

## **Journalism without fear or favour - Why WAN-IFRA is supporting UNESCO's World Press Freedom Day campaign in 2020**

Good journalism is made for times such as these. Good journalists have ensured our leaders remain accountable, their policies are scrutinized, and their promises will be kept in check as we navigate the coming months and a cautious return to optimism.

To mark World Press Freedom Day we must celebrate this, recognise the sacrifices of media professionals who ensure the daily free flow of information, and hope that independent media can financially survive to help lead us into better times.

During a crisis, journalism is arguably more vital than ever. The COVID-19 pandemic has certainly placed independent media front and centre in providing verified, accurate and potentially life-saving information, particularly in countries where government has floundered, or the COVID-19 response has been found wanting.

But to say we need journalism now more than ever masks a reality worth reiterating loud and clear – especially as we celebrate World Press Freedom Day. Independent journalism is vital, day in, day out, for everyone. Whether we are facing global catastrophe or exposing local concerns, media's public interest role is essential to how we understand our world and make decisions in it.

At this critical time, journalists and media professionals need our support. The measures taken in reaction to the COVID-19 pandemic have accentuated the financial precarity of media worldwide, risking the survival of independent journalism and challenging the safety and economic security of media professionals.

It remains to be seen what will survive of our profession – the profession as we know it today - once this crisis has passed. The landscape may look very different; the way we gather, produce and consume the news likewise. Despite the painful, inevitable turmoil this will bring, we must embrace the opportunities that arise, the new ways of working, doing business, and our relationship with the world and people around us.

But one thing is certain to prevail, regardless of how different, how difficult the future looks.

The very soul of our profession, our ability to conduct journalism - without fear or favour.

### **Andrew Heslop**

Executive Director, Press Freedom

WAN-IFRA

[andrew.heslop@wan-ifra.org](mailto:andrew.heslop@wan-ifra.org)

*This piece is freely available for you to reproduce, with attribution to WAN-IFRA/Andrew Heslop*

--

**This 3 May, World Press Freedom Day, we are providing complementary access to our 2019 World Press Trends report chapter on Press Freedom (<https://www.wan-ifra.org/node/217494/>), as well as sharing materials provided by UNESCO that are free to use to help you mark the day. Please let us know how you use them, or if you run your own content be sure to share with us so we can help promote it, on or around 3 May.**

## **WAN-IFRA supporting UNESCO's 3 May World Press Freedom Day campaign - 2020**

Every year, 3 May marks World Press Freedom Day, the largest celebration of media freedom in the world. The theme of this year's edition of WPFDD is "Journalism without Fear of Favor", and provides an occasion to reflect on the importance of free and independent media, in particular in times of crisis.

In light of the current COVID-19 pandemic, UNESCO is launching a new campaign on the importance of independent journalism during the health crisis. [You can see all the details in the toolkit.](#)

[You can download the communications materials in this link.](#) The materials will be available also in French, Spanish, Arabic, Dutch, Portuguese and German. They have been designed for use in both media and social media.

In order to give a maximum push to #WorldPressFreedomDay, the materials are embargoed until 3 May.

To help us spread the word, we invite you to:

1. Cover this subject as part of your editorial calendar;
2. Publish one of the campaign images as a banner on your homepage;
3. Publish, share or repost campaign images on your social media accounts using the hashtags: #WorldPressFreedomDay; #PressFreedom.
4. Follow along on social media starting around 3 May.

Other communication materials for WPFDD can be found in the [Media Resources](#) section of the WPFDD website.

If you have any questions about the campaign and how you can be involved, please do not hesitate to reach out to Saorla McCabe ([s.mccabe@unesco.org](mailto:s.mccabe@unesco.org)) and Oscar Castellanos ([o.castellanos@unesco.org](mailto:o.castellanos@unesco.org)).