of repression—they are murdered, arrested, detained and censored, and are restricted by economic and political pressures such as restrictions on newsprint, licensing systems which restrict the opportunity to publish, visa restrictions which prevent the free movement of journalists, restrictions on the exchange of news and information, and limitations on the circulation of newspapers within countries and across national borders. In some countries, one party States control the totality of information.
- Today, at least 17 journalists, editors or publishers are in African prisons, and 48 African journalists were killed in the exercise of their profession between 1969 and 1990.
- 8. The General Assembly of the United Nations should include in the agenda of its next session an item on the declaration of censorship as a grave violation of human rights falling within the purview of the Commission on Human Rights.
- African States should be encouraged to provide constitutional guarantees of freedom of the press and freedom of association.
- To encourage and consolidate the positive changes taking place in Africa, and to counter the negative

- ones, the international community—specifically, international organizations (governmental as well as nongovernmental), development agencies and professional associations—should as a matter of priority direct funding support towards the development and establishment of nongovernmental newspapers, magazines and periodicals that reflect the society as a whole and the different points of view within the communities they serve.
- 11. All funding should aim to encourage pluralism as well as independence. As a consequence, the public media should be funded only where authorities guarantee a constitutional and effective freedom of information and expression and the independence of the press.
- 12. To assist in the preservation of the freedoms enumerated above, the establishment of truly independent, representative associations, syndicates or trade unions of journalists, and associations of editors and publishers, is a matter of priority in all the countries of Africa where such bodies do not now exist.
- 13. The national media and labour relations laws of African countries should be drafted in such a way as to ensure that such representative associations can exist and fulfil their important tasks in defence of press freedom.
- 14. As a sign of good faith, African Governments that have jailed journalists for their professional activities should free them immediately. Journalists who have had to leave their countries should be free to return to resume their professional activities.
- 15. Cooperation between publishers within Africa, and between publishers of the North and South (for

- example through the principle of twinning), should be encouraged and supported.
- 16. As a matter of urgency, the United Nations and UNESCO, and particularly the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC), should initiate detailed research, in cooperation with governmental (especially UNDP) and nongovernmental donor agencies, relevant nongovernmental organizations and professional associations, into the following specific areas:
  - (i) identification of economic barriers to the establishment of news media outlets, including restrictive import duties, tariffs and quotas for such things as newsprint, printing equipment, and typesetting and word processing machinery, and taxes on the sale of newspapers, as a prelude to their removal;
  - (ii) training of journalists and managers and the availability of professional training institutions and courses;
  - (iii) legal barriers to the recognition and effective operation of trade unions or associations of journalists, editors and publishers;
  - (iv) a register of available funding from development and other agencies, the conditions attaching to the release of such funds, and the methods of applying for them;
  - (v) the state of press freedom, country by country, in Africa.
- 17. In view of the importance of radio and television in the field of news and information, the United Nations and UNESCO are invited to recommend to the General Assembly and the General Conference

- the convening of a similar seminar of journalists and managers of radio and television services in Africa, to explore the possibility of applying similar concepts of independence and pluralism to those media.
- 18. The international community should contribute to the achievement and implementation of the initiatives and projects set out in the annex to this Declaration.
- 19. This Declaration should be presented by the Secretary-General of the United Nations to the United Nations General Assembly, and by the Director-General of UNESCO to the General Conference of UNESCO.

# Annex II - Resolution 4.3 adopted by the UNESCO General Conference at its 26th Session in 1991

(RESOLUTION ADOPTED ON THE REPORT OF COMMISSION IV AT THE TWENTY-SIX PLENARY MEETING, ON 6 NOVEMBER 1991)

#### The General Conference,

**Recalling** 25 C/Resolution 104 set out in the Medium Term Plan for 19901995 and concerning Major Programme Area IV, 'Communication in the service of humanity',

**Noting with satisfaction** the decisions taken at the 136th session of the Executive Board concerning this major programme area,

**Welcoming** the scope provided in this programme for activities aimed at encouraging press freedom and the independence and pluralism of the private, public and other media in all regions,

**Recognizing** that a free, pluralist and independent press is an essential component of any democratic society,

**Considering** that the Seminar on Promoting an Independent and Pluralistic African Press (29 April3 May 1991), organized by UNESCO and the United Nations in Windhoek, Namibia, acted as a catalyst in the process of encouraging press freedom, independence and pluralism in Africa.

**Congratulating** the Director-General and the Secretariat on this initiative.

**Noting with satisfaction** the cooperation that developed at that meeting between UNESCO and the professional media associations,

**Noting with interest** the Declaration adopted by participants at the Windhoek seminar, which provides

a reference for the development of independent and pluralist media in Africa,

**Thanking** the Director-General for his action aimed at providing positive follow up to the recommendations made at the seminar, especially those mentioned in the annex to the Windhoek Declaration,

#### **Invites** the Director-General:

- (a) to extend to other regions of the world the action taken so far in Africa and Europe to encourage press freedom and to promote the independence and pluralism of the media;
- (b) to celebrate the anniversary of the Windhoek Declaration adopted on 3 May 1991;
- (c) to transmit to the United Nations General Assembly the wish expressed by the Member States of UNESCO to have 3 May declared 'International Press Freedom Day';
- (d) to examine, with the United Nations Secretary General, the possibility of issuing a joint report on the progress of press freedom in the world to mark this day.

## Annex III - Resolution 29 "Condemnation of violence against journalists"

(RESOLUTION ADOPTED AT THE UNESCO GENERAL CONFERENCE IN ITS 29TH SESSION, PARIS, NOVEMBER 1997)

#### The General Conference,

**Recalling** Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that "everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers",

**Confirming** that freedom of expression is a fundamental right of everyone and is essential to the realization of all the rights set forth in international human rights instruments.

Also recalling the American Convention on Human Rights (Pact of San Jose, Costa Rica), the European Convention for the protection of Human rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the African Charter on Human Rights and Peoples' rights, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,

Bearing in mind resolution 59(I) of the United General Assembly, of 14 December 1946, in which it is stated that freedom of information is a fundamental human right, General Assembly resolution 45/76 A of 11 December 1990 on information in the service of humanity, and resolution 1997/27, of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, on the right to freedom of opinion and expression,

**Reaffirming** that the rights to life and to liberty and integrity and security of person and also to freedom of expression are fundamental human rights that are recognized and guaranteed by international conventions and instruments.

#### Considering:

- (a) that over the past ten years an increasing number of journalists have been assassinated for exercising their profession, a development denounced by various international organizations, and that the majority of these crimes still go unpunished,
- (b) that this reality in the Americas, for example, has been corroborated by the Inter-American Press Association (IAPA) through investigations conducted in various countries and by special missions,

**Mindful** that, as a consequence of the Hemisphere Conference on Unpunished Crimes against journalists convened by IAPA, several professional organizations have decided to engage in specific joint action to shed light on unpunished crimes against journalists,

**Conscious** that the assassination of journalists goes beyond depriving people of their lives as it involves a curtailment of freedom of expression, with all that this implies as a limitation on the freedoms and rights of society as a whole,

#### 1. Invites the Director-General:

(a) to condemn assassination and any physical violence against journalists as a crime against society, since this curtails freedom of expression and, as a consequence, the other rights and freedoms set forth in international human rights instruments;

- (b) to urge that the competent authorities discharge their duty of preventing, investigating and punishing such crimes and remedying their consequences;
- **2. Calls upon** Member states to take the necessary measures to implement the following recommendations:
- (a) that governments adopt the principle that there should be no statute of limitations for crimes against persons when these are perpetrated to prevent the exercise of freedom of information and expression or when their purpose is the obstruction of justice;
- (b) that governments refine legislation to make it possible to prosecute and sentence those who instigate the assassination of persons exercising the right to freedom of expression;
- (c) that legislation provide that the persons responsible for offenses against journalists discharging their professional duties or the media must be judged by civil and/or ordinary courts.

## Annex IV - Selected Joint Messages on the occasion of World Press Freedom Day

### Joint Message by Kofi Annan and Federico Mayor on the occasion of World Press Freedom Day 1999

Today marks the last World Press Freedom Day of the twentieth century. On this occasion we issue a joint appeal to all governments, regional and local authorities to renew their commitment to guarantee the safety of journalists and to ensure that crimes against journalists do not go unpunished. Each time a journalist is killed or attacked; society at large suffers a grievous wound. For whenever one journalist suffers violence, intimidation or arbitrary detention because of his or her commitment to conveying the truth, all citizens are robbed of the right to think and act according to their conscience.

Press freedom is a cornerstone of human rights and a guarantee of other freedoms. It encourages transparency and good governance; it ensures that, over and above the mere rule of law, society enjoys the rule of true justice. There are, however, those who still question the value of freedom of speech to their societies; those who argue that it threatens stability and endangers progress; those who still consider freedom of speech an imposition from abroad and not the indigenous expression of every people's demand for freedom.

This argument is never made by the people, but by governments; never by the powerless but by the powerful; never by the voiceless, but by those whose voices are the only ones allowed to be heard. Let us put this argument, once and for all, to the only test that matters: the choice

of every people, to know more or know less, to be heard or be silenced, to stand up or kneel down.

Freedom of speech is a right to be fought for, not a blessing to be wished for. But it is more than that: it is a bridge of understanding and knowledge. It is essential for that exchange of ideas between nations and cultures which is a condition for true understanding and lasting cooperation.

We issue our appeal at the end of a century marked by ceaseless struggle for press freedom. It has been a century of numerous abuses of the right to freedom of expression. The continued targeting of journalists demonstrates the need to pursue the struggle with increased vigour. As we prepare to enter a new century and millennium, a thriving local, national and international free press is more important than ever. It underpins the emerging information society and is a driving force for sustainable human development. Our daily diet of accurate information, whether carried by satellite or ocean cable, still depends on the daily exercise of courage and integrity by journalists, on the tenacity of editorial teams, on the commitment of independent media to carry high the principles of a profession under permanent pressure. On this World Press Freedom Day, we salute their courage and their commitment to the universal pursuit of truth and knowledge.

Kofi Annan
United Nations Secretary-General
Federico Mayor
UNESCO Director-General

### Joint message by Kofi Annan, Mary Robinson and Koïchiro Matsuura on the occasion of World Press Freedom Day 2000

On this first World Press Freedom Day of the new century, and in the context of the International Year of the Culture of Peace, we urge all actors in conflict situations around the world—governments, local authorities and armed forces—to protect the right of all citizens to reliable information and the right of journalists to provide it without fearing for their security, their freedom or their life. In every society, freedom of the press is essential to transparency, accountability, good governance and the rule of law. It cannot be suppressed without dire consequences for social cohesion and stability. When it is sacrificed, whatever the reasons invoked, the chances are that conflict is not far down the road. All States should ratify the relevant international human rights instruments and should scrutinise their domestic legal systems with a view to bringing them into line with international standards governing the right to freedom of opinion and expression.

In times of conflict, the media's responsibilities for independent and pluralistic reporting are more important than ever. They can help to prevent the worst atrocities. But when belligerents see freedom of expression as an enemy to their cause and the media as a tool for propaganda, journalists who attempt to report in a non-partisan way face pressure, manipulation, intimidation, or even elimination. And when they are forced to leave, the cycle of violence does not end. The only remaining eye-witnesses—aid workers and local residents—often become the next targets. In the aftermath of war, the establishment of a free and independent press offers a

way out of mistrust and fear, into an environment where true dialogue is possible because people can think for themselves and base their opinions on facts.

Particular attention should be given to ensuring that women's voices are heard. Women are often the first ones affected by armed conflict. It is, therefore, right and indeed necessary that women have full access to information and that they be there to cover the issues, with equal strength and in equal numbers. Governments are urged to do all they can to overcome any formal and cultural obstacles to the exercise by women of their right to freedom of expression .Wherever their independence or security is threatened—whether in repressive societies, in times of conflict or in post-conflict situations—local journalists must be supported and protected in their efforts to maintain a flow of fair and independent information. The international media, too, have an important role to play, in providing non-partisan coverage of conflicts and in calling the world's attention to humanitarian crises, human rights abuses and other situations where oblivion would be the worst of fates for suffering human beings. The international community must keep on seeking to remedy severe violations of press freedom. On behalf of our organizations, and in the interest of knowledge, justice, and peace, we promise to explore every approach that offers hope of enabling the media to carry out their invaluable and often dangerous work.

Kofi Annan,
United Nations Secretary-General
Mary Robinson,
UN High Commissioner for Human Rights
Koïchiro Matsuura,
UNESCO Director-General

### Joint Message by Ban Ki-moon, Navi Pillay, and Irina Bokova on the occasion of World Press Freedom Day 2011

World Press Freedom Day was born twenty years ago in the vision of a group of journalists gathered in Windhoek, Namibia. The Windhoek Declaration was a call to arms to protect the fundamental principles of the freedom of expression as enshrined in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration Human Rights. It was also a bell ringing in change across the world.

Twenty years on, the media landscape has changed beyond recognition, but our objective remains the same: to promote freedom of expression as the foundation for human dignity and the cornerstone of democracy. Our times feature great paradox. We enjoy unprecedented opportunities for expression thanks to new technologies and media. More and more people are able to share information and exchange views, within and across national borders. This is a blessing for creativity, for healthy societies, for including everyone in new forms of dialogue.

At the same time, new threats are arising. In a context of rapid change, these combine with older forms of restriction to pose formidable challenges to freedom of expression. New measures to block, filter and censor information emerge every day. Challenges take different features, but they share the same face as violations of a fundamental human right. The United Nations is dedicated to ensuring that the Internet becomes a truly global public resource, to which all have access and where all voices are heard. This underlines the

importance of quality content. This calls for action to defend the integrity and safety of online reporters. All principles of freedom of expression must be brought to the on-line world

And they must be protected. Over the last decade, more than 500 journalists lost their lives in the pursuit of their profession. Sixty killings were reported worldwide in 2010 alone. Every week brings more reports of journalists and bloggers suffering from intimidation and violence.

Violations of fundamental human rights cannot go unanswered. State authorities must do everything to counter impunity and to protect the safety of journalists. We will never forget the courage of journalists who paid with their lives for our right to know. The media revolution is triggering new debates about freedom of expression, about the nature of regulation, about the balance between expression and responsibility. We must not shy away from exploring all angles of these questions. We must all rise to the occasion and accept the responsibility of change. Twenty years after Windhoek, events every day show that promoting freedom of expression remains as important as ever. On this 2011 World Press Freedom Day, we call on all governments to join forces with the United Nations to guarantee and to promote freedom of expression in print, on the airwaves, and online.

Ban Ki-moon,
United Nations Secretary-General
Navi Pillay,
UN High Commissioner for Human Rights
Irina Bokova,
UNESCO Director-General

#### **Footnotes**

- 1 Item 4.3 of the General Conference at its 26th session (15 October 1991).
- 2 See United Nations General Assembly decision A/DEC/48/432 on 20 December 1993.
- 3 See also www.misa.org
- 4 See also www.ifex.org
- 5 UNESCO's website, www.unesco.org/webworld/ en/wpfd, has a dedicated section for World Press Freedom Day, providing resources and information concerning the day.
- 6 Item 4.3 of the General Conference at its 26th session (15 October 1991).
- 7 European Governance: A White Paper, Commission of the European Communities, July 2001, http:// ec.europa.eu/governance/white\_paper/en.pdf, p.10.
- 8 UNESCO Presentation Paper, "Media, Development and Poverty Eradication, World Press Freedom Day, Sri Lanka 1-3 May 2006," http://www.unesco. org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/pdf/ wpfd2006\_concept\_note.pdf
- 9 Wolfensohn, J., The Right to Tell The Role of Mass Media in Economic Development, 2002.
- 10 "Democracy as a Universal Value," Journal of Democracy, 10.3 (1999).
- 11 Callamard, Agnès "Toward a Third Generation of Activism for the Right to Freedom of Information,"

- UNESCO Freedom of Expression, Access to Information and Empowerment of People, World Press Freedom Day 2008, p.44, http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001803/180312e.pdf
- 12 Message by Irina Bokova, The Right to Know: UNESCO World Press Freedom Day 2010, http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0019/001936/193653e.pdf
- 13 Ibid.
- 14 "The Potential of Media: Dialogue, Mutual Understanding and Reconciliation," UNESCO World Press Freedom Day Concept Note, 2-3 May 2009.
- 15 "The Potential of Media: Dialogue, Mutual Understanding and Reconciliation," UNESCO World Press Freedom Day Concept Note, 2-3 May 2009.
- 16 Ibid.
- 17 Ibid.
- 18 The Safety of Journalists and the Danger of Impunity, Report by the Director-General to the Intergovernmental Council of the IPDIC, 30 March 2010, http://unesdoc.unesco.org/ images/0018/001874/187491e.pdf
- 19 Lesbians, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender.
- 20 UNESCO started the process which led to the United Nations General Assembly officially proclaiming "World Press Freedom Day" as an "International Day" in 1993 and recognising 3 May for the first time as the date to celebrate this

- celebration, in commemoration of the original Windhoek Seminar which adopted the historic Windhoek Declaration on 3 May 1991.
- 21 Women are seven times and twice less represented in Ethiopian and Ghanaian media respectively, according to the International Women's Media Foundation Global Report on the Status of Women in the News Media.
- 22 The "mothers of women's journalism" include Annette Mbaye d'Erneville in the 1960s in Senegal; Mariama Keita, President of the Superior Council of Communication, in the 1990s in Niger; Sokhna Dieng, Elisabeth Ndiaye, Adrienne Diop ORTS in the 1980s in Senegal; and many others. See also Portraits of African Women in the Media, PIWA 2005).
- 23 For example, the L'Observateur created by Koumbo Sy in Chad.
- 24 Excerpts from the "Report of the Special Rapporteur to the Human Rights Council on the protection of journalists and media freedom, A/HRC/20/17", (June 2012).
- 25 Excerpts from the "Report of the Special Rapporteur to the Human Rights Council on the protection of journalists and media freedom, A/HRC/20/17", (June 2012).
- 26 Excerpts from: The "Report of the Special Rapporteur to the Human Rights Council on the protection of journalists and media freedom A/ HRC/17/27" (May 2011); Frank La Rue, "The Internet supports people power", extracts from the record

of the international conference "The Media world after Wikileaks and News of the World" at UNESCO Headquarters, Paris 16-17 February 2012; "Report of the Special Rapporteur to the Human Rights Council on the protection of journalists and media freedom, A/HRC/20/17", (June 2012).

The origins of World Press Freedom Day arise from a declaration signed by a group of African journalists who gathered at a UNESCO seminar on "Promoting an Independent and Pluralistic African Media" that was held in Windhoek, Namibia from 29 April to 3 May 1991. Subsequently, painstaking lobbying led to the proclamation of 3 May as an international day on press freedom by the United Nations General Assembly in 1993. This publication aims to commemorate the 20th anniversary of World Press Freedom Day by illuminating the trajectory of this important international event from its origins, following the historic Windhoek Declaration, to the present day. Issues of media freedom, safety of journalists, impunity, gender in the media, pluralism, independence and access to information, as well as the role of the Internet and other 21st century media developments are also covered.



Communication and Information Sector

