

## Roundtable on Education, Training and Research

World Press Freedom Day International Conference 2012 Post-Event

Sunday 6 May 2012

Serail Room, Karthago Le Palace Hôtel, Complexe Cap Gammarth, Tunis

### AGENDA

#### Description

Universities play an important role in rebuilding media for democracy. The institutions of higher education contribute to reforming news media by preparing students to critically engage with political, social, economic and cultural development of society, by providing training for entry and mid-career journalists; and by developing research agenda that will support policy formation and well informed citizenry necessary for the functioning of democracy. The process of creating environment where the media can serve the public and speak the truth, one of the most important demands of the Arab spring, requires universities that prepare journalists for the work based on international standards and principles. This roundtable aims to address the question how journalism education, training and research relates to and contributes to building up society of free expression, diversity, inclusiveness, transparency and public accountability.

**Moderators: Milica Pesic (MDI, UK), Ahmed Hidass (ISIC, Morocco), Verica Rupar (Cardiff University, UK)**

#### 9.00- 10.30 Session 1: Journalism education

The World Journalism Education Council's Declaration of Principles (2007)<sup>1</sup> state that journalism education is a foundation for the effective and responsible practice of journalism. It involves an informed ethical commitment to the public, teaching and learning grounded on a good balance of conceptual, philosophical and skills-based content, journalism curriculum that includes a variety of skills courses and the study of journalism ethics, history, media structures/institutions at national and international level, and education that combines critical analysis of media content and evaluation of journalism as a profession.

There were several attempts to develop a model of journalism education that works regardless the national context. In 2007, UNESCO introduced its new Model Curricula for Journalism Education for Developing Countries and Emerging Democracies at the World Journalism Educators Congress. In Egypt and Morocco, Media Diversity Institute has run a program for development of inclusive journalism curriculum. This session will focus on the experiences and criteria for the quality journalism education.

**Panel: Verica Rupar, (Cardiff University, UK), Guy Berger (UNESCO), Kamal Ben Younes (ISAI, Tunisia)**

#### Sample questions:

- \* How to strengthen universities capacity to offer high quality journalism education (resources, staff development, new technologies)?
- \* How to develop journalism curriculum to reflect the ideas of inclusive society and raise students' awareness towards diversity issues?
- \* What are the experiences of the UNESCO model curricula and the centres of excellence and how they can be applied in MENA region?

#### 10.30- 11.00 Refreshment break

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<sup>1</sup> Developed out of the first meeting of the World Journalism Education Congress in Singapore

### **11.00- 12.30 Session 2: Journalism training**

While journalism education at university level is grounded in a commitment to ethics, social responsibility and the idea that journalism is important for functioning of democracy – a set of objectives that easily translate into a set of courses that constitutes curriculum - journalism training focuses primarily on updating set of tools for successful running of everyday news production. Around the world, the key media industry players are organizing their own journalism colleges (BBC College of Journalism , Al Jazeera Media Training and Development Center for example) and a wide range of non-governmental organisations and charities, such as MDI, specialize in this field offering either general trainings in writing, ethics, law and more specific trainings that focuses on different branches of journalism such as investigative, business or fashion journalism or specific issues such as diversity reporting. This session is aimed to sharing the experiences of the work done, identifying a need for further trainings and discussing the models that work well in a post-revolution environment.

**Panel: Kamel Labidi (National Independent Authority for Information and Communication, Tunis), Sanaa El Jack, Media Unlimited (Lebanon), Milica Pesic (MDI), Basyouni Hamada (Cairo University, Egypt)**

#### **Sample questions:**

- \* How to bridge a gap between journalism education and journalism practice when it comes to reporting issues that touch upon diversity issues such as political, ethnic, religious, race, and gender differences?
- \* What types of trainings are available for improving ethical and professional standards of practicing journalists and what are the obstacles in their organisation?
- \* How to design a journalism training to accommodate a need for stay tuned to the most recent developments of technology and respond to reality of the economic crisis and its impact on the life in a newsroom?
- \* How to access the quality of journalism training institutions (experiences of the UNESCO Centres of Excellences framework)?

### **12.30 - 14.00 Lunch**

### **14.00- 15.30 Session 3: Developing research agenda for democratic future**

Although journalism is central to democracy, citizenship and everyday life, journalism studies in transition democracies tend to focus on single aspect of media operations, either political or legal within which journalism operates. This session will aim to discuss options for expanding the research agenda to include a wide range of issues relevant for understanding the relationship between political, legal, economic, social and cultural aspects of journalism and news media. It will focus on the need for more sophisticated and empirically grounded models of the role of journalism in emerging and diverse democracies to recognise the complexity of journalists' experiences and constraints on the ground, and the limitations of the Western-centric liberal model.

**Panel: Karin Wahl-Jorgensen, Cardiff University (UK), Rasha Abdulla, AUC (Egypt), Ahmed Hidass (ISIC, Morocco)**

#### **Sample questions:**

- What are the key research themes in the field of journalism studies today?
- How to negotiate a need for a research that contributes to policy advocacy and academic autonomy?
- How to develop, undertake and promote academic research that supports a culture of respect for freedom of expression?

### **15.30- 16.00 Refreshment break**

### **16.00- 17.30 Session 4: Africa Network of Centres (Possibilities for networking Arab J-schools as in sub-Saharan region)**

Participants are invited to discuss the possibilities for organising joint workshops, exchange of staff and students, and developing research agenda that will open a space for collaborative research projects.