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Country: Indonesia, Jakarta



The Media Diversity Institute (MDI) participated at the official celebration of the World Press Freedom Day (WPF) in Jakarta organised by UNESCO, the Government of Indonesia, and the Press Council of Indonesia. On 3 May, MDI Executive Director Milica Pesic was one of the speakers at the panel “ [Fostering inclusiveness and gender equality through media innovation](#) ”.

“It is extremely important to continue discussing the significance of inclusion as one of the basic democratic principles. The UNESCO celebration of the World Press Day in Jakarta was very much about inclusive societies that are under threat. If citizens are being excluded on basis of their class, ethnicity, religion, gender and if they don't feel being a part of the society, that would make some people look for extremism as an option. Therefore, the media that provide space for inclusion of all voices can significantly contribute to the prevention of extremism,” said Pesic at the panel on inclusiveness and gender equality.

Other panellists were Jane Worthington from the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), Elizabeth Sonto-Mendoza, Director of Courseline Media International Services and Nur Hasyim, Founder of New Men Alliance. The moderator was Gwen Lister from Namibia Media Trust.



Debating indigenous communities participation and inclusion in the content-making process, Elizabeth Sonto-Mendoza said that the media shouldn't be just getting the news from indigenous people. "You have to go to them and let them write the news for you," said Sonto-Mendoza. Jane Worthington from IFJ presented the data on gender equality in the media in the Asia-Pacific region. She also talked about the increasing online harassment against women in India and gave a positive example of the only-women radio in Afghanistan tackling issues such as domestic violence. As the only male participant at the panel at the UNESCO event, Nur Hasyim said: "to achieve gender equality, the media should create space for criticizing masculinity".



MDI Executive Director also advised young people to fight for their cause raising questions and issues of importance for them. "You have innovation and digital media these days. You don't have to collaborate with the mainstream media. So just do things that you want to do," said Pesic. She also said that introducing diversity in the newsrooms is a must. "But that does not mean that a blind journalist for instance, has to report on disability issues only," explained Pesic.

Around 1300 participants attended this year's WPFDD celebration in Jakarta. They have unanimously adopted the [Jakarta Declaration](#), which calls for a greater role of the media in advancing peaceful and inclusive societies.

The Jakarta Declaration basically warned of three major challenges to press freedom, notably safety of journalists, false news and freedom of speech on the Internet.

In the 74-point Declaration, participants, comprising of journalists, editors, experts, government officials, press freedom advocates and academics, welcomed multi-stakeholder efforts made by the international community to enhance the protection of journalists and address the issue of impunity through the implementation of the U.N. Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity.

They recognized that the Internet is a powerful medium for self-expression, which facilitates the ability of users to speak freely and in public interest.

"We see the importance of Agenda 2030 on Sustainable Development Goals particularly Goal 16 on promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development. Let's use the adopted Jakarta Declaration, precluded in the Finlandia Declaration," said Zabrina Holmström of the Finland National Commission to UNESCO. "We need critical minds for critical times. Stand up for your rights. There can't be a compromise in freedom of expression," she said.

This year global theme of the World Press Freedom Day was "*Critical Minds for Critical Times: Media's role in advancing peaceful, just and inclusive societies*".

Over 100 national celebrations took place to commemorate 3 May around the world while UNESCO led the worldwide celebration.

Also, Dawit Isaak, an imprisoned Eritrean-Swedish journalist, received the [2017 UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize](#)

. Mr. Isaak was arrested in a crackdown on the media that occurred in September 2001. The last time he was heard from was in 2005. His present location is unknown.