

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

The UK National Commission for UNESCO Introduces World Press Freedom Day 2007

London, UK – 12 January 2007. The UK National Commission for UNESCO (UKNC; www.unesco.org.uk) in partnership with the Press Freedom Network (PFN) is delighted to announce that World Press Freedom Day will be held on 3rd May 2007.

3rd May was declared World Press Freedom Day (WPFDD) by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly in 1993 amid the growing recognition of the importance of press freedom for democracy and development. WPFDD celebrates the fundamental principles of press freedom, evaluates press freedom around the world to defend the media from attacks on their independence, and pays tribute to journalists who have lost their lives in the exercise of their profession.

Article-writing competition in partnership with the Independent to mark World Press Freedom Day

This year, the UKNC, in partnership with the Independent, is launching an article-writing competition, to encourage students across the UK to consider and define the main global challenges currently facing freedom of expression. Entrants are required to write a 1,000-word article entitled 'The greatest threat to media freedom in the world is...' The prize will be £1,000 and publication of the winning article in the Independent (www.independent.co.uk).

More information at <http://www.unesco.org.uk/pressfreedomcompetition.htm>.

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For further information, please contact the UK National Commission for UNESCO on +44 (0)20 7766 3490.

Notes to Editors

- ***The UK National Commission for UNESCO*** (www.unesco.org.uk) *is an independent body which works in partnership with both the Government and civil society in the UK, to provide the following: objective and professional advice for the Government on UNESCO-related matters, develop UK input to UNESCO policy-making, promote reforms within UNESCO, and encourage support in the UK for UNESCO's ideals and work.*

- **The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO;** www.unesco.org) *is a Specialized Agency within the UN system. Its overarching goals is to “contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture in order to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for [...] human rights”.*
- *UNESCO promotes freedom of expression and freedom of the press as a basic human right. It is the only UN agency with a mandate to defend freedom of expression and press freedom. Through sensitisation and monitoring activities, it fosters media independence and pluralism as prerequisites and major factors of democratisation by providing advisory services on media legislation; and sensitising governments, parliamentarians and other decision-makers.*