



United Kingdom
National Commission for UNESCO

PRESS
FREEDOM
NETWORK

frontline
club

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

UN World Press Freedom Day 2008 “Is new media killing journalism?”

London, UK – 23 April 2008. The implications of new media on journalism standards, is the topic for this year’s World Press Freedom Day (WPFJ). The main event, hosted by the UK National Commission for UNESCO and the Press Freedom Network, with the support of the Frontline Club, will be a debate on the motion “New Media is Killing Journalism”.

The internet’s influence has drastically changed the media landscape, often to the detriment of print newspapers. Is new media edging out accountability and standards with ill-informed opinion and user-generated rants? Or is it the evolution of journalism, breaking down barriers which previously restricted the flow of information and narrowed the range of debate?

Date: Friday, 2 May 2008, 10:00 AM – 12:00 (9:30 AM tea / coffee)

Venue: The Frontline Club, 13 Norfolk Place, London W2 1QJ

A wide range of high-profile panel speakers will debate the motion, including:

- Robin Lustig, journalist and radio broadcaster for the BBC World Service and BBC Radio 4
- Andrew Keen, author of *The Cult of the Amateur*, writer for the Independent
- Kim Fletcher, ex-Editor of the Telegraph & Independent on Sunday, writes for the Guardian
- Nazenin Ansari, Kayhan Publishing Iran/UK, President of the Foreign Press Association

Contributions from the audience will include the thoughts of:

- Charlie Beckett, Director of POLIS
- Jeremy Dear, General Secretary for the National Union Journalists
- John Kelly, Reuters Institute Visiting Fellow, Washington Post
- Nick Jones, author and previous BBC correspondent
- Umit Ozturk, Chair, Amnesty International Journalists Network and Mediterranean Resources Network
- Ashley Norris, Co-founder and Director of Shiny Media

The debate will be chaired by William Horsley, former BBC correspondent and Chair of the Association of European Journalists, UK. It will follow an Oxford Union debate format and will culminate in an audience vote on the motion.

This year, in association with guardian.co.uk, the UK National Commission and the Press Freedom Network are hosting a competition for UK university students to create an article or radio / podcast package on the question "Is new media killing journalism?" The winner will be presented with the *John Ivinson Memorial Prize for Freedom of Expression* and its £500 prize at the opening of the WPFDF event on 2 May. The winning entry will be published on guardian.co.uk.

This is the 8th year the UK National Commission and the Press Freedom Network are holding events to mark World Press Freedom Day in the UK.

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Notes to Editors

The event is open to the press however booking in advance is **essential**. Please visit www.frontlineclub.com or write iwhite@unesco.org to reserve a place.

For further information, please contact Ian White at the UK National Commission for UNESCO on +44 (0)20 7766 3492 or iwhite@unesco.org.uk.

- **The UK National Commission for UNESCO** is the focal point in the UK for UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization)-related policies and activities. As an independent body, the UK National Commission brings together a network of over 200 experts from across the UK in the fields of education, culture, sciences and communication. Working closely in partnership with HM Government and UK civil society, the UK National Commission aims to provide expert advice to the Government on UNESCO related matters, develop UK input into UNESCO policy-making, promote reforms within UNESCO, and encourage support in the UK for UNESCO's ideals and work.
- **The Press Freedom Network** is a loose grouping of organisations, publications and individuals who are sympathetic to or directly interested in the cause of media freedom. It contributes to the organisation of the annual World Press Freedom Day event (usually a debate) on May 3, in addition to discussing other topical and relevant issues. The network operates mainly via an effective e-group but with occasional meetings (in London); and acts primarily as an information and debating forum rather than seeking to make policy decisions binding to any member.
- **The Frontline Club** was established over three years ago and is aimed at supporting independent journalism. The Frontline Club now have over 1200 members - mainly journalists and photojournalists specialising in foreign news - from all major international news media including BBC, CNN, Al Jazeera, Channel 4, CBC, all British quality dailies, The Economist, The New Yorker, Newsweek, The New York Times, and the Washington Post, to name but a few. In this time the Club became a true hub for everyone involved with foreign news, people who cover it, comment on it, write reviews, or interview political leaders. It is the place where people meet to discuss things that matter and to have fun along the way (the Club houses two bars and a restaurant).
- **World Press Freedom Day (3 May)** is a day to celebrate the fundamental principles of press freedom; 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. 3 May was proclaimed World Press Freedom Day by the UN General Assembly in 1993 following a Recommendation adopted at the twenty-sixth session of UNESCO's General Conference in 1991. It serves as an occasion to inform citizens of violations of press freedom - a reminder that in dozens of countries around the world, publications are censored, fined, suspended and closed down, while journalists, editors and publishers are harassed, attacked, detained and even murdered.