



**Ethical Journalism**

**Network**

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Media Standards for the Digital Age

# Annual Report 2012- 2013

Launch Year of the Global Campaign  
for Ethical Journalism, Good  
Governance and Media Self-Regulation

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## **Contents**

1.	Introduction	Page 3
2.	Activities 2012-2013	Page 4
3.	Calendar of Activities	Page 6
4.	Attachment One: Pakistan Report	Page 10
5.	Ethical Media Audit	Page 14
6.	Election Code and Guidelines	Page 22
7.	Press Council Reform	Page 28
8.	Public Broadcasting Declaration	Page 37
9.	Attachment Two: Egypt Report	Page 39
10.	Ethical Media Plan for Egypt	Page 41
11.	Guide to Self-Regulation	Page 45
12.	Attachment Three: EJM Texts	Page 61

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*leadership of Bertrand Pequerie. Special thanks to Stefanie Chernow at GEN who has devoted much of her precious time to this work.*

## **Introduction**

This report on the first year's activity of the Ethical Journalism Network covers a period of intense activity following the launch of the EJNI in 2012. During this time the EJNI has established itself as an expert voice on critical issues concerning the ethical performance of media and journalists.

The EJNI has engaged in high-level discussions on media policy development at national and international level and has produced a number of practical tools designed to assist journalists and media professionals.

The report outlines the activities of the EJNI in targeted regions and covers all activities planned and executed with the support of a grant from the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and sets out a full calendar of events and actions of the EJNI in this period.

After preliminary work in 2011, the Network was formally launched in 2012 with a mandate to campaign for ethics, good governance across all platforms of journalism and media. It was set up on the initiative of Aidan White, the former General Secretary of the International Federation of Journalists in co-operation with the Paris-based Global Editors' Network.

A founding statement and guidelines for EJNI organisation were agreed at a partners meeting in June 2012 in Paris organised with the support of UNESCO. These are attached to this report with a list of the members and partners in March 2013. (Attachment Three).

During 2012 and 2013 the EJNI has been hosted by the GEN and Aidan White is the founding director.

The network held meetings in Paris in June 2012 and in Brussels on December 10<sup>th</sup> 2012 at which a draft of plans for the coming three years was discussed. It was also announced by EJNI and GEN that the EJNI would be seeking a new host organisation at the end of 2013.

The EJNI web site was launched during 2013 and has attracted widespread support with more than 500 subscribers in more than 60 countries. An editorial board of acknowledged media experts has been set up to advise the Director on ethical and governance questions.

During 2012 the EJNI Director met three times with representatives of professional associations in Norway and established a Norwegian consultative and advisory group which has contributed advice and support on the development of the EJNI programme.

The EJNI has worked closely with the office of the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression on issues related to hate speech and xenophobia and in the coming year there will be further efforts to strengthen this co-operation.

## **EJN Activities**

The EJN has been particularly active in **Pakistan**. There were four visits to Karachi, Islamabad, and Lahore in May, June, November and December 2012. Working with local partners EJN established a local network, the Pakistan Coalition for Ethical Journalism and, working in partnership with Internews Europe, we have been involved with a number of ground-breaking actions to promote ethical journalism. This has included:

1. The public launch by the country's biggest television group GEO TV of an ethical and principles campaign.
2. The preparation and adoption by a self-reporting instrument on ethics and standards – the Ethical Media Audit.
3. A dialogue with the Pakistan Press Council in which we have made recommendations for its reform.
4. An-industry wide debate, involving senior state media representatives, on the need for the transformation of state broadcasting to public broadcasting status.
5. A detailed code of conduct and guidelines for election reporting which have been adopted by the Pakistan Election Commission in advance of elections in 2013.

A full report on these activities with detailed appendices is set out in Attachment One of this report.

In addition, the EJN worked close with UNESCO in a programme to support self-regulation and ethical journalism in **Egypt**. The EJN programme, involving three visits to Cairo in March, June and November, has been developed with local partners and has included a number of actions:

1. The preparation and launch in Arabic of a manual and guidelines on ethical practice and self-regulation for media.
2. The preparation and launch of a proposal for the establishment of a self-regulatory body for the country. A meeting will be held in November to launch this initiative.

A full report on these activities with detailed appendices is set out in Attachment Two of this report.

**Indonesia:** the EJN programme has been further strengthening its work with media partners in Indonesia and a number of activities have been put in place. The EJN featured prominently at the regional Bali Media Forum on November 7-9 where plans for an Asian network of press councils and to formulate an action plan to strengthen ethical journalism and self-regulation were launched.

This initiative, in co-operation with the Thomson Foundation and the Indonesian Press Council, is planned to be a continuing theme of the Bali Media Forum in 2013. We have promoted the model of the Indonesian Press Council which is a particularly effective advocacy and mediation body, independent of government, and have organised meetings for colleagues from the Council with EJM partners in Pakistan and Egypt which are in the process of reforming or creating new councils.

**South East Europe:** The EJM has begun to work on dialogues aimed at strengthening work in South East Europe and Turkey as well as within the European Union.

In co-operation with UNESCO and the South East Europe Network for Professionalisation (SEENPM) EJM led a discussion at a regional conference in Bucharest on November 16-17 on actions to improve transparency, good governance and ethics in media within the region – particularly Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria.

**Turkey:** The EJM Director took part in meetings on December 6 and 7 in Istanbul and held discussions with local media partners to prepare an EJM programme for Turkey over the next three years. A further mission is planned in 2013.

In addition, and thanks to additional support from the NMFA, the EJM contributed to detailed ongoing research into the impact of hate speech in the media of countries in the Balkans region including Albania, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Kosovo and Slovenia. The results of this research will be made available in 2013.

**European Union:** The EJM has been in discussions with the cabinet of Neelie Kroes, head of the European Policy programme for media and digital communications to organise a dialogue with EJM partners on EU policy aims in support of self-regulation.

The EJM has organised meetings of its EU partners – the European Federation of Journalists, the European Publishers Council, the European Newspaper Publishers Association, the European Broadcasting Union and the Association of Commercial television in Europe to discuss a joint response to EU policy proposals regarding media and pluralism.

In addition to this work, the EJM has supported activities in **Africa** – at the Global Forum for Media Development conference in Johannesburg in September 2012 – to promote the EJM and its programme.

In **Latin America**, in September, the EJM held discussions with media leaders from Argentina and Brazil in the margins of the Global Editors Network meeting in Buenos Aires.

The EJM has also initiated discussion in the media development community about strategies and policies for work in the **Middle East**, and has promoted actions to strengthen media reform and in particular stressed the importance of programmes on governance and ethical issues.

### **Calendar of Activities and Actions in 2012-2013**

Below is a brief note of meetings and events that the EJM has attended during the period of this report. It does not include the visits to Egypt and Pakistan and other focused actions referred to above:

March 26-27, 2012

**Italy:** Florence experts meeting at European University Institute to promote regulation and standards recognising convergence and emergence of digital media in Europe

April 13, 2012

**France:** Paris meeting of media professional groups in collaboration with UNESCO to discuss creation of network in support of ethical journalism programme.

April 18, 2012

**Norway:** Meetings with Norwegian media leaders and professional bodies to establish national network supporting Ethical Journalism Network.

May 3, 2012

**United Kingdom:** Presentation at London meeting at Reuters with journalists and media leaders to discuss ethical crisis for journalism in the UK.

May 4, 2012

**Tunisia:** Presentation of programme on ethical and governance issues at UNESCO conference to celebrate World Press Freedom Day 2012.

May 15, 2012

**Belgium:** Brussels meeting with Association of Commercial Television to prepare for Brussels-based activity on ethical journalism issues.

May 24, 2012

**United Kingdom:** London meeting at Reuters with International News Safety Institute. Discussion on ethical issues related to security and safety of journalists with media leaders from Reuters, BBC, CNN, Aljazeera and others.

May 28, 2012

**Kenya:** Tele-conference keynote address to Nairobi meeting of radio journalists on ethical and governance issues

May 29, 2012

**France:** [Summit of Global Editors Network in Paris](#), Presentation of Ethical Journalism Network and two meetings with sponsored editors from 18 countries to discuss EJM and regional development proposals. Attendance at Board meeting of GEN.

June 2, 2012

**France:** Paris meeting in collaboration with UNESCO of media professional groups including the formal launch of Ethical Journalism Network and adoption of Founding Statement. Meetings with Indonesian Press Council members and preparation of activity program for 2012-2013.

June 4, 2012

**Denmark:** Copenhagen meetings with International Media Support and Danish Journalists Union to discuss Ethical Journalism Network Programme and proposals for further work.

June 12, 2012

**Belgium:** Meeting with General Secretary of European Association of Press Councils to plan co-operation and participation in conference due for Antwerp, October 18th-19th.

June 15, 2012

**Belgium:** International conference in Brussels on issues of racism, intolerance and media diversity organised by European University Institute, Florence.

June 27, 2012

**Belgium:** Participation and presentation at European Parliament conference on media pluralism and future regulation of journalism.

June 30, 2012

**United Kingdom:** London meeting of Statewatch media network to discuss ethical standards and role of media in reporting security and justice issues

July 22-28, 2012

**Armenia:** Presentation of EJM principles and ethical activities at summer school for Armenian journalists and media executives. In co-operation with Council of Europe and Internews.

September 9-11, 2012

**South Africa:** Presentation and launch of EJM in sub-Saharan Africa in co-operation with [Global Forum for Media Development summit](#) and Africa Media Initiative.

September 24, 2012

**Kiev:** Debate with Ukraine media and police officials on reporting security and exposing corruption. This event, organised by the OSCE, also provided an opportunity for the EJM to advise local media and journalists on the establishment of an independent body for the accreditation of journalists in the country.

September 28-29, 2012

**Argentina:** Meetings in co-operation with Global Editors Network and media leaders to plan Latin American activities and programme of EJM. Attendance at board meeting of GEN.

October 10-11, 2012

**Oslo:** Discussion between Norwegian journalists and Al Jazeera on standards of reporting when dealing with intolerance and conflicts. At meetings with supporters of EJM from Norwegian media we further developed a recently-launched Ethical Media Audit for self-reporting on standards by media organisations.

October 12, 2012

**Cyprus:** Meeting with media and policymakers from Mediterranean area organised by the Economic and Social Committee of the European Union.

October 18, 2012

**Antwerp:** Meeting with Alliance of Independent Press Councils in Europe to highlight EJM work and to promote the creation of a new global network for press councils and non-political self-regulation bodies for media.

October 23, 2012

**Budapest:** Keynote address to conference of media managers and editors from the Schibsted group on the theme of internal standards for good governance.

October 25-26, 2012

**Baku:** Meeting with journalism groups and editors in Azerbaijan on self-regulation on self-regulation. Event organised by the Council of Europe.

October 30, 2012

**New York:** EJM presentation on ethics and regulation challenges at United Nations meeting to mark presentation of annual report by UN Rapporteur on freedom of expression. (Postponed due to Hurricane).

November 16-17, 2012

**Romania:** Bucharest conference in co-operation with SEENPM and UNESCO to discuss ethical journalism programme and self-regulation for EJM network in Western Balkans and South East Europe.

December 3-7, 2012

**Turkey:** Participation in South East Europe Media Organisation regional conference in Istanbul. EJM report on situation of self-regulation of media in Turkey and establishment of ethical programme with local partners.

December 10, 2012

**Brussels:** Organisation of EJM partners meeting and consultation with European Union officials on development of media policy related to journalism and self-regulation in the EU.

January 15-16

**Tirana:** European Union meeting to discuss media policy in Albania and south east Europe

January 26-27, 2013

**Paris:** Participation in meeting of UN Alliance of Civilisations meeting on role of media in dealing with issues of migration.

January 31, 2013

**New York:** participation with UN Special Rapporteur on Free Expression at United Nations meeting on genocide and role of media in prevention strategies.

February 5, 20123

**Washington:** Discussion at Holocaust Museum on media and genocide prevention.

February 14, 2013

**Oslo:** Intervention on ethical journalism at conference of TV2 Norway.

February 15, 2013

**Vienna:** Conference of OSCE on media policy.

February 21-22

**Geneva:** Participation in high level experts' group meeting at United Nations Human Rights Commission on media and genocide.

February 26-27, 2013

**Paris:** WSIS + 10 conference of UNESCO, session on future of journalism with World Association of Newspapers. Meeting with media groups on MENA strategies.

March 1, 2013

**Barcelona:** Anna Lindh Foundation Euro-Med meeting on media and transitions.

March 14-16, 2013

**Doha:** Aljazeera Media Forum session on ethics and training on ethics as part of programme of Norwegian Human Rights Institute

## **Conclusion**

All of this work has been possible thanks to the support of Norwegian Foreign Ministry, UNESCO and particularly the European Union through Internews Europe. It has also benefited from the participation of EJM Members and national partners. In particular the Global Editors Network but also including ACT, IPI, GFMD, ONO, Thomson Foundation, SEENPM and CIME.

The EJM is still in the process of evolution. Its structure and governance are still under review but the initiative is without doubt timely and well-supported and it has the potential to make an enormous contribution to shaping the future of journalism. After a busy first year, the Network is well placed to expand its activities and to strengthen the work of media professionals across all platforms.

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# Ethical Journalism Network: Good Governance and Media self-regulation in Pakistan

## **Final Report**

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### **Introduction**

This programme of the EJNI has been designed to strengthen the professional capacity of journalists and media in Pakistan. It was carried out in co-operation with Internews Europe.

The programme follows a challenging period of unprecedented growth in the number and range of news media, particularly in the broadcast sector.

This explosive expansion of media has undoubtedly created a more pluralist media landscape, but it has not been accompanied by any serious attempt to establish credible forms of media self-regulation to support basic standards of journalism.

This has been a particular focus of debate during 2012, a time when there have been numerous incidents of scandal involving media and an enhanced public debate about the role and responsibility of media.

As a result journalism the quality of journalism and corruption inside media has been a major concern for organisations seeking to improve the capacity of people to communicate their concerns and to assist the process of humanitarian relief and recovery from the catastrophic impact of flooding across the country.

The programme, therefore, has been designed to build a fresh sense of solidarity within Pakistan media on issues of ethical journalism.

It has led to more discussion on how take practical steps to confront a difficult environment for the exercise of journalism that includes

- problems of safety and security;
- the absence of social protection and basic employment rights for media staff particularly in regional locations;
- lack of respect within media for existing systems of self-regulation;
- prevalence of “paid-news” and sponsored editorial activities;
- lack of transparency in media ownership and governance, particularly in dealing with conflicts of interest and relations with political institutions and corporate sector;
- fierce media competition driven by ratings system which promotes sensational and unethical news coverage focused on crime, violence and with dramatized re-enactments;

- publication of unverified information from social networks;
- role of media in promoting hate-speech and intolerance;
- weakening of the role of the media editors and increasing influence of media proprietors in defining media content and journalism
- no recognizable systems for systematic response to complaints and concerns of the audience;
- lack of transparency and political bias in allocation of public advertising by the state and state agencies
- poor levels of skills, knowledge and competence among journalists and editors on matters related to ethical journalism.

### **Programme Activities**

The work carried out through the programme has made a practical contribution to raising awareness inside media on the need to confront these problems. It has been focused on promoting actions within the media industry to strengthen ethics, good governance and self-regulation across all platforms of media.

In particular, the programme has led to the following:

1. The establishment of the Pakistan Coalition for Ethical Journalism, a ground-breaking network of journalists, media outlets, and media support groups linked to civil society which was the umbrella-body for a number of practical initiatives to promote ethical journalism;
2. The programme has also raised a number of issues for discussion among all media stakeholders and for focused debate inside media on a number of challenging professional issues including:
  - a) Reform of existing media self-regulation bodies including the Press Council of Pakistan and the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA);
  - b) Establishment of internal mechanisms inside media for review of ethical performance and good governance (Ethical Media Audits);
  - c) Co-operation with Pakistan's leading media enterprise GEO TV in the preparation and launch of the country's first extensive public outreach on internal ethical and self-regulation policy – GEO Asool;
  - d) Transformation of existing state broadcasting institutions (Pakistan Radio and Pakistan Television and state news agency) into genuinely public service media institutions;
  - e) Consultation with media and preparation of detailed code of conduct for media and election coverage with guidelines for establishment of editorial units for election reporting;
3. The programme has also promoted and carried out meetings, training and awareness-raising activities in the country's major media hubs (Karachi, Lahore

and Islamabad) with journalists, editors and media at proprietor level with the leading media in Pakistan, including *Dawn Group*, *GEO TV*, *Express-Tribune*, *SAMAA*, *Dunya*, *The Herald*, and *Pakistan Radio*;

4. Preparation of follow-up programmes of training and awareness-raising for strengthening ethical performance of media in election period and beyond for 2013 in co-operation with media developments groups.

The practical materials developed in this programme are attached to this report and are as follows:

Coalition for Ethical Journalism website: Creation of web portal for exchange of information on ethical journalism issues and promotion of materials and information about the programme and its work (see [www.pakmediaethics.org](http://www.pakmediaethics.org))

Ethical Media Audit: a detailed self-reporting mechanism that assists media in defining their work and attachment to ethical standards and good governance principles

Code for Election Reporting and Checklist for establishing reporting units at election time

Policy proposals and recommendations on effective self-regulation of media

Policy approach for transformation of state media into public service institutions

### **Evaluation of Programme and Recommendations**

In my view this work has proved immensely valuable. The issues covered are extremely important on defining the future role and responsibility of media in Pakistan – particularly the press – in a much-changed information landscape.

The sharing of experience from other countries and the contribution to the debate about reform of key media institutions (including the press council and the public broadcasting networks) will do much to enrich the debate going forward.

Most important has been the process of bring media support groups and media professionals together through the Coalition for Ethical Journalism and, as a priority, efforts should be made to maintain this initiative. One key element of the programme was emphasising the importance of media professional themselves playing a leading role in defining official policy (such as through the election reporting code).

Although there are continuing problems (not least continuing political instability, sectarian divisions and serious problems of security for media and their staff in some areas) it remains the case that Pakistan journalism is robust and the media environment is pluralist. Much more can and should be done to strengthen professional capacity and confidence.

Although, more media leaders could have participated in the public activities, the programme has engaged owners and editors in chief from important and strategic media players. This should be built upon.

Much work still needs to be done to raise awareness of the value of self-regulation; particularly inside media institutions. Internews Europe and other media development initiatives from the European Union should use and further develop the materials generated from this programme. The enthusiasm generated by this current activity among media is a valuable resource itself and should lead to more seminars and workshops on ethics, good governance and self-regulation in media.

Recommendations:

1. Strengthen the Coalition for Ethical Journalism and follow up recommendations for changes in the leadership.
2. Organise election reporting seminars for media leaders and journalists in the regions of Pakistan on the basis of the code of conduct and guidelines.
3. Support the continuing debate on reform of the Pakistan Press Council and encourage its association with the recently-launched regional alliance of press councils.
4. Inform and engage the Pakistan Government and relevant agencies of state of the results of the programme and seek recognition for the initiatives taken.
5. Promote a continuing discussion on the reform of state broadcasting and the broadcasting regulator PEMRA.

# Media Standards Audit: Reporting for Good Governance and Transparency in Pakistan

## 1. Introduction

Media in Pakistan work at a cracking pace. On all platforms of journalism media compete fiercely for market and audience share. However, many people, including those inside media, worry that in this overheated atmosphere standards of journalism and media governance are put under strain.

Intolerable time constraints, friction between journalism and commercial objectives and the need to adapt rapidly to changing market conditions all take their toll. Media companies themselves often find it difficult to monitor effectively their own performance and particularly their obligations to be open, inclusive and accountable.

The aim of this proposal is to help media establish a process to measure performance, set goals, and manage change through an organisational report that acts as an internal audit, providing information on the company and its work. The objective is to promote accountability through transparency.

It has been developed by the Pakistan Coalition for Ethical Journalism, a network of journalists, media and media support groups, looking at ways of helping media to keep track of their corporate responsibilities by helping them to achieve their objectives.<sup>1</sup>

The information is important for internal consumption, but it can also form the basis of the company's strategy for outreach – as an annual report, for instance – to help build trust with the audience.

It can promote the company's brand as an ethical and responsible provider of journalism and other information services among all stakeholders including staff, shareholders, and the public.

Whatever form it takes, the report should be clear. It should be understandable and accessible; it should contain information that supports analysis relative to other media; and it should be accurate and detailed enough for stakeholders to assess the company's performance.

Finally, this approach benefits everyone and creates confidence at all levels – including with investors, the workforce and the audience. Most importantly, a systematic review of performance opens the door to greater transparency and makes good business sense. It will increase economic opportunities and enable better and more informed decision-making.

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<sup>1</sup>*This proposal draws heavily from the detailed and comprehensive international standards of reporting for media drafted by the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), and GRI's Media Sector Supplement, which was launched in May 2012.*

## Structure of the Report

The following provides a basic structure for a Media Standards Audit. It could be introduced with a statement from the President or Chief Executive Officer on the values of the organisation. The audit should begin with an analysis of the company's journalism and its role as a public information provider and followed by a detailed review of management and working practice.

The headings set out here may be amended as needed, but the objective should be to provide an accessible and coherent picture of how the company works, its aims and objectives and its vision for the future.

## Our Mission

1. Company commitment to good governance and ethical standards
  - a) Mission statement
  - b) codes of conduct
  - c) governance rules (transparency, avoiding conflicts of interest)
  - d) engagement with external regulators (press council, etc)
  - e) Recognition and reward for quality work (prizes, etc)
  - f) Promoting integrity through co-operation between different sections of the company (commercial, marketing and editorial)
2. How much journalism we have produced
  - a) Numbers of editorial columns, contributions from external sources (commissioned and uncommissioned), and numbers of contributors on all platforms (including online sections),
  - b) Examples of holding power to account – business, politics, sports cultural life, etc.
  - c) Examples of issues raised and debates on important topics
3. How company protects editorial independence
  - a) Separation of commercial activities and editorial activities
  - b) Independence of the editor in chief : statement of editor on challenges and opportunities
  - c) Obligation of journalists to respect ethical codes
4. How Company deals with complaints and concerns of audience
  - a) Internal systems for dealing with complaints
  - b) Numbers of complaints received internally. How many resolved amicably, how many legal cases, how many complaints to the press council or industry regulator?
  - c) External systems for dealing with complaints (press council, etc.)

- d) Actions for engaging with the audience and readers.

## **Who we are and how we work**

### 5. Management and ownership of the company

- a) Status, name and address of the company, its range of activities
- b) Board of Directors
- c) Structure of management
- d) Financial holdings
- e) Rules of internal governance
- f) Report on company actions to combat corruption and actions taken in response to incidents of corruption.
- g) Income received from state sources (advertising, grants, etc.)
- h) Details of membership and participation in groups such as industry associations or national/international advocacy

### 6. Information on economic performance

- a) Circulation figures and audience reach
- b) Details of the company's financial status and reports as provided to national authorities as required by law.
- c) A commentary on financial trends and market conditions.

### 7. Industrial relations, labour standards and training activity

- a) Respect for national and international labour standards including trade union recognition, collective bargaining and gender equality
- b) What we have done to improve journalistic skills and other training for staff
- c) Numbers of full time, part-time and freelance staff
- d) Actions to promote diversity in staff employment

### 8. Safety and Protection of Journalists and Media Staff

- a) Provision of training and awareness-raising for reporting in danger zones
- b) First aid training
- c) Availability of medical insurance and life insurance
- d) Co-operation with industry initiatives to improve safety

## **Our vision of the Future**

### 9. Company objectives and targets

- a) Set out targets – editorially and commercially – for the company
- b) Assess successes and failures
- c) Highlight specific projects and programmes

### 10. Industry trends

- a) Challenges and risks in the next year
- b) Opportunities and potential for development

## **A Checklist for Key Report Information**

### 1. EDITORIAL PERFORMANCE:

Provide as many facts and figures as possible and focus on work that has enhanced the role of ethical journalism.

### 2. EDITORIAL INDEPENDENCE:

Report on structures and process for ensuring the right of editorial staff to work ethically and according to conscience including

- Obligations to respect an editorial code of conduct (is this set out in work contracts, for instance?)
- The appointment and independence of the editor in chief
- Systems for monitoring journalism and correcting errors
- Structures for setting out editorial policy and dealing with breaches of codes and guidelines.
- Policy regarding use of social networks (rules regarding Twitter and Facebook)

### 3. ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE :

The major elements in performance with as much transparency as possible on company revenues and expenditures as well as all income streams from state sources.

### 4. EMPLOYMENT :

Provide information on the total workforce by employment type, employment contract, and region, broken down by gender. Key elements of collective bargaining agreements covering staff labour rights.

### 5. HEALTH AND SAFETY:

Set out actions by company to protect journalists and media staff including

- Provision of training in hostile environment work and first aid.
- Provision of security protection.
- Provision of health and life insurance to vulnerable staff members.
- Other education, training, counseling, prevention, and risk-control actions to assist staff regarding serious diseases and physical attacks.

- Health and safety topics covered in formal agreements with trade unions.
- Engagement with safety activities at national and international level including International News Safety Institute.

## 6. TRAINING AND EDUCATION

Set out company provision of training by

- Average hours of training per year provided for employee by gender, and by employee category.
- Programmes for skills management and lifelong learning that support the workforce and assist them in managing career endings.
- How workers receive performance and career development reviews, by gender.

## 7. DIVERSITY AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES:

Set out the company's performance in composition of governance bodies and breakdown of employees per employee category according to gender, age group, minority group membership, and other indicators of diversity.

## 8. EQUAL PAY FOR WOMEN AND MEN

Provide information on the ratio of basic salary and remuneration of women to men by employee category, by significant locations of operation.

## 9. HUMAN RIGHTS:

Report on recognition of and attachment to respect for national and international standards covering:

- Freedom of expression
- Portrayal related to Human Rights
- Cultural Rights
- Intellectual Property
- Protection of Privacy
- Corruption and lobbying
- Audience Interaction
- Advertisement
- Media Literacy

Set out agreements and contracts that include clauses incorporating human rights concerns, or that have undergone human rights screening as well as total hours of employee training on policies and procedures concerning aspects of human rights that are relevant to operations, including the percentage of employees trained.

Report on total number of incidents of discrimination and corrective actions taken.

## 10.FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION AND COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Report on company recognition of the right to exercise freedom of association and collective bargaining and actions taken to support these rights.

Report on number of grievances related to human rights filed, addressed and resolved through formal grievance mechanisms.

## 11.PUBLIC POLICY:

Set out public policy positions and participation in public policy development and lobbying including the total value of financial and in-kind contributions to political parties, politicians, and related institutions.

## 12.CONTENT DISSEMINATION:

Report on actions taken to improve performance in relation to quality of content issues (particularly in editorial coverage related to vulnerable audiences) and results.

Report on the number and nature of feedback and complaints over editorial content and the responses of the company and outline the processes for addressing these concerns.

## 13.AUDIENCE INTERACTION and RATINGS

Report on methods to interact with audiences and results. Explain evaluation of ratings and practices related to customer satisfaction, including results of surveys measuring customer satisfaction.

## 14.MARKETING STANDARDS

Company policy related to adherence to laws, standards, and voluntary codes related to marketing communications, including advertising, promotion, and sponsorship.

Give details of all actions taken to separate marketing communications (advertising and commercial activities) from editorial work.

## 15.MEDIA LITERACY

Report on actions taken to empower audiences through media literacy skills development and results obtained.

## 16.PRIVACY and DEFAMATION

Report on total number of complaints regarding breaches of privacy or actions against the company regarding libel or defamation.

# **Code of Conduct for Media and Journalism and Coverage of Elections in Pakistan**

1. The aim of journalism on all media platforms is to provide coverage that is fair, unbiased and ethical. This is essential in reporting of political affairs and particularly at times of elections.
2. Media and ethical journalists in Pakistan strive at all times to
  - a) avoid discrimination against any political party, political leader or candidate
  - b) provide information that will assist citizens to better understand the issues, policies and perspectives of all democratic participants in the election process
  - c) ensure all communities are made fully aware of the election process and how they can freely exercise their right to vote
3. Media recognise that it is not always possible to cover all candidates in an election, but they shall strive to ensure that all candidates representing democratic values and a credible and significant body of opinion shall be subject to scrutiny and appropriate media coverage.
4. In this regard media shall apply principles of fairness in the allocation of time and space in provision of coverage to political parties and candidates while recognising that balance and fairness are achieved over a reasonable period of time.
5. In line with their responsibility to be inclusive and independent, media will canvass the voices and opinions of all sections of society and all democratic groups in their coverage of political affairs and elections.

In doing so all media, both public and private, shall scrupulously observe the distinction between advertising and editorial and shall not allow forms of advertising or paid political promotion to be disguised as editorial content. Paid political content must be identified as such.

A balance between broadcasting of paid for content and editorial content shall be maintained in line with agreed industry standards.

6. Media shall encourage journalism of the highest ethical standards in their election coverage and shall, in particular,
  - a) Avoid all forms of rumour, speculation and disinformation, particularly when these concern specific political parties or candidates,
  - b) Forbid the publication of unsubstantiated allegations or personal remarks or opinions that are designed to be offensive and malicious and verify information

regarding individuals or parties which is critical or negative before it is telecast, broadcast or published,

- c) Ban all forms of hate speech that can be interpreted as incitement to violence or has the effect of promoting public disorder.
7. This pledge to avoid inflammatory expression shall apply to coverage of political activities at all levels including when it applies to the reporting of statements or remarks by political leaders or candidates.
8. Media recognise that the power of elections rests with the people of Pakistan and the voters. They will exercise caution in the use of opinion polls and agree to work together to ensure that announcement of results is managed in an equitable and transparent manner ensuring that all media are able to report accurately the results as they emerge from the ECP and the election control room.
9. All media shall ensure that all their staff, including those working at local level have employment rights and enjoy social protection. They shall prepare staff for the task of election coverage in line with the checklist of principles and actions attached to this code.
10. Safety of journalists and media staff is paramount and all media shall provide staff with training and advice on security issues with appropriate support including insurance.
11. Candidates in Pakistan elections shall not act as news anchors, interviewers or presenters of any type of programme during the election period.
12. When a candidate takes part in an item about his or her particular election, then candidates of each of the major parties shall be offered the opportunity to take part. However, if they refuse or are unable to participate, the item may nevertheless go ahead.
13. Broadcasters must offer the opportunity to major candidates to take part in discussions covering a particular electoral area. This also applies to independent candidates. However, if a candidate refuses or is unable to participate, the item may nevertheless go ahead.
14. All media shall give the audience regular information about appropriate websites or other information source listing all candidates taking part in the elections.
15. Pakistan media agree to establish an election media monitoring group comprised of respected, non-partisan figures to protect the press from aggression and to investigate any incidents.
  - a) The group will follow the coverage of the election and register all incidents of threats or intimidation or other improper violation of media rights to report freely. It shall receive and consider relevant information from media monitoring groups including the Press Council of Pakistan and PEMRA.

- b) It shall further be committed to protect the interests of media and should work under the umbrella of the Pakistan Broadcasters Association, the Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists, the Pakistan Newspaper Society and the Council of Pakistan Newspaper Editors.
- c) This group shall deal with all complaints and issues arising from media coverage of the elections and shall strive to ensure professional respect for the principles and values set out in this code.
- d) The group shall ensure that media act together to protect each other from acts of violence or political intimidation and that fair and transparent systems are used for the allocation of state and political advertising related to the elections.

This code, which has been drafted by the Pakistan Coalition for Ethical Journalism after consultation with Pakistan media and journalists at meetings in Karachi, Lahore and Islamabad, is submitted to all media and to media support organisations for their further consideration.

It is also submitted to the election commission and to all political parties, who are asked to recognise and support the self-regulating commitment of media, and to respect the right of all journalists to report freely in conditions of safety and security.

Islamabad, November 22<sup>nd</sup> 2012

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## **Election Coverage: A Checklist for Ethical and Fair Reporting**

*(NOTE: These are suggestions for individual media organisations concerning editorial preparation for elections in line with Clause 9 of the Code for Election Coverage. It is not for circulation other than to media organisations and is intended to assist them in drawing up their own checklist.)*

### Introduction

The challenge of objectivity, impartiality and balance in media is faced daily by Pakistan journalists, but there is no test of professionalism greater than that posed by a political election. During an election the impulse to manipulate media and to control information is strongest among ruling parties and political leaders running for office.

The media in Pakistan recognise that their first duty is to provide citizens with access to all the facts, opinions and ideas being canvassed in the campaign. The principles of Pakistan media in coverage of an election are set out as follows:

- Our role is primarily to be the link between voters, the community and the political leadership.

- We are not the voice-box for politics alone; we also provide access to media to ordinary people so that citizen's voices can be heard.
- We shall review and underscore our professional guidelines and rules to ensure ethical practice in the reporting of all aspects of the election.
- We will remember that elections can bring out the worst in politicians (and journalists) – extreme opinions, extravagant promises and intemperate speech.
- Reporters and editors shall be wary of violent rhetoric and offensive opinion, particularly about minorities and vulnerable groups.
- Keeping the peace is the job of the police, but journalists should not do anything that may incite intolerance or hatred.

The following guidelines provide some basic advice for journalists and media in their election coverage:

### Remain independent and Keep Your Distance

Pakistan journalists are citizens too and are entitled to their own political opinions, but they must be non-partisan in their journalism, especially when reporting elections.

Media opinions on politics will be kept to properly identified editorial columns and programmes.

In the news and current affairs reporting we must be fair to all parties and candidates.

Practicing journalists should not take part in any election activity, standing for election, speaking at party rallies or making financial donations.

Journalists and media representatives never take gifts, cash or in kind. There will be a political price to pay. If inducements are offered, check with the editor.

Journalists, broadcasters and publishers have a responsibility towards the society as a whole. Journalism was originally intended to be, and must continue to be, a useful instrument in the general interest rather than mouthpieces of individual, particular interests.

This explains why it is vital that politicians keep their hands out of the affairs of journalists. But it also means that journalists cannot be prevented by their advertisers or even their proprietors from acting professionally.

Media should establish internal mechanisms to avoid undue pressure on journalists and to reinforce professionalism and independence.

## Give Voters a Voice and Confront All forms of Bias

The most important people in an election are not the politicians - the party leaders or candidates. It is the Pakistani people and particularly those who vote. So give the voters a voice.

Media will provide information on the election process. They will examine the promises of people canvassing for votes and pose relevant questions that focus on the needs of citizens and the community.

We will show to voters that we are on their side and we will confront all forms of undue editorial bias in election coverage.

Allegations of bias in the news media are not unusual, particularly at election time. Politicians and public interest groups may regard the omission of certain news items or issues from newspapers and radio and television news bulletins as deliberate bias.

More often than not, journalists make these choices on the basis of sound professional judgment. But mistakes are made. When deadlines are tight and pressures are greatest, the weighing of these factors may be less thorough.

In general, journalists strive for fairness and for decisions made solely on the basis of news value. That is something which journalists always try to respect, and that is sometimes difficult for many outside journalism to understand.

Of course there is political pressure. Often it comes from the traditional supporters of particular media. This base may be identified by social status, language or other cultural dimension. Liberal newspapers tend to be left of centre in their editorial columns; conservative newspapers will favour right of centre politics.

Partisan journalism can be good journalism. Campaigning journalism in favour of human rights issues has often nurtured the best tradition in the profession, but the political opinions of the editorial columns should not interfere with the process of news gathering, news selection and placement.

Allegations of deliberate, political bias are easy to make and often difficult to refute. The gathering, editing and publishing of news involves decisions by people who inevitably bring their own background, values and prejudices to bear on deciding what to select, emphasize and colour as news.

But even if there is personal bias, there must be balance in the representation of a range of views. Lack of balance can lead to unfair representation of politics as well as unacceptable stereotypes that are unfair to women, homosexuals, and socially marginalized groups and minorities.

Media can express biased opinion. The editorial column, which serves as the institutional voice of a newspaper on a wide range of issues, must be biased because it expresses an opinion, even though such opinion must always be based on confirmed facts. Columnists and television anchors also have the right to express their opinions.

But none of this should lead to a lack of fairness in news reporting where balanced coverage of events is expected. Reporters, editors and proprietors must avoid actions which sacrifice even-handed journalism for partisan self-interest.

The suppression of essential or important facts and the deliberate distortion of other facts through wrong or improper emphasis must be forbidden.

News readers should not give preferential news coverage to one party or another and using deceptive "camera angles" to disguise or enhance the size of campaign rallies is not acceptable and using technology to enhance or diminish images of a candidate.

It is the media's job to act fairly. Remember that many politicians are skilled at manipulating people, including media. In the 2012 presidential elections in the United States billions of dollars are being spent on television time often to avoid politicians having to talk to free media.

Journalists can confront this approach by ensuring that they provide a link between election news and the reader, listener or viewer. News coverage should be a bridge connecting candidates and the voters.

In the age of social networks and open journalism the desire of the people to become more involved in the political process is here to stay.

Journalism should not focus on the glitz and the glamour of personality or character politics and the inevitable "horse race" model of reporting. We need to dig deep into the substantive issues that bring news values into line with concerns of the voters.

## Getting Organised

Journalists covering elections need to know what they are talking about. We shall train our staff in election reporting and the importance of political pluralism. Reporters and editors will ensure that they are fully briefed on all aspects of the election from the point of view of the voter as well as the political candidates.

In particular this includes

- understanding the constitutional and legal background to the holding of elections as well as the process of the election itself,
- knowing details about the parties, candidates and political manifestos,
- understanding the issues that are important for voters,
- using credible sources who provide insight to make sense of it all.

There should also be full understanding of **safety and security issues**. Journalists and media staff should not take unnecessary risks. Campaign events can be robust, even dangerous, journalists should at all times be aware of safety concerns.

Media should ensure that all journalists and media staff, including those employed at local and district level, are properly paid with recognised employment contracts

Each media organisation agrees to follow the minimum standards set out below for the editorial organisation of election coverage:

**1: Details:** To obtain from the electoral commission regarding all the details of the coming poll: registration date, start and closing day of the campaign period, Election Day specifics (how the polling will be organized, timetable for election returns, etc.).

**2: Rules:** To study the election rules: voting system, electoral laws, poll watching, laws governing international observation delegations, use of public opinion surveys, political advertising regulations, access to state media, electoral expenses limitations, etc.).

**3: Guidelines:** To work according to the common guidelines and code of conduct agreed by Pakistan media.

**4: Audience awareness:** To explain to readers and viewers your reporting rules, how you are going to cover the campaign and why and ensure that they are able to register concerns and complaints as appropriate.

**6: Roles and responsibilities** To establish an editorial team for the elections. Election coverage is the political desk's golden hour but should not be its exclusive preserve. All departments can be asked to perform duties according to their skills.

Specialised writers will analyze issues on their beat (economics, health, foreign affairs, economics, labour, education), others will compare competing political programmes, and some will scrutinise speeches and position papers, to track inconsistencies and expose propaganda.

**7: Review procedure:** To appoint an editorial election panel to review delicate questions that may arise as the campaign develops. It should include the editor-in-chief, the relevant department head, and a few distinguished commentators or reporters.

**8: Backup systems** To plan for emergencies: what do you do if something breaks down on your side (your computer crashes, when one of your reporters is arrested or wounded, etc.) and on the side of the government (failure in the collation of results, charges of irregularities, etc.)

**9. Clarity of content and contact with audience:** To promote civic education and carefully and repeatedly explain the principles and techniques of voting and what the election will lead to (a new parliament, separation of powers, transparency, etc.) and to introduce an open line to readers so they might ask questions on specific points of the campaign and air their views.

**10: Plans for polls:** To ensure that public opinion polls are not elections and do not become the dominant feature of election reporting. Unprofessional polls are bad news, for voters and for media. Some points:

- Never commission surveys that do not stick to the highest standards and never print them without fully explaining the conditions and the limits of the survey.
- Expose any fraud in a political party or newspaper survey. Never forget that polls will never replace old-style political reporting.
- Avoid using unattributed online information. The social networks are useful, but they are a rumour-mongering paradise.

**11: Fact files and Background Reporting:** To begin the editorial preparation well ahead of Election Day: prepare profiles of major candidates, close-ups on most electoral districts (economic base, population profile, major problems, party dominance).

**12: Fair Access for Politicians:** To allocate time and space for political comment by parties and politicians on a fair and rotating basis. Stop the process at least a week before election day so as not to give undue advantage to one candidate or to the propaganda of one party.

**13: Beware of Media manipulation:** To avoid stunts and cooked-up events from media-savvy parties and politicians that are designed just to grab headlines. And to avoid publishing political parties' press releases without checking them. These shall as a source for a more balanced story.

**14: Attribution:** To be credible and always attribute information and clearly identify and attribute any information coming from sources other than obtained from independent reporting.

**15: Review process:** To review how our team cover the campaign and to compare our performance with other media.

*Islamabad*  
*November 22<sup>nd</sup> 2012*

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## **PRESS COUNCIL AND MEDIA REGULATION IN PAKISTAN**

In transitional societies like Pakistan trustworthy and independent journalism working through transparent and accountable media are crucial for political and social stability.

Self-regulation is designed to avoid the use of law to enforce standards of good governance and ethical conduct in journalism. It can build trust in the community.

The success or failure of the Press Council in Pakistan depends upon the following:

- Firstly, that it is voluntary and initiated by media professionals who have a genuine desire to improve their standards;
- Second, that it creates a code and ethical guidelines that balance independent journalism and media freedom with responsibility;
- Third, that it applies ethical standards consistently and its decisions are respected both by media outlets and by government and special interests;
- Fourth, that it is independent of vested interests, both political and commercial;
- Fifth, that it is recognised and used by the public it serves.

To ensure that it is in tune with public demands for democratic change the guiding principles for self-regulation and for media law should be rights based and flow from internationally-accepted human rights standards, in particular, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and African Human Rights standards.

Therefore, the press council should be guided by the following principles:

1. Freedom of expression and freedom of media are basic human rights
2. Any limits on these freedoms are only to protect other human rights
3. That all forms of regulation are based on democratic principles.

By taking this approach, the press council is placed in the mainstream of the movement for political pluralism and democracy. It also recognises the history of violations of press rights and free expression and signals a call for an end to the ill-treatment of journalists and a trend towards increased pressure on media and journalists from political and non-state actors.

Although accepted international standards allow restrictions on free expression these are only in extremely narrow circumstances, such as cases of defamation of private

individuals, or incitement to violence and hatred, or speech that clearly threatens national security.

Such restrictions these must be clearly defined, specific, necessary, and proportionate to the interest protected.

Article 19 of the ICCPR, for instance, sets out the very narrow conditions under which limitations on speech are permissible, namely that they be provided by law and necessary.

*(a) For the respect of the rights or reputations of others; and (b) For the protection of national security or of public order, or of public health or morals.”*

Support for free speech is based on a belief that people are free to hold different and contrary opinions and that they have the right to challenge their government and society and seek to change it, through peaceful expression of views. Public discussion of changes to the political, social, or economic system is a normal part of political life in any democratic country and Pakistan should be no exception.

Additionally, there should be demands for a legal environment in Pakistan that will promote pluralism and will remove all vaguely defined limits on speech which invite abusive and arbitrary enforcement. Indeed, media law should ensure

- Maximum protection of media freedom
- Minimal exceptions specified by law and deemed necessary
- Legal protection of sources
- Limits on media ownership and monopolies to support pluralism
- No criminal defamation and short statute of limitation
- Fines in civil defamation must not be disproportionate
- Commitment to self-regulation and recognition of the Media Foundation

Having considered the legal environment and the rights base for creation of a press council, it is finally essential to ensure that it is a body that it is free of undue political interference in its work.

Therefore, it must operate at all levels without government involvement, particularly in its representative and decisive functions.

Its membership should involve journalist associations, editors and publishers across all platforms of media working in co-operation and association with public representatives and its independence should be further secured through a process of funding, which may legitimately involve public money, but which is transparent and accountable.

## **2. HOW TO FIT THE PAKISTAN PRESS COUNCIL INTO MEDIA LAW**

In many countries where the self-regulating authority is recognised in law; and is given legal powers – such as to enforce its judgements – it is known as co-regulation.

Different systems apply even within regions where there is a common democratic tradition, such as Europe. In Germany, the Press Council is recognised in the Basic Law of the Constitution, but it has no legal authority. In Sweden it has no legal standing. However, in Denmark it has legal authority.

Given the conditions applying in Pakistan, it is useful to look at examples of legal recognition of media self-regulation and the legal as applied in countries with a similar cultural, historical and social-economic profile, such as for instance Indonesia. Here are two examples.

## **INDONESIA**

The following texts provide examples of articles from the Indonesian Press Law (40/1999) which show how the press law underlines constitutional rights and gives authority to a press council for self-regulation.

### Article 4

- (1) Freedom of the press is an inalienable right of every citizen
- (2) Censorship, banning or denial of broadcasting to the national press is forbidden
- (3) To guarantee press freedom, national press has the rights to seek, acquire and disseminate ideas and information
- (4) Journalists have the legal right to protect the identity of source(s)

### Article 5

- (1) National press is obliged to respect religious norms, public morality and the presumption of innocence until proven guilty (in its duty to disseminate opinion and news to the public)
- (2) The press is obliged to respect “the rights of reply”
- (3) The press is obliged to respect “the right to correct”

### Article 9

- (1) Every Indonesian citizen and the state has the right to publish (create a media)
- (2) Every media company has to be registered as a legal entity

### Article 11

Foreign ownership of a media company is only possible through the purchase of publicly traded shares

### Article 12

Every media company is obliged to announce to the public its address and the name of the person responsible for the content of its product. The printed press must inform the public the name and address of its printer

#### Article 13

Media are not allowed to carry advertisements that:

- Insult any religion or inciting religious conflict or are offensive to public morality
- Promote alcoholic drinks, drugs and contrabands
- Promote any image of cigarette or the act of smoking

The press law also contains the following articles concerning establishment of a press council. These were drafted by Indonesian media professionals.

#### Article 15

In order to develop and maintain freedom of the press, an independent Press Council should be founded. The Press Council duties are:

1. To protect freedom of the press from any interference.
2. To conduct study to develop and enhance the quality of the press.
3. To establish and supervise the implementation of journalism Code of Ethics.
4. To provide guidance and amicable solution in mediating conflicts between member of societies and the press.
5. To enhance communication among the press, the people and the government.
6. To facilitate press organizations in their effort to create rules to enhance the quality of press freedom.
7. To maintain information about the press

*Other articles relevant to the press council and its work are:*

#### Article 17

1) Society can conduct activities to enhance press freedom and provide the rights to information

(2) Those activities can be in the form of:

- Monitoring, reporting and analysing press deficiencies in conducting its duty to inform the public.
- Providing suggestions to the Press Council in order to increase its effectiveness in enhancing the quality of the national press.

Article 1: “Journalist is a person who does journalism on regular basis”

Article 7: (2) Indonesian journalists abide by the journalism code of ethics

Article 18: “Anyone found guilty of damaging press freedom is liable up to 2 years prison sentence or fine of up to Rp 500.000.000,-” (42.000 Euro)

## **DENMARK**

In Denmark the press council has legal powers which are set out in the Media Liability Act (Act No. 348 of 6 June 1991). It has authority to enforce its adjudications on matters of “sound press ethics.”

The rules of “sound press ethics” are the articles of an ethical code which were agreed by media professional groups and form an annex to the Act.

The law recognises the press council as a complaints authority, covering the press and broadcasting. The council rules only on alleged breaches of press ethics and questions on the right of reply.

### Section 43

The Press Council shall rule in cases relating to

- 1) Whether the publication made is contrary to press ethics
- 2) whether a mass media shall be under an obligation to publish a reply, including the content, form and location of the reply.

### Section 49

The Council may direct the editor of the media against which the complaint has been lodged to publish a decision to an extent specified by the Council. Such a publication shall be made without comments and in any such conspicuous manner as may reasonably be demanded.

### Section 52

After conducting negotiations with the Council, the Minister of Justice shall lay down the Press Council’s rules of procedure. The Minister of Justice may direct that the expenses of the Council are paid by mass media according to a scale fixed in the Council rules of procedure.

## **3. SCOPE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PRESS COUNCIL**

As set out earlier, the Pakistan Press Council may undertake a number of tasks and responsibilities. These might be expected to include a mix of the following

- Defence of media freedom,
- Promote quality of journalism
- Establish a recognised media codes and guidelines for journalists
- Promote media literacy and responsible use of information

- Media disputes between the media and the public.

a) Defend Editorial Independence and Media Freedom

**Indonesia:** The Press Council, which operates in transitional conditions, where media freedom and democratic pluralism have been recognised only in recent years, undertakes a range of tasks including advocacy, education and training, and mediation of disputes. The role and responsibilities of Council are:

- Bringing bad laws to the attention of the Constitutional Court
- Making sure proposed legislation is friendly to press freedom
- Advocating use of press law as *lex specialis*
- Providing expert witness at court and during police investigation
- Promoting press freedom paradigm to police, judges, prosecutors, bureaucrats, parliament members, professional groups and other civil society groups including media
- Ethical training for journalists and others
- Facilitating press self rule and guidance

b) Promote High Standards of Ethics

Almost all press councils operate in the context of a recognised and accepted code of ethics which are prepared by media professionals. In some there is an active commitment to promote these ethics.

**Indonesia:** A declared objective of the Press Council is to facilitate media efforts to create rules to enhance the quality of press freedom and to provide professional training in ethical matters for journalists and media staff.

**Germany:** The press council actively seeks to make recommendations and guidelines for journalistic work. Its mission is to observe, reprimand and, where possible, remove any corruption, abuse, degeneration and dubious infringements of ethical journalism and at the same time, to build public respect for the press.

c) Mediate and Adjudicate Disputes: Role of Council and/or Ombudsman

**Germany:** The key task of the Press Council is to investigate and to decide on individual complaints. It has no legal power to enforce its judgements. It covers only press and online media.

**Indonesia:** The Press Council provides guidance and seeks amicable solution in mediating conflicts between members of the public and all media (press, broadcasting and online).

d) Monitor and Review state of Media

**India:** the press council makes an annual report on the state of press freedom and the problems facing media which highlights threats to journalism.

#### Provide Expert Opinion

**Indonesia:** The press council gives expert opinion on laws affecting the media to the attention of the Constitutional Court; it monitors proposed legislation and its potential impact on media freedom; and it provides expert witness at court and during police investigations.

(Most press councils do not regard themselves as consultative or representative media bodies expected to engage in dialogue with the government or the state. This role in Indonesia is unusual, but it is work done in the context of monitoring proposed new laws and official policy and provides a positive benefit reflecting the fact that the country is in the process of building a culture of media freedom.)

### **PRESS COUNCIL STRUCTURE**

The working rules and procedures of self-regulating bodies vary considerably.

#### **a) Membership**

Most self-regulating authorities have a majority of their members nominated from within the media professional community by associations of owners, editors and journalists mixed with a number of public representatives usually selected by independent and non-political groups within civil society.

**Indonesia:** The press council has nine members (three from journalist groups, three from media owners, and three public representatives who are selected by the press organisations). The Chairman is someone from the public sector.

**Denmark:** Under Section 41 of the Media Liability Act the Council consists of eight members — a Chairman and Deputy Chairman, appointed the President of the Supreme Court, two members to be appointed by the Journalists' Union, two members appointed by media managements, and two public representatives recommended by the Danish Council for Adult Education.

**Germany:** The press council membership is selected from delegates of the publisher and journalist associations. The four media professional groups establish two complaints committees elected from a 28-member plenary: the general complaints committee with two chambers and 8 members each and the complaints committee for editorial data protection with 6 members. There are no public representatives.

#### **b) Funding**

In most countries press councils seek funding from media organisations and try to limit their reliance on public funding. However, in many cases there is a need for public support to supplement the contribution of media companies.

**Germany:** media companies and journalists' unions make a contribution to costs of the press council. The state also pays the costs of mediation services as recognition of the public interest in this work.

**Indonesia:** The press council is allowed to receive and seek donations. It also receives contributions from publishers and media organisations. The major payment is made by the state for educational activities and the public promotion work of the council. This state aid began in 2006. It is accounted for separately from other income.

**Sweden:** The Swedish system is entirely voluntary and wholly financed by four press organisations. Unusually, the Swedish Press Council charges a “fee” or a fine on censored newspapers equivalent to around 3.500 Euro. This money is paid into a fund to cover press council.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Enclosed are some comments on some special issues – broadcasting policies, the right of reply and further information on the ombudsman. It should be noted that increasingly most press councils handle complaints regarding online news services and are increasingly seeking to centralise handling of complaints from both press and broadcasting,

In order to further develop the work of the oppress council it may be useful to establish two working groups, also involving media professionals

- a) **Working group to prepare new rules** of the council covering questions of representation, funding, governance and operational activities;
- b) **Working group to prepare a working programme** for the council including efforts to raise awareness in media, to develop proposals for promotion of media freedom, outreach to public and establishment of a secretariat for complaints. The most important challenge, however, may be how to create a media community which supports an efficient and credible self-regulator. The Coalition for Ethical Journalism in Pakistan could be the catalyst for bringing together owners, editors and journalists across all platforms for this purpose.

## **SPECIAL ISSUES:**

### **a) Regulation of Journalism in Pakistan Broadcasting**

The reform of PEMRA is an urgent and necessary requirement for the creation of a new, democratic and professional system for dealing with complaints about journalism across all media platforms in Pakistan.

The key challenges of reform are separation of the responsibilities for licensing and allocation of frequencies with application of standards and codes concerning journalism content in broadcast media (public and private).

The independence, funding and operational system of accountability for journalism in press, broadcasting and online should be guaranteed by legal means. In many countries this form of self-regulation is already in place – Netherlands, Denmark, Belgium and Indonesia. Additionally, in Canada and Indonesia, the regulator can launch legal challenges against threats to media freedom, including by the state.

The mandate of the public broadcasting system must be clearly set out in enabling legislation including the separation of the independent role of the supervisory board and editorial independence of journalists and other creators. The ability to make independent decisions about content in all its forms is an important guarantor of the freedom of public broadcasting.

### **b) Statutory Right of Reply**

Well respected principle of ethics that any person or institution criticised should be allowed to comment in the story or in a right of reply given equal prominence to the original story. There is no legal right in UK, Australia or Canada.

A person who is the subject of factual allegations that cast them in a negative light is entitled to respond without having to demonstrate that the information was false or defamatory (Germany, Netherland, Norway or Spain, for instance).

In France the right is triggered by critical opinions. Offended party may go to court if paper refuses to publish a reply. Publication does not affect other remedies and does not amount to an admission of wrongdoing. Publication may reduce damages (Germany, Norway).

### **b) The Ombudsman**

The ombudsman is a widely-accepted international term to describe a public office possessing genuine independence to scrutinise authority. The concept is the notion of a person who “represents the public” in monitoring of exercise of power in government or state institutions.

It has its origins in Sweden where it has been broadened to include ombudsmen for various areas including gender equality, community relations, rights of children and the press.

Over the past 30 years ombudsmen have been established in many newspapers and some broadcast media across Europe and North America. It is estimated that there are about 100 news ombudsmen in media.

The ombudsman can be present inside media outlets or may, as in Sweden, work outside individual media and play a key role in a national system of self-regulation.

The aim of an ombudsman, whether in the press or broadcasting, is the same:

- To be responsive to the audience,
- To defend the integrity of editorial work,
- To promote transparency and openness in journalism and media.

# **Citizen Media: A Call for Transformation of Pakistan State Broadcasting Media**

*Declaration of the public consultation held in Serena Hotel, Islamabad, September 20<sup>th</sup> 2012:*

We the stakeholders of Pakistan's pluralistic community, comprising citizens, civil society, political parties and media, including newspapers, TV channels and radio stations, from both the private and public sectors, affirm that

- a) freedom of expression and right to information are fundamental rights as guaranteed by the Constitution of Pakistan which must be respected by way of transparent commitment and practice,
- b) Pakistan media, as critical sources of reliable information for a large majority of the citizens, must be free, fair and dedicated to serving and safeguarding public interests by being editorially independent and at all times respectful of public trust,
- c) without commitment to public service values in media – to ethics and professionalism – there will be biased and incomplete coverage of news, current affairs and other information-based programming, and that
- d) all media in Pakistan, whether in the public or private sectors, should strive to be unbiased, ethical and professional.

We recognise that in an open, diverse and digital media landscape the notion of government-run state broadcasting is not a viable or credible system that can command the attention and trust of the public.

We believe that there should be full transparency in state relations with the media as a vital part of creating public trust.

The media itself has a responsibility to show leadership in setting standards for internal transparency and accountability.

Accordingly, we demand that all forms of secret funding of media and journalism, both from national and international agencies, should cease.

We call for the allocation of state advertising to be made more transparent, for it to be taken out of government control and for this work to be carried out by an independent body of reputed professionals.

We believe that state media institutions, including Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation, Pakistan Television, APP and Shalimar Recording and Broadcasting Company, should become free from undue political influence at all levels and that editorial independence should be guaranteed.

In a democratic and transparent society government must not be afraid of journalism and public scrutiny of its actions.

As a first step we therefore declare that PBC, PTV, APP and SRBC, which are major shareholders of the Pakistan media space serving the whole population, should be freed from direct and exclusive control of the government.

It should become public service media, charged with safeguarding constitutional guarantees on freedom of expression and the right of all citizens to information and administered with public funds according to an explicit public mandate.

As representatives of direct stakeholders in this public-funded enterprise, and in conclusion of a focused national consultation, we demand urgent reforms that will allow the PBC, PTV APP and SRBC to be transformed from government service operations to genuinely public service systems.

We call for management of these media to be handed over to independent boards comprising eminent citizens reflecting Pakistan's diverse socio-political, ethnic and cultural communities and opinions.

These independent boards should prepare a public service agenda for its transformation to enable PBC, PTV, APP and SRBC to function in a transparent and accountable manner as non-partisan, ethical and professional media organisations committed to the promotion of a public interest information environment in the country.

Finally, we call for legal reforms that will underpin the principles of media independence set out here in particular the transformation of PEMRA and the creation of a single authority for regulation of broadcasting across all platforms, both public and private.

We believe a further consultation on the future of media regulation including the creation of a single media council based on principles of self-regulation and covering all media platforms is urgently needed and we commit ourselves to following this process.

# Strengthening Professionalism and Self-Regulation in Egyptian Media

## **Final Report**

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### **Introduction**

Following the dramatic events of January 2011 and a popular revolution in Egypt a process of economic, social and democratic reform in Egypt has led to renewed interest in media reform and the creation of an independent, accessible and pluralist information space.

In particular, within the media community and supported within society at large there have been calls for actions to strengthen the role of media and journalism in support of democracy.

As part of this process of reform and renewal the media community has indicated its desire to create new structures for the regulation of media content and journalism in line with international standards of press freedom and information pluralism.

The Director of the Ethical Journalism Network has been working with UNESCO during 2012 to help develop and support a proposal for the creation of an inclusive and independent authority of self-regulation for Egyptian media able to implement a code of conduct and adjudicate complaints.

The EJM actions, which are attached to this report, has involved

- Assistance in the preparation of a debate within Egyptian media on the importance of self-regulation including preparation of a detailed background note on self-regulation issues ;
- Participation in an initial seminar in April 2012 to launch a process for the creation of a self-regulatory authority and drafted the declaration from the meeting which set out the process of establishing a steering committee to draft necessary documents for an independent self-regulatory media foundation;
- Providing advice and consultancy to the steering committee on self-regulation for journalists and including the writing of a detailed handbook on self-regulation:
- Providing materials on best practice containing draft articles for press and broadcasting law and setting out the role and functions of the media foundation within the media regulatory/self-regulatory system;

- Helping define the areas of responsibility of the foundation including the editing and assistance in drafting by-laws for the foundation and the preparation for the launch of the process to establish the new authority;

The EJNI Director visited Cairo December 2012 and participated in the formal launching of the declaration establishing the foundation.

In carrying out this work the EJNI has worked in partnership with UNESCO and its media partners, including the Syndicate of Journalists,

To prepare the meeting held at the Syndicate of Journalists' building in April 2012 the EJNI Director visited Cairo and advised UNESCO and the syndicate on the organisation of the launch seminar for a discussion on self-regulation.

On his advice the participation of experts with relevant experience from Pakistan and Indonesia were drawn into the process, providing helpful advice. In the event, the operational proposal for a new self-regulatory body draws upon the experience and practice of the Press Council of Indonesia.

In order to strengthen further the professional discussion on the importance of self-regulation and to raise awareness within the profession, the consultant provided drafted guidelines for self-regulation for Egyptian media and media professionals in the form of a handbook which has been translated into Arabic and distributed within media.

#### **Evaluation of EJNI Director:**

In my view this work has proved immensely valuable. The issues are extremely important on defining the future role and responsibility of media – particularly the press – in a much-changed information landscape. The sharing of experience from other countries and the contribution to the debate about reform of key media institutions (including the Egyptian Syndicate of Journalists) will do much to enrich the debate going forward.

There were some problems during the process mostly caused by uncertain circumstances (not least the continuing political instability and sectarian divisions which have hindered the process of constitutional reform). However, it is a pity that more media leaders did not participate in the public activities. It may well be useful in follow up work to have targeted actions directed towards key media institutions in the press and broadcasting sectors.

Much work needs to be done to raise awareness of the concept of self-regulation; particularly inside media institutions and UNESCO may find it useful to build upon the materials and enthusiasm generated by this current activity to promote more seminars and workshops on ethics, good governance and self-regulation in media.

# **Programme of Ethical Journalism, Self-regulation and Good Governance for Media in Egypt**

## **Introduction**

This short paper highlights the challenges and tasks facing media professionals in Egypt as they work to strengthen independent and quality journalism and consider how best to build credible structures for self-regulation of media.

The programme should be developed from the following principles:

- That Egyptian journalism must be free and independent and driven by the ethical conduct of journalism and good governance of media across all platforms;
- That the experience of media regulation in other countries is valuable, but that Egyptian media must adopt its own models reflecting the principle that ethical journalism is a public good;
- That the role of the state is to create an enabling environment for the development of free media without any direct political interference in editorial content or management and administration of media.
- That self-regulation, both internally and externally, should be the guiding principle in the development of systems of media monitoring, review of journalistic work and resolution of disputes between media and their audience.

## **Challenges for Egyptian Media**

Public confidence: Perhaps the most immediate task facing journalism and media in Egypt is to build public confidence in journalism. For many years informal mechanisms of political influence and the legal constraints on media have undermined public trust and this has increased in the period of revolutionary reform over the past year.

The Legal Environment: Laws covering broadcast media, the Supreme Press Council, the journalists' syndicate and the role of the state information ministry are all under urgent review. There is a need for preparation of new statutes that will create the basis for a new media landscape that will be transparent, modern, efficient and independent, creating an environment for ethical journalism and the provision of a pluralist information service for all citizens.

Media laws are necessary, of course, but only to the extent that they are needed to make press freedom enforceable. This means constitutional prohibition on censorship; laws that guarantee access to information and protect journalists' rights to act ethically; and rules that guarantee the fair and transparent administration of media business covering ownership, licensing, disclosure and financial matters such as taxation. Unavoidable exceptions from free expression (incitement to violence or

distribution of child pornography, for example) must be set in law and clearly defined. The law should not be used to criminalise speech that disturbs or offends.

Self-regulation: the principle of voluntary and credible regulation by media themselves is a critical objective and requires careful examination of practice in other countries. There are useful examples in many European countries, but also in other countries – such as suggested in this paper from Pakistan and Indonesia – where cultural traditions and socio-economic challenges are more similar to the Egyptian experience.

The process of self-regulation is both internal and external. The government itself should be encouraged to promote self-regulation by keeping the media pluralist and by creating genuinely public and independent forms of state media.

In many countries media organisations have internal rules and mechanisms which are designed to promote ethical conduct. These include:

- The adoption of mission statements;
- The application of codes of conduct;
- The development of internal guidelines and procedures which assist journalists in their work;
- The appointment of special staff and procedures to mediate disputes.

(Examples: The Guardian, Die Zeit, Le Monde, GEO TV, Aljazeera, Reuters, Tempo, in Indonesia.)

These internal systems are being updated in many countries to take account of social media and the need for new measures to verify information and images which comes from many different sources.

Internal systems often include an ombudsman or readers' editor. This is a senior and independent figure who is expected to take a robust and independent role in mediating complaints from readers and viewers. In the Guardian, for instance, the readers' editor was appointed by the paper's Trustees, not the Editor in Chief.

The experience of GEO TV in Pakistan, a country where media are often under political pressure from state and non-state actors has introduced self-regulating rules which may be useful for Egyptian media. It has also successfully promoted a common code of conduct among media in reporting of terrorism.

At the same time, there are forms of regulation of content through external bodies such as self-regulating press councils or legally-based media commissions for broadcast media. In almost all countries the regulation of broadcasting (whether state or private) is subject to a legal process.

The relevance of different structures for print and broadcast media is called into question by technological convergence of media. Today media content – online, print and broadcast – may be produced from the same newsroom. In a modern environment all journalism, therefore, could be subject to a single form of self-regulation.

The principle of self-regulation does not exclude a role for law in strengthening journalism. Indeed, a mix of self-regulating principle in a narrowly-defined legal

context is now emerging as an important form of co-regulation being considered or already in operation many countries (Denmark, UK and Indonesia, for example).

But the law here is designed to strengthen the work of a self-regulation body not to act as a constraint or punitive weapon to restrict journalism. A credible self-regulation body will have a number of characteristics:

1. It gathers together all media outlets, editors, owners and journalists;
2. It has the support of government and include appropriate representation of civil society;
3. It develops a single code of conduct and rules of good governance and will supervise it and provide sanctions against those who break it;
4. It provides a credible alternative to court procedures, providing remedies through corrections, apologies and a right of reply to complainants.
5. It is funded and administered in a transparent manner with full disclosure of its financial affairs and appointment procedures;
6. It promotes media literacy and responsible use of information in journalism and society at large;
7. It monitors and reports regularly on the media and the work of journalists;
8. It advocates an enabling environment for media pluralism and ethical journalism and engages in dialogue with the authorities and the public.

Not all existing bodies have all of these characteristics but many do. In this regard the experience of the Press Council in Indonesia may be useful to examine in the context of Egypt. This is a body which not only deals with complaints against media, but it is also an advocacy body which promotes a relaxation of all rules that constrain media; is a partner in dialogue with the government and the state about improving the media environment; carries out educational work and supports media literacy; and monitors media content across all platforms. It was created through a press law adopted in 1999 and the article setting out its duties and role is attached.

This council receives funding from media themselves, but also receives state funding in support of its work in training and promotion of independent journalism. This support is delivered in a transparent and accountable manner.

The appointment of people to serve on a regulation body must be transparent. In Indonesia it is made by Presidential decree after a transparent system of nomination. In other countries it can be made through a special independent commission which should be constituted by the Parliament in consultation with journalists, media organisations and civil society institutions.

What is important is that there is no direct political control of the appointment and management of these bodies.

Similarly, in most countries the appointment of chief executives and boards of governmental media are appointed through bodies responsible to a state authority, normally the parliament or appropriate ministry. For instance, in the UK the Director General of the BBC is also Editor in chief and appointed by the BBC Trust. The Trust itself is appointed by the Government's department of culture.

Appointments to senior positions in state media should be subject to consultation and transparently managed. When they are politically driven they may undermine confidence. For instance, when Tunisian interim Prime Minister Hamadi Jebali on January 7<sup>th</sup> 2012 appointed new heads of state run media and editors in chief of major newspapers and state television he was criticised by journalists syndicate and others over a lack of consultation. They claimed many of those named were compromised by allegations of corruption and political service for the former regime.

**Governance of Media:** The principles of ethical conduct are not just for application in the newsroom and among journalists; they should be followed in the leadership of media. There should be rules to avoid conflicts of interest at all levels with disclosure of the political, financial and other interests of owners and media directors.

Similarly, where the state controls the allocation of resources for media (licences, printing capacity, and state advertising, for example) systems are often unclear or secretive. To avoid political manipulation there should be rules for disclosure and transparent administration of media support.

### **Programme for Media in Egypt**

The creation of an inclusive Dialogue on Ethical Journalism and Media Governance is the first step in developing a new approach to media regulation. The round table should consider the following tasks:

- a) To establish a new system for the selection and appointment of editors in chief, both of state media and independent private media, that is transparent and involves consultation with journalists and, where appropriate, civil society;
- b) To analyse and amend existing codes of conduct to ensure they cover all media and journalism across all platforms and are appropriate for a modern, open information environment;
- c) To examine best practice for the creation and operation of self-regulatory authorities in other countries (for example, Germany, Indonesia, Pakistan) and to develop proposals for self-regulation that are appropriate for Egypt;
- d) To develop an inclusive process of consultation on these matters with all relevant professional and public authorities.

# Guide to Self Regulation for Egyptian Media

## Introduction

These are exciting times for journalists in Egypt. Independent journalism and media-savvy citizens armed with the latest digital tools can play a key role in driving forward the popular movement for political and democratic reform.

But this will not happen automatically.

Media will only contribute to the transformation of Egypt if they deliver journalism that is fact-based, free of political bias and gives voice to all groups in society.

This short guidebook aims to help people in Egyptian media to strengthen quality through ethical journalism, good governance and self-regulation.

It starts from the belief that media and journalists, including citizen media, need to be professional in their work and loyal to the people they serve.

To achieve high standards editors and media owners must shake off decades of political influence and break free from institutional and legal controls which have often stifled pluralist and independent journalism in Egypt.

There is cause for optimism. The media boom after the revolution pointed towards an era of liberal press and more objective editorial content. It has been suggested that today there are about 50 television channels, of which around 20 are new, and about 40 newspapers, with a handful launching since the revolution.

But partisan and government-owned media still dominate. Many newspapers, television and radio channels remain either government-owned or they represent an opposition political party.

The Egyptian constitution, which is currently under review, guarantees free expression, but the law allows government and censorship underpins the power of state-run media.

The penal code, in particular, contains many criminal restrictions on media content and there are specific laws covering the Syndicate of Journalists, the Egyptian Radio and Television Union and the Supreme Press Council all of which currently reinforce governmental influence and encourage self-censorship by journalists and editors.

At the same time, there is no independent regulatory body to monitor, regulate and question any medium, with the government as the ultimate authority. Not surprisingly, there are strong calls for better press regulation and more media transparency, including over ownership.

In that process it will be vital to create an enabling environment for media freedom and a legal framework to encourage journalists and media to set up forms of self-regulation.

This guidebook is an introduction to some of the principles and ideas behind self-regulation. It arises from a discussion in Cairo in April 2011 when media leaders and journalists, meeting under the auspices of UNESCO and the Syndicate of Journalists, launched a debate on building a new framework for ethical journalism in media.

The guide is in three parts. It begins with a broad outline and practical explanation of the principles of ethical journalism and self-regulation. In the second part it draws upon experience in other countries to outline the options for setting up an independent authority for media self-regulation based upon partnership between journalism, the media and the public. Finally, it sets out a checklist for practical actions to support self-regulation and a summary of recommendations for initial work.

The starting point is the belief that a culture of self-regulation will create a confident community of ethical journalists, improve levels of transparency and accountability, and build public trust in media.

This debate is up and running. A growing movement of Egyptian journalists and media professionals is already discussing how to steer media towards a renaissance of values and standards that will build public confidence.

But this will not be easy. People know that journalism has a history in the shadows of politics and forms of state control. They want media they can trust and not journalism that is an instrument controlled by invisible hands, whether from the world of politics, public relations or business.

When journalism acts unethically media can cause of confusion, ignorance, uncertainty and fear. Even worse, journalism can become a weapon for division and hatred in the community, particularly when it is manipulated by unscrupulous politicians who encourage sectarianism, sensationalism and propaganda.

Egyptian journalists need to tell their stories with integrity and style; communicating essential facts and always balancing the need for humanity but to do that there must be an end to media serving narrow political interests.

At the same time people everywhere are concerned by the growth of a culture of live and breaking news and the expansion of more yellow, tabloid or junk journalism.

Information travels at breakneck speed. In an instant reputations can be destroyed, falsehoods spread and privacy invaded. Often journalism seems to be driven by sensationalism, violence and conflict while less dramatic, but important stories about politics, health, education and community slip down the news agenda.

In this context the need for ethical journalism, good governance and media self-regulation poses an enormous and urgent challenge for journalists, editors and owners. This guidebook is a response to that need.

# Part One: Basics of Ethics and Self-Regulation

## 1. Why Ethics Matter

Ethics are important in all aspects of public life but they are particularly important in journalism.

Human beings are essentially ethical animals who make moral choices. They understand what is good and what is bad, what is shameful and what is worthy of praise. They think freely and they have the right to express their opinion, thanks to Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which states:

But in order to frame opinions and to make judgments of value people need to be properly informed. They need access to timely, reliable and truthful information about events, whether in their own neighbourhood, across the nation or in the wider world.

They rely upon journalists and media to provide them with information and news that is useful and that they can trust.

Ethical journalism is based upon professional values and encourages relevance, context, facts and analysis which helps people focus on what is important. It also builds credibility for media within society.

Just as governments have set benchmarks for moral and ethical behavior through international agreements, standards and conventions such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, journalism, too, has its recognised conventions and standards.

In journalism the benchmarks are set out in professional codes of ethics. In order to ensure respect for the code and the values of journalism media establish systems of self-regulation.

## 2. How Self Regulation Works

Ethical journalism and the self regulation that goes with it are part of the solemn promise made by media and journalists to behave responsibly.

A system of self regulation corrects media errors and deals with concerns and complaints from the public, particularly when media and journalists cause offence or violate their own ethical rules. It also ensures that media engage in dialogue with the audience.

Self-regulation can be achieved without setting up formal and rigid structures. It is only necessary for media to commit themselves to be transparent and accountable and to respond promptly to public complaints and concerns.

Self regulation is both **internal** and **external**. Inside media it is carried out by individual companies who define their own standards and systems for monitoring the work of journalists.

Internal self-regulation involves dealing with complaints as well as efforts to promote good governance and transparency at all levels of the company's operations.

Some companies appoint a readers' editor or ombudsman to work independently in the editorial department dealing with complaints and concerns from the public. Normally this position is independent of direct control by the editor.

An accessible system for prompt correction of errors and efficient and amicable resolution of complaints not only builds trust with the public it can help companies avoid costly legal disputes.

External self-regulation involves the creation of a national authority, such as a press council, media commission or national ombudsman. (See Part Two).

Although in many democratic countries media codes of ethics are supported by systems of internal and external self-regulation, in most countries of the world there are no formal systems of self-regulation of media.

In this context the promotion of a culture of media self-regulation in Egypt based upon ethical principles is an important step in establishing an open and pluralist system of government and an important sign of democratic development.

### **3. The Code of Ethics**

Codes of ethics guide journalists in the moral choices they make in their daily work. They are a statement of professional aspirations by journalists.

One widely recognised example is the International Federation of Journalists' *Declaration of Principles on the Conduct of Journalists* (See Appendix One).

There are many codes of ethics for journalists – more than 400 different codes exist around the world – which reflect different cultural and historical traditions.<sup>2</sup> Many are designed for particular acts of journalism – for instance codes covering how to report on the rights of children, or at election time, or in specific areas of journalism such as crime, business and politics.

Almost all codes are based upon the following core principles:

- a) Truth-telling:** Journalism has an obligation to tell the truth. Truthfulness creates a sense of security. Journalists should always strive for accuracy. Reporting must be balanced and fair; it is the essence of news. Media must verify the facts they publish. They must avoid deceptive handling of the truth.
- b) Independence and impartiality:** Journalists must be loyal to citizens. Media should be independent and journalists must not serve vested interests. In particular, journalism and media must be free of political manipulation and undue influence by commercial or other interests.

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<sup>2</sup> A full list of codes from around the world can be found at <http://www.rjionline.org/MAS-Codes-of-Ethics>

- c) **Minimise Harm:** Journalists should never shy away from reporting reality, however painful, but they must minimise harm to the public. People who make the news are vulnerable to the impact of stories about them -- their lives or reputations may be at risk. Journalists must avoid causing unnecessary pain or suffering. They must not incite hatred and discrimination and they should avoid stereotypes.
- d) **Accountability:** Journalists and media must correct their errors promptly. They must also permit legitimate criticism of their work. Media must respect the right of the audience to have their say by subjecting themselves to public scrutiny.

Although most journalists cannot recite exactly the words of their code, they are all aware of these core principles. The difficulty is in putting these values into practice.

#### 4. Setting Guidelines for Ethical Journalism

Codes of ethics resonate with a high moral tone but they are only effective when they are translated into a working document that helps journalists in their daily work.

Most media that respect and adopt codes have developed guidelines to help journalists and editors to understand what good practice is and how they should behave.

Many media organisations – such as the *BBC*, *Aljazeera*, *Associated Press*, *Reuters*, and major newspapers such as *The Guardian*, or *Le Monde* and the *New York Times* for example – have developed their own internal rules and producer guidelines.

Sometimes these are very extensive – often running to hundreds of pages. They help journalists to balance rights and responsibilities and to avoid bias, intemperate language, plagiarism, financial conflicts of interest, unbalanced reporting, obscenity, sensationalism and other pitfalls in the hot-house of the modern newsroom.

These guidelines also represent the values of the company and provide the moral compass for the whole workforce and management. A typical set of internal guidelines on content of journalism might cover the following:

**Verify facts and Attribute Sources**  
*Be honest about what is said and who said it and avoid anonymous quotes.*

**Plagiarism**  
*Do not copy, lift or steal other people's work.*

**Bias**  
*Bias in reporting and use of media stereotypes are the enemies of truth and understanding*

**Quoted Speech**

*Avoid altering quotes when it changes their meaning.*

**Fairness and balance**  
*Journalists are obliged to allow people who suffer criticism the right to respond.*

**Reporting Conflict**  
*Journalists need to be sensitive in reporting from scenes of conflict. They need to understand the origins of conflict and respect the victims of violence.*

**Reporting Children**

*Take care when dealing with children. They have rights too.<sup>3</sup>*

### **Digital alteration of Images**

*It is easy to distort and alter digital photos and film. Avoid this, but if it is necessary, label images accordingly.*

### **Use of language**

*Avoid using words that are hateful or likely to offend people.*

### **Race and Ethnicity**

*Ethnicity is only important when it is relevant to a report. Avoid incitement to racial hatred.*

### **Religion and Sectarianism**

*Respect all of the audience and avoid contributing to sectarian divisions.*

### **Respect minorities**

*Sensitive reporting is required when reporting the most vulnerable groups in who are often in minority communities.*

### **Subterfuge**

*Avoid using deception, except where there is a clear and defensible public interest involved.*

### **Suicide, Grief**

*In times of trauma and tragedy avoid intruding into private grief. Take*

*Particular care with incidents of suicide so as not to encourage other similar acts.*

### **Know the law**

*Journalists should be informed of their legal rights under national and international law and be aware of dangers they face including laws of defamation and privacy.*

### **Safety**

*Safety of journalists is an ethical issue. Journalists should be aware of the risks they face and the need to protect themselves and colleagues under fire.*

### **Protect Sources**

*People promised confidentiality for good reasons must be protected.*

### **Correcting Errors**

*Journalists have a duty to help correct mistakes promptly and should report errors and complaints to editorial heads.*

### **Privacy**

*People have the right to a private life so do not invade their privacy unless the public interest demands it.*

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<sup>3</sup> See The guidelines of UNICEF  
[http://www.unicef.org/media/media\\_tools.html](http://www.unicef.org/media/media_tools.html)

In addition, editorial guidelines should give advice on **conflicts of interest**, both financial and political, as well as personal behaviour.

There should also be **staff training** in the basic concepts of ethical journalism to ensure that ethical weaknesses are corrected.

In the end it is the experience and wisdom of colleagues that provides journalists with their best guide to good behaviour. That is why media should regularly monitor and review the performance of editorial staff and the operation of the guidelines.

## **5. The Role of Law**

The rule of law is important to protect pluralism and prohibit censorship. It can be used to protect journalists' sources and can promote the cause of open government through freedom of information rules.

In addition, in many countries the power of media monopolies is legitimately regulated by law to protect pluralism. There are also useful rules of transparency regarding ownership of media.

These legal constraints prevent media being used by powerful individuals and industrial interests to exercise undue political influence on the state and society.

However, the law has no place in the regulation of the work of journalists or of media content. Responsibility for matters of journalism and media content rests with media professionals themselves.

Egypt like many countries making the transition to democracy has over the years developed a web of intricate legal controls over journalism. These should be systematically identified and repealed.

Although the law should never be used to control journalism, it may strengthen some aspects of self-regulation by giving a self-regulation authority some narrowly-defined powers, such as the right to carry out investigations, to define suitable penalties and to enforce adjudications.

Nevertheless, membership of an authority for media self-regulation should not include representatives of government, parliament or political bodies in its operational activities. This will intimidate journalism and compromise the ability of media to promote debate and to carry information critical of government.

## **6. Good Governance: The Role of Media Owners and Editors**

It is not only journalists who must show moral courage in media. Media owners and executives must also demonstrate deep commitment to the core values of journalism.

Moral behavior in the boardroom ultimately decides the quality of journalism. It is as important for building public trust as the performance of journalists in the newsroom.

Unless media are led by people of principle there is little chance that journalism will deliver the quality of information that communities need and democracy requires.

Unethical and partisan behavior by media owners – such as that exposed by recent events at Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation in the UK – leads inevitably to corrupt or biased journalism. This undermines public confidence and leads, as one renowned philosopher has said, to "the poisoning of public discourse and public life."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> See the comments of philosopher Onora O'Neill in her Reith Lectures at the BBC in 2002.

When this happens as recently in Britain, for example, lawmakers begin to consider using the law to discipline media and regulate journalism.

This can be dangerous for democracy. Media can avoid the threat of arbitrary and dangerous legal regulation by adopting internal standards of transparency to ensure proper disclosure of their political, financial and editorial activities.

Public disclosure, not secrecy is the key to honesty in public life and journalism is no exception.

In this regard the launch of an extensive set of guidelines to help media report on their activities by the Amsterdam-based Global Reporting Initiative at the 2012 UNESCO celebrations for World Press Freedom Day in Tunisia is a timely and useful contribution to the debate about corporate social responsibility in media.<sup>5</sup>

Genuine commitment from owners of media to make their business activities more accountable will greatly strengthen the cause of media self-regulation and ethical journalism.

Additionally, it should be noted that without good governance journalism can become a victim of self-censorship. Journalists often bend to pressure from advertisers and commercial sponsors. News which might hurt the financial interests of a news organisation goes unreported by journalists within that organisation.

This threat is even greater when political tensions run high and when competition in media is intense. In summary, the key elements of a strategy for good governance are:

**Transparency:** Ownership of media including the major sources of media funding should be subject to public scrutiny. There should be regular disclosure of information on those who own media including financial and political interests.

**Commitment:** media can demonstrate their loyalty to citizens and to rights and values of society by engaging with the audience and regularly reporting on how they promote ethics in journalism and management including respect for human rights and core labour standards;

**Accountability:** media should join with others in the industry to establish credible and effective structures for dealing with complaints and concerns.

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<sup>5</sup> See the Global Reporting Initiative,  
[Http://www.globalreporting.org/reporting/sector-guidance/media/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.globalreporting.org/reporting/sector-guidance/media/Pages/default.aspx).

## Part Two: A Credible Authority for Self-Regulation

A national system for voluntary self-regulation is normally achieved through the creation of a special authority – a press council or a media council.

The aim of such an authority is to build public trust in media, to improve standards of ethical journalism, to stop all forms of state and government interference in media and to deal with complaints and concerns from the public.

This authority can be established as a voluntary exercise through co-operation among media owners, journalists and professional bodies and will normally involve representatives of civil society.

In some countries the authority is established by law, but its work and operations are organised according to the voluntary principles of self-regulation as in Denmark and Indonesia, for example. This is called co-regulation.

Whether it is established through co-regulation or voluntarily a media authority must be independent of the state and government and must not be subject to undue political or commercial influence.

### **Role and Responsibility**

The media authority is not just a punishment body. In a democracy, a media self-regulator plays a key role in defending media freedom and promoting responsible use of information both within journalism and wider society.

This is particularly important in countries like Egypt which is in transition to democracy and where there is no established tradition of effective self-regulation.

The activities of a self-regulating authority in Egypt should be:

- **Advocacy for Media Freedom and Free Expression**
- **Promotion of an industry code of ethics within journalism**
- **Campaigning for the responsible use of information in society**
- **Adjudication and mediation of complaints**
- **Monitoring and reporting on media trends**

The self-regulating authority should operate on a national basis.

It should deal with journalism content across all media platforms – print, broadcast and online – and will usually promote respect for a unified code of ethics covering all sectors of media.

Sometimes there will be separate systems of technical regulation of print and broadcast and online media (because of different rules of registration or allocation of frequencies or telecommunications rules). Even so agreement should be reached on the need for a single, unified system for regulating the content of journalism based upon the principle of self-regulation.

Besides dealing with complaints and monitoring the state of media, a self-regulating authority should also have the right to initiate its own investigations and to carry out such work that is needed to respond to legitimate concerns about the work of media and the behaviour of journalists.

### **Informing the Public**

All citizens should be aware that they have the right to raise concerns and to complain about what they see, hear or read in the media.

The role and the aims and objectives of the self-regulation authority must be made widely known to everyone in all corners of society. Media covered by the self-regulation authority should publicise details of the authority and its work.

### **Membership**

It is critical that members of a self-regulation authority are respected representatives of all the major groups concerned: media owners, editors, journalists and the public.

The numbers involved may vary from country to country although in almost all cases the majority of members come from the media community. In Indonesia, for example there are nine members -- three media owners, three journalists and three representatives of the public.

They should all be people who are dedicated to the defence of the wider public interest in free expression and who understand the role of pluralist and ethical media as a bulwark of democracy.

Public representation should be achieved by seeking nomination of individuals from all sections of society (unions, professional bodies, religious society, civil society bodies and individuals).

The selection of public representatives should be independently organised and not be the responsibility of government or parliament. One model used in Sweden is to ask the country's Bar Association to select the public representatives to serve on the press council. Similar independent selection bodies exist in other countries.

## **Governance and Funding**

The self-regulation authority should establish its own internal working rules of governance. It should ensure there are no conflicts of interest. For instance, when dealing with complaints, no owner or journalist directly associated with the media concerned should play a role in hearing the complaint or in adjudicating on the outcome of an investigation.

The work of a self-regulating authority should be supported by an independent secretariat which handles complaints and organises support activities to promote the authority and to carry out its advocacy and educational work.

The responsibility of the secretariat and the different roles played by employees should be clearly defined.

Funding of the authority must itself be transparent and enshrined in a mechanism that respects the ethical values which the authority upholds.

The funding of the authority and the secretariat can come from a number of different sources:

- a) Media and media support organisations
- b) Public donations and external donor support
- c) Defined areas of public funding.

Most self-regulating authorities have a mix of funding.

In Indonesia, for example, the press council receives state funding for its educational and advocacy activities. However, it seeks industry support to maintain its core costs covering meetings of the Council itself and handling complaints.

In Germany, the unions of journalists and media owners pay for the work of the Press Council, but the council also accepts government money to pay for the cost of dealing with complaints.

In many countries, Egypt included, the public interest activities of a self-regulation authority should be supported by public funding.

However, this should be strictly controlled. There should be transparent and accountable systems for monitoring how public money is used in order to avoid state interference in the authority's work.

At the same time, the rules of the authority must ensure that there are no conditions attached to the provision of funding by media organisations. In all cases the rules and operations of the authority must ensure full transparency on the origins of all money received with full accounting for how it is spent.

### **Enforcement of Decisions**

The essential credibility of the authority lies not only with transparency in how it is funded, but also in public confidence that its decisions are respected by the industry. It is essential, then, that all media support the authority and accept its right to investigate complaints independently and are ready to go along with its adjudications and decisions.

When a media authority has the full support of all media houses the voluntary process of self-regulation can work effectively. In Sweden, for instance, all newspapers are part of the press council process. All media accept the decisions of the council. When media are criticised they have to pay a “fee” of 40.000 Euro. This money is paid directly to a fund to support the press council and its work.

However, this level of industry consensus is rarely achieved. Sometimes there are disputes over funding arrangements or some media refuse to join the process.

When the authority is created through co-regulation and has legal authority (Denmark and Indonesia, for example) it can go to court to enforce its judgments or to ensure that it can carry out its work according to its mandate.

Normally, a self-regulating authority will not seek to fine media or journalists or to suspend a publication. It will resist the temptation to replace the courts in upholding law.

Even when it has legal authority, a self-regulator can change a culture of confrontation to one of consensus by using its powers wisely.

In Indonesia, for example, more than 95 per cent of all complaints received against media are resolved through successful mediation between the two sides.

By seeking amicable resolution of disputes a self-regulating authority can provide a cheaper, shorter and more efficient way of dealing with complaints than the courts.

But for that to happen media organisations must be ready to take responsibility for their actions and agree to go along with the authority and its work.

## **Part Three: A Checklist for Self-Regulation**

The following checklist covers the elements of and actions needed to create the conditions for both internal and external forms of self-regulation.

Mission statement:

**Media should publish a declaration of company objectives and values including commitments to ethical journalism, transparency and accountability and loyalty to citizens.**

Code of Conduct:

**Media should support a code of principles in line with international standards of media freedom that demonstrate commitment to ethical journalism and good governance.**

Editorial Guidelines:

**Media should compile handbooks or manuals for reporters and editors' providing detailed advice on how to apply ethics in their daily work.**

Training:

It is not enough that codes of conduct and ethical principles exist as the theory of journalism. Working journalists need to be constantly reminded of their rights and responsibilities in their everyday activities.

**Codes and guidelines should be distributed to all journalists and editorial staff and all staff should receive training on ethical principles**

**Media should ensure regular review and monitoring of the effectiveness of codes and guidelines through internal debate**

**Editorial policy related to ethical use of information should feature in published material, including online services.**

Contracts:

Journalists and media staff need to work in a safe and secure environment which encourages them to behave ethically. Precarious working conditions can damage morale and confidence in the newsroom.

**All editorial staff including journalists working as freelance contributors should have contracts which clearly outline their rights and ethical responsibilities as well as their employment rights.**

**Journalists should have the right to act according to conscience. This can be formally achieved by agreeing to a "conscience clause" in contracts which allows journalists to resist unreasonable pressure on them to violate their ethical principles.**

**Job descriptions of editorial staff should highlight the importance of ethical conduct in the exercise of specific tasks, for instance covering political and business journalism.**

Editorial Contact Point: An Ombudsman or Readers' editor:

Internal systems for monitoring standards and responding to concerns and complaints from readers and viewers can encourage self-criticism and build credibility.

**Media should appoint a senior journalist to act as a public contact point – a readers' editor or ombudsman, for instance – who will receive and respond to public complaints.**

**In smaller media houses the company can designate a specific member of the senior editorial staff to undertake these duties.**

**The ombudsman or readers' editor should liaise between the staff of the media outlet and its readers, viewers or listeners and try to resolve amicably disagreements between the two sides.**

**This position should be independent of the Editor in Chief and may be appointed, for instance, by the board of directors and owners of the media.**

**Some examples of this practice are found in The Guardian (UK), in Le Monde (France) and also in some broadcast media.<sup>6</sup>**

Dialogue with the Audience:

Media should encourage debate and dialogue with reader, listeners and viewers. This will build public trust and inspire confidence in journalism.

**Media should**

- a) Prominently display information on how to comment, express concerns and make complaints regarding journalistic work.**
- b) Provide opportunities for readers and viewers to express contrary opinions and express the right of reply where it is appropriate.**
- c) Publish an annual report of editorial activities reflecting on successes and challenges of journalism and giving the audience information on how they can express their opinion.**

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<sup>6</sup> There is a special international association for ombudsmen, the Organisation of News Ombudsmen, [www.newsombudsmen.org](http://www.newsombudsmen.org)

### Ethical Management:

Ethical conduct in media management is an essential prerequisite for ethical journalism.

**At all levels media should apply internal rules that ensure good governance, transparency and accountability. Such rules should define**

- **The independence of the Editor in all matters related to journalism, editorial operations and content**
- **Procedures for transparency in the appointment of editors**
- **Systems to maintain the independence of journalism from undue influence by commercial, marketing and advertising departments;**
- **Systems that avoid conflicts of interest at the level of the boardroom and administration of media,**
- **Respect for media's role to protect the public interest including, where appropriate, the appointment of independent directors to the board of management.**

### Transparency, accountability and reporting:

Because media exercise a particularly powerful influence on political and commercial affairs they must be open and accountable, even more so than other sections of the national economy

**Media companies should be transparent and report regularly on the standards they apply in the administration and conduct of their business and their journalism.**

**Such reporting should cover all aspects of their affairs and indicate a commitment to implement the highest standards of good management practice covering, for instance,**

- **Transparency in ownership as well as disclosure of political affiliations and financial interests including contacts with government**
- **Commitment to good industrial relations and employment practice including social dialogue, workforce diversity and application of core labour standards as well as a culture of security so that journalists and all media personnel can practice their profession safely.**

- **Commitment to international human rights standards;**

## Taking Action: the First Steps

The ideas set out here will remain mere aspirations unless practical steps are taken by media and journalists leaders in Egypt to put them into effect. Not least important is the need for **professional solidarity** among media professionals and a commitment to work together in favour of the following concrete actions:

- ✓ **Internal self-regulation:** Media houses in Egypt should hold internal meetings at the highest level to assess what needs to be done to establish effective internal forms of self-regulation including
  - drawing up mission statements
  - adopting a code of conduct
  - ethical guidelines for journalists
  - rules of good governance including avoiding all conflicts of interest
  - establishing a system for dealing with public complaints and concerns
  - ethical obligations in contracts of employment
  - social dialogue to agree minimum standards of social and professional rights and safety and protection of media staff.
  
- ✓ **External self-regulation:** Egyptian media and journalists groups, in co-operation with relevant civil society groups, should establish a process for creating an industry-wide body for self-regulation of media and journalism. This should create the appropriate structure of such an authority covering:
  - Legal status and mandate
  - Membership: including representation of the public
  - Governance
  - Aims and objectives
  - Funding
  - Annual Reporting of its activities
  
- ✓ **Dialogue with Government:** Media and journalists' groups should establish a structure for dialogue with state agencies and representatives of government to convince them of the benefits of media regulating themselves. Particular attention must be paid to media under government supervision or dependent on state funding where legal protections should safeguard editorial independence. New legal rules to strengthen independent journalism should include:
  - Review and repeal of existing laws that threaten free media
  - Access to information laws

- Reform of state-run media and creation of genuine public service media

### ATTACHMENT THREE

## **Foundation Statement**

The Ethical Journalism Network is a global coalition of media professional groups and journalism support organisations working across all platforms of the rapidly-changing media, information and communications landscape who agree to meet regularly, to share information and consider joint actions with the following aims

- To support and highlight actions of the Network members to promote high standards of transparency, good governance, ethical conduct and self-regulation in journalism;
- To support and work together in preparation of surveys and reports that will raise awareness of the ethical and governance challenges facing media and journalism around the world;
- To support an information and communications portal of the Network dedicated to the promotion of ethics and good governance and to promote activities of all Network members in this area;
- To support dialogue with the audience and wider society to raise awareness of the important role played by ethical journalism in building democracy and informed society;
- To support transparent, accessible and independent systems of self-regulation, without political interference, that will respond to the concerns and complaints of citizens while promoting and defending the principles of media independence, information pluralism and ethical journalism.

The network is an informal association. Its meetings are organised in collaboration with UNESCO by the Global Editors Network which provides the secretariat services. The funding of the programmes and operations of the Network shall be the responsibility of the Network secretariat and the Global Editors Network.

The convener of the Network who shall chair Network meetings is nominated from within the Network and shall be rotated among the member organisations.

Members of the Network may at any time withdraw from the process by writing to the secretariat of the Network.

## **Guidelines for Network Relations**

These guidelines are based upon the Ethical Journalism Network's aim to be a catalyst for change and to promote new debate among media professional groups on how to promote standards of journalism and to ensure media professionals lead the debate about future regulation. These are specified in the EJN Foundation Statement:

1. The Network does not replace, substitute or seek to compete with any of its members.
2. The Network is an information exchange.
3. The Network fully consults with all members on its work and activities
4. The Network will seek the advice, guidance and opinions of its members concerning proposals for development of its work
5. Meetings of the Network will be organised by the secretariat of the Network, in consultation with GEN and the Convener of the Network.
6. The Convener shall be nominated from among the members of the Network and shall chair meetings and assist in the preparation of the agenda of meetings.
7. The position of convener shall be rotated among the member organisations of the Network.
8. There are no financial obligations involved in Network membership and the Network secretariat will not seek funding for activities or country programmes on behalf of Network members.
9. The EJN secretariat is managed and paid for by the GEN. The secretariat shall seek financial support to assist members of the Network to participate in its meetings.

The Network will not issue public statements on matters related to press freedom or safety of journalists but will maintain its focus of activities and website information on the issues of:

- a) promotion of good governance in media across all platforms,
- b) promotion of ethical conduct in journalism and
- c) raising-awareness on the need for new and effective forms of self-regulation of journalistic content.

### **Network Members at March 1<sup>st</sup> 2013**

Association of Commercial Television  
African Media Initiative  
Centre for International Media Ethics  
Pakistan Coalition for Ethical Journalism  
European Publishers Council  
European Broadcasting Union  
Global Editors Network  
Global Forum for Media Development  
Media Diversity Institute  
Organisation of News Ombudsmen  
World Press Freedom Committee  
Internews Europe  
South East Europe Network for Media Professionalisation  
South East Europe Media Organisation  
Thomson Foundation  
PANOS South Asia  
MediaWise Trust (UK)  
New Ibero-American Press Foundation (Colombia)  
Central and Southern Asia and Caucuses Free Press Network (Azerbaijan)

### **Co-operation and Collaboration with:**

Article 19  
European Newspaper Publishers Association  
European Federation of Journalists  
Open Society Institute, UNESCO, Council of Europe,  
Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe  
International Organisation of Migration  
United Nation Human Rights Commission  
European Commission  
World Association of Newspapers  
Alliance of Independent Press Councils in Europe

### **EJN Editorial Advisory Council**

Tom Kent, Standards Editor, Associated Press  
Christopher Elliot, Readers Editor, The Guardian  
Professor Ying Chan, Head of Journalism, Hong Kong University  
Abeer Saady, Editor, Vice President Egyptian Press Syndicate  
Dean Wright, Former Head of Standards, Reuters  
Bambang Harymurti, Editor in Chief Tempo, Indonesia  
Jean-Paul Marthoz, Journalist, Belgium,



Owais Ali, Director, Pakistan Press Foundation