



UNITED STATES SUPPORTS PRESS FREEDOM WORLDWIDE

“...there is no more important pillar of democracy than a free and active press.” – Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice

As part of President George W. Bush's Freedom Agenda, the United States views freedom of the press as a key component of democracy. The free exchange of ideas fosters accountable government and allows the viewpoints of many, including the marginalized in a society, to be heard. The United States works bilaterally and multilaterally in many ways to support press freedom worldwide.

THREATS TO A FREE PRESS

Reports indicate that over 110 journalists and media workers were killed in 2006, making it the bloodiest year on record for journalism. These incidents highlight the significant dangers journalists and media workers face throughout the world as well as the need to improve respect for freedom of the press and the safety of journalists.

U.S. INITIATIVES AND PROGRAMS

The United States works to protect and promote press freedom at home and to spotlight places where press freedom is threatened abroad.

Reporting and Denouncing Violations

- The U.S. State Department's annual Country Reports on Human Rights spotlight threats facing a free press and are a tool for governments, NGOs and citizens. In 2006, for the first time, the Reports included a section on Internet freedom.

Supporting a Free Press through Programs and Exchanges

- The United States Government provides professional development and exchange programs for journalists, editors and media managers from around the world, such as the Edward R. Murrow Journalism Fellowships. It supports journalists producing radio and television programs that are independent of state-controlled media. The U.S. funds NGOs that promote a free press abroad, and defend journalists under threat.

Promoting Internet Freedom

- Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice launched the Global Internet Freedom Task Force in February, 2006, to maximize the free flow of information on the Internet while minimizing the abilities of repressive regimes to censor it.

WORKING MULTILATERALLY UNESCO

- The United States was a founding member and is the fourth largest donor of UNESCO's International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC) that promotes media independence in developing countries.
- Since rejoining UNESCO in 2003, the United States has increased its donations to the IPDC five-fold to \$300,000 and has funded many of its media development projects, including in Afghanistan, Colombia, Cameroon, Guatemala, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Rwanda, and Uganda.
- The United States commemorates the UN-sponsored World Press Freedom Day on May 3. And the U.S. joins UNESCO in honoring Anna Politkovskaya of Russia, who is being posthumously awarded the 2007 UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize.

UN World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)

- The United States passionately supported freedom of the press and the free flow of information at both phases of the UN World Summit on the Information Society in Geneva in 2003 and Tunis in 2005.
- The United States supports the free expression principles listed in the WSIS Declaration of Principles and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as they apply to the Internet and the need for them to be honored even in connection with efforts to promote security and fight crime.