

World Press Freedom Day: WAN-IFRA helps newspapers commemorate

In commemorating World Press Freedom Day on 3 May 2011 a wide range of editorial and advertising materials are being offered free of charge by the World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers (WAN-IFRA) to newspapers and other media for publication. Newspapers publish WAN-IFRA materials each year to remind readers of the central role a free press plays in democracy and in economic, cultural, social and political development.



Venezuela, Caracas: A woman wears a gag as journalists and workers of Venezuelan media, demonstrate in support of 32 radios and two TV channels closed by the government a year ago, in front of the private radio network Belfort National Circuit (CNB) in Caracas on August 1, 2010. AFP photo/Miguel Gutierrez

The essays, infographics, photos, political cartoons, public service advertisements and young reader materials on the theme, "Silence kills democracy, but a free press talks", are available at www.worldpressfreedomday.org.

Newspapers worldwide are encouraged to view and download all or part of the materials, which are being offered in English, French, Spanish, German, Arabic and Russian but can be translated into other languages as well.

Acknowledging the importance of a free press

"Put simply, freedom of expression is the right that underpins all rights. Yet it is a sad reality that this basic human right is withheld from the majority of the world's population," said

Christoph Riess, CEO of WAN-IFRA.

"World Press Freedom Day exists to acknowledge the importance of a free press and freedom of expression to society, whether emerging or well-established," he said. "It is an opportunity to recognise the importance of what many take for granted the daily news, produced by teams of courageous men and women who labour every day in the interests of their societies and of their readers."

The package of materials includes op-ed pieces and essays by Peter Englund, permanent secretary of the Swedish Academy, which awards the Nobel Literature Prize; Google VP David Drummond; renowned Tunisian writer Taoufik Ben Brik; Rocio Gallegos, a reporter with *El Diario de Juarez*, a newspaper on the front lines in the battle with drug cartels; head of the World Bank Institute's media development, Eric Chinje; Pakistan publisher and Golden Pen of Freedom laureate Najam Sethi; Zimbabwean publisher Trevor Ncube and an editorial from the World Editors' Forum.

The "white space" challenge



Newspapers are also being encouraged to take up the "white space" challenge by printing white space on their front pages, to symbolise what would be missing without a free press.

Other materials include cartoons from renowned French cartoonist Michel Cambon, advertisements on the theme of press freedom; photographs and infographics; and materials that can be used by young readers and teachers in classroom activities.

WAN-IFRA's World Press Freedom Day initiative benefits from contributions by Agence France-Presse, Getty Images, the World Editors Forum and the Russian Guild of Press Publishers (GIPP).

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