

30 YEARS OF THE WINDHOEK DECLARATION

# INFORMATION AS A PUBLIC GOOD

WORLD PRESS  
FREEDOM DAY 2021  
3 MAY

**#WorldPressFreedomDay**



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



World Press  
Freedom Day

## Impact & Visibility Report

# INFORMATION AS A PUBLIC GOOD

WORLD PRESS FREEDOM DAY 2021

**GLOBAL CONFERENCE**

29 April - 3 May | Windhoek, Namibia

WORLD NEWS

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Republic of Namibia



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



## A SNAPSHOT

- The 2021 World Press Freedom Day Global Conference took place from 29 April to 3 May, marking the 30th anniversary of the 1991 Windhoek Seminar and Declaration.
- Over **3,000 participants** registered virtually and 150 attended in person in Windhoek.
- Participants from **150 different countries**.
- Over **40 sessions and 250 speakers**, with most of the plenaries held in hybrid format from the Safari Hotel in Windhoek, Namibia, the same venue of the 1991 Seminar.
- **4 Main Plenaries** and **6 Regional Forums** organized with a process that involved regional consultations as well as thematic consultations with wide array of stakeholders.
- **Over 100 World Press Freedom Day celebrations** in more than **30 countries**.
- World Press Freedom Day (in all 6 UN official languages) had **463K mentions on social media** and **#WorldPressFreedomDay** was the **most used hashtag** in social media posts mentioning world press freedom day (analysis period from May 2 – 4, 2021).
- About **1,700 media articles in the 6 UN official languages** mentioned World Press Freedom Day, and reached a potential number of 1.6B readers. At least **430 articles** made a reference to Maria Ressa, 2021 UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize Laureate.
- **The New York Times, Le Monde, The Guardian, Los Angeles Times, Globe and the Mail, Liberation** and other leading newspapers featured in-king the UNESCO's campaign ads **#QuestionsThatMatter** on their print editions around 3 May.
- World Press Freedom Voices messages received by over a dozen global leaders from government and relevant organizations.

## UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize Ceremony



*“What I and other truth-tellers in the Philippines have lived through has given us first-hand experience on how the law and law enforcement have been turned against our people.”*

The award was given to **Maria Ressa**, Filipino investigative journalist and CEO of *Rappler*, on 2 May. An independent international jury praised Ressa’s ‘unerring fight’ for freedom of expression amidst online attacks and targeted campaigns as well as facing charges of cyber-libel linked to her investigative reporting.

### Highlighted speakers

- **Joseph Stiglitz**, Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences
- **Irene Khan**, UN Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of the Right to Freedom of Opinion and Expression
- **Agnès Callamard**, Secretary General, Amnesty International
- **Maria Ressa**, CEO of *Rappler*
- **Christophe Deloire**, Director general of Reporters Without Borders
- **Anthony Bellanger**, Secretary-General, International Federation of Journalists
- **Swe Win**, Editor in Chief of *Myanmar Now*
- **Julie Owono**, Member of Facebook’s Oversight Board. Executive Director of Internet sans Frontiers
- **Miranda Johnson**, *The Economist*, Deputy Executive Editor
- **Stephen Dunbar-Johnson**, President, International of *The New York Times*
- **Nicholas Clegg**, Vice-President for Global Affairs and Communications at Facebook
- **Rod Sims**, Chair of the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission
- **Seema Mustafa**, President, Editors Guild, India
- **Věra Jourová**, Vice President of the European Commission for Values and Transparency

[Read the full Programme here](#)

## Key Outcomes

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*“The Declaration’s urgent call for press freedom and free access to information is as relevant as ever.”*

Antonio Guterres, UN Secretary General, message for World Press Freedom Day 2021 referring to the 1991 Windhoek Declaration on free, independent, and pluralistic press

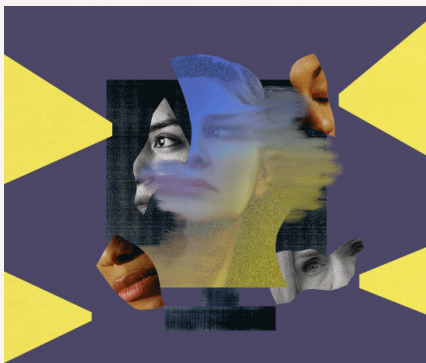
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*“The UN’s warning about a tide of misogynistic hate needs urgent attention.”*

The Guardian’s Editorial. 9 May 2021

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### Adoption of Windhoek + 30 Declaration

The participants of the conference adopted the “Windhoek +30 Declaration” taking forward the spirit of the original 1991 Windhoek Declaration while acknowledging the persistent and new challenges to media freedom. The Declaration contains recommendations to nurture a diversity of viable public, private and community media, while safeguarding their independence. It also calls on mainstreaming Media and Information Literacy, as well as to work on ensuring transparency of technological companies.

[Read the Windhoek+30 Declaration](#)

[Read about the 30th anniversary of the 1991 Windhoek Declaration](#)

### Launch of the UNESCO-ICFJ Study

[“The Chilling: Global trends in online violence against women journalists”](#)

On 30 April, an online panel with **Maria Ressa** and Julie Posetti, International Center for Journalists (ICFJ) Global Director of Research, discussed the findings of The Chilling, UNESCO-ICFJ’s pioneering study on the sharp increase in online violence against women journalists and how these attacks are now inextricably bound up with disinformation, intersectional discrimination, and populist politics. The report was featured in leading media outlets across the globe including [The Guardian](#), [Al Jazeera](#), [Le Monde](#), [Lusa](#), [Rappler](#), [The Washington Post](#), [CNN](#), [EFE](#), [RTVE](#), and BBC World Service.

## Regional Forums

For the first time in a World Press Freedom Day Global Conference, 6 Regional Forums took place in parallel to take forward spirit the regional declarations inspired by the 1991 Windhoek Declaration as well as to discuss the 2021 theme against regional-specific challenges and opportunities. The outcomes of the forums included a series of recommendations to foster media viability, transparency of online platforms, and media and information literacy, and were presented during the Plenary “Voices from the Regions” on 3 May.

The session ‘Voices from the Regions’ was preceded by an opening dialogue with Agnes Callamard, Secretary General of Amnesty International preceded the panel moderated by Gwen Lister, co-chair of the 1991 Windhoek Seminar, and Alain Modoux, former UNESCO Assistant Director-General for Communication and Information at the time of 1991 first historic conference.

### More information on Regional Forums:

- [Africa Forum to reflect on press freedom 30 years after the Windhoek Declaration](#)
- [Africa Forum calls for adoption of access to information laws](#)
- [We Have to Show Our Value as Journalists: Voices from Asia and the Pacific](#)
- [Experts take a close look at the state of Arab media during WPF](#)
- [Fuerte compromiso de América Latina y el Caribe con la libertad de prensa](#)

### Click to watch the Regional Forums:

- [Africa Forum / 30 Years After the Windhoek Declaration](#)
- [Arab region Forum / 25 years After the Sana’a Declaration](#)
- [Asia and the Pacific Forum](#)
- [Central-Asia Forum / Towards to Alma-Ata+30](#)
- [Europe Forum / 26 years After the Sofia Declaration](#)
- [Latin American and Caribbean Forum / 26 Years After Santiago Declaration](#)



*“I’m really looking forward to seeing how this excellent new initiative of advocating for more transparency from internet companies unfolds, because it’s much needed.”*

*Nick Clegg, Facebook’s Vice-President for Global Affairs and Communications.*

*“This partnership gives us an opportunity to really move forward on some crucial initiatives.”*

*Peggy Hicks, Director, Special Procedures and Right to Development, OHCHR*

*“It is in the spirit of Windhoek, that we are determined to reinforce the safeguards of a free, independent and pluralistic media [...]”*

*Joint Statement by the Groups of Friends on the Safety of Journalists on World Press Freedom Day 2021*

## Release of a new World Media Trends Report Issue Brief:

### [“Letting the Sun Shine In: Transparency and Accountability in the Digital Age”](#)

The Issue Brief highlights 26 principles to enhance the transparency of internet platforms and discusses different aspects of transparency including regulatory approaches and social responsibility initiatives. It was released at the Plenary on Transparency of Online Platforms, opened with a dialogue with **David Kaye**, former UN Special Rapporteur for freedom of expression and opinion and current Chair of the Board of the Global Network Initiative, and **Nick Clegg**, Facebook’s Vice-President for Global Affairs and Communications.

## Launch of the [Global Drive for Media Freedom and Safety of Journalists](#)

The Global Drive is an initiative supported by the Kingdom of the Netherlands and implemented by OHCHR and UNESCO.

It follows the announcement by Dutch Foreign Minister, Stef Blok, during the 2020 World Press Freedom Day Conference about the Netherlands’s donation of €7 million to promote media freedom and the safety of journalists worldwide, in the wake of The Hague Commitment signed by more than 50 ministers.

## Groups of Friends on the Safety of Journalists [Joint Statement on Press Freedom](#)

The chairs and members of the five Groups of Friends on the Safety of Journalists at UNESCO in Paris, at the UN in New York and Geneva, at the OSCE in Vienna and at the Council of Europe in Strasbourg joined forces to issue a statement on the occasion of World Press Freedom Day.

A total of **45 Member States** co-signed the statement.

## Conference Highlights

The [Global Opening Ceremony](#) took place in the presence of **Audrey Azoulay**, UNESCO Director-General, and **Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila**, Prime Minister of Namibia, on 2 May. The event also featured video messages from **António Guterres**, Secretary-General of the United Nations, and Ministers of Foreign Affairs from **Austria, Canada, Lithuania, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom**, as well as the **European Union's** Special Representative for Human Rights.







The “[Opening Talk Show: Is Information a Public Good?](#)”, one of the main segments of this year’s conference, kicked off with a dialogue on information as a public good between **Joseph Stiglitz**, Nobel laureate and **Miranda Johnson**, Deputy Executive Editor, The Economist. The panel gathered experts from leading media, civil society, and journalists’ associations to exchange views on journalism sustainability at a time when the current economic crisis is forcing closures and journalistic job cuts and increasing political capture of media outlets. The session was held on 2 May, moderated by the **Conference Champions and Masters of Ceremonies, Gwen Lister**, co-chair of the 1991 Windhoek Seminar, and **Toivo Ndjebela**, Managing Editor of the Namibian Sun.



## Plenary on Media Viability

A dialogue between **Zukiswa Potye**, CEO, South African Media Development and Diversity Agency and **Rod Sims**, Chair of the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) opened the **Plenary on Media Viability** on 30 April, with speakers calling for immediate action to support media sustainability including through public and fiscal measures in favour of media enterprises; revenue sharing mechanisms to ensure media are adequately compensated for third party use of their content; increasing development assistance to media; collaboration among media; and support for non-profit media.



## Plenary on Transparency of Online Platforms

The Plenary on **Transparency of Online Platforms** took place on 2 May with a 'setting the scene dialogue' between **Nick Clegg**, Vice-President for Global Affairs and Communications, Facebook, and **David Kaye**, Chair Board of Directors, Global Network Initiative (GNI). The dialogue was followed by a panel with leading internet experts to discuss initiatives on regulation for transparency requirements of internet companies, and other international and collaborative initiatives for online platform transparency at a time of a heated debate on the impact of internet companies in economic, social and political life, and their role in shaping the communications landscape.



## Plenary on Media and Information Literacy

A plenary on **Media and Information Literacy (MIL)** discussed local and international initiatives to boost people's competencies so that everyone can recognize and cherish information. This plenary was held right after the proclamation by the UN General Assembly of UNESCO-initiated MIL Week and in the lead up to its global celebration to be hosted in South Africa.



Through the [World Press Freedom Voices](#), UNESCO invited members from the community to join in the 30th anniversary of the Windhoek Declaration by sharing their messages on the significance of the 1991 Windhoek Declaration, its contribution to press freedom and the importance of information as a public good.

High-level representatives and partners including **Stef Blok**, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, **Alexander Schallenberg**, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Austria, **The Honourable Marc Garneau**, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Canada, **Gabrielius Landsbergis**, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania, **The Rt Hon Dominic Raab MP**, Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs of the United Kingdoms and **Eamon Gilmore**, EU Special Representative for Human Rights, shared their messages.

Other representatives from government, civil society and internet companies included: **H.E. Veronique Roger-Lacan**, Ambassador of France to UNESCO, **H.E. Rauno Merisaari**, Ambassador for Human Rights and Democracy of Finland, **Teresa Ribeiro**, Representative on Freedom of the Media, OSCE, **Leslie Miller**, Vice President of Government Affairs & Public Policy for YouTube, **Zoe Titus**, Director of Namibian Media Trust and more.

The Voices were released on 1 May, and are available for re-watching [here](#).



## Partner's Day

1 May, 'Partners Day', was a day to listen to inspiring stories from individuals making a difference on freedom of expression, and it was marked by the [#PressFreedom Watch Party](#) organized by the Namibia Media Trust at Windhoek's Zoo Park, the '[Recite and Take Action](#)' Festival with journalists and writers reading favourite pages about stories making a difference in the defence of press freedom, short video submissions from the community of World Press Freedom Day participants.

## Coalition's Day

The Coalitions Day on 29 May included over 15 sessions organized by media coalitions and organizations, including Cartooning for Peace; Free Press Unlimited; the Freedom Online Coalition; BBC Media Action; the Forum on Information and Democracy; Dynamic Coalition on the Sustainability of Journalism and News Media; the Civil Society Coalition on Safety of Journalists; the High Level Legal Panel; the Media Freedom Coalition, and the Center for Law and Democracy.

### Rewatch the Sessions:

- [Press Cartoons: A Tool for Media and Information Literacy](#)
- [Emergency Measures to Support Media Hit by Covid-19](#)
- [Is Independent Media a Public Good and is Public Subsidy to Support it Realistic?](#)
- [Promoting Freedom Online: Tackling Online Disinformation](#)
- [Information & Democracy: Developing Concrete Recommendations for the Sustainability of Journalism](#)
- [Journalism, Tech Platforms, and the Future of Media Policy](#)
- [Windhoek Declaration and the Safety of Journalists: Past, Present and Future](#)
- [The Challenges Ahead: Perspectives from the High-Level Panel of Legal Experts on Media Freedom](#)
- [The Role of Governments in Protecting Media Freedom: What More can the Media Freedom Coalition Do?](#)
- [Realising the Potential of Think Tanks in Striking a Balance Between Freedom](#)





## The Academic Conference

Co-organized by the **University of Namibia (UNAM)** and UNESCO, the 6th Academic Conference on the Safety of Journalists saw the participation of researchers from around the world who presented 14 papers. The papers covered policy-relevant and current topics such as safety of journalists and the COVID-19 pandemic, gender-based violence against journalists and methodological advancements in monitoring safety. Within the framework of the Academic Conference, the **Journalism Safety Research Network (JSRN)** organized the first event in a series of knowledge exchange sessions with the purpose of connecting academics and civil-society representatives on the topic of safety of journalists.

[Re-watch the Academic Conference](#)



## The Youth Newsroom

The 2021 edition of Youth Newsroom brought **16 young journalism practitioners and students** from Namibia and other Southern African countries to Windhoek while engaging 10 online participants from Europe, Asia and Latin America. During the course of World Press Freedom Conference 2021, participants were given training sessions by Namibia University of Science and Technology on journalistic ethics, photoshop, video editing and briefing of the conference programme. On 3rd May, the last day of the conference, UNESCO Director General, Ms. Audrey Azoulay paid visit to Youth Newsroom to interact with the young reporters. Over 20 news articles on media freedom, gender-based violence, investigative journalism and other topics were generated in various formats. Articles could be found on the youth Newsroom website at [www.youthnewsroom.org](http://www.youthnewsroom.org).





WORLD PRESS FREEDOM DAY  
**REMEMBER THE DEAD,  
 FIGHT FOR THE LIVING.**



*“More than 1,200 journalists have died globally from COVID-19, and in India one journalist died every day in April 2021.”*

*Jeremy Dear, Deputy General Secretary International Federation of Journalists*



The [“Remember the Dead, Fight for the Living - A Tribute to Journalists Who Have Died from COVID-19”](#), a session organised by the International Federation of Journalists, invited journalists from Brasil, Somalia, Pakistan, Montenegro and Kenya to pay respect to the numerous media workers, journalists and editors who have saved lives during the COVID-19 pandemic through quality journalism.

The importance of – and concrete measures to achieve - a safe and healthy working environment for journalists were also discussed, sharing best practices and paying tribute to those who have died of COVID-19.



The Facebook Dilemma, @frontlinepbs's award-winning documentary, tells an inside story of relentless pursuit of growth, and what that's meant for privacy & democracy around the world.

📺 NOW at the #WorldPressFreedomDay Conference Cinema.

▶ [on.unesco.org/3u8adNA](https://on.unesco.org/3u8adNA)



FRONTLINE and 3 others



## Booths and Cinema section:

Registrants to the Conference online platform accessed to stream online PBS' Frontline award-winning documentary *The Facebook Dilemma* at the Cinema section and visit booths from **Cartooning for Peace**, the **Namibian Tourism Board** and a booth with commemorative materials on the **30th anniversary of the Windhoek Declaration** set up by UNESCO.

## Artistic Performances

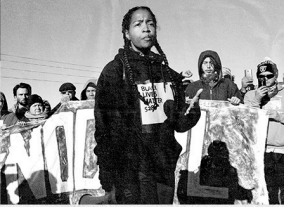
The global conference featured Namibian musical and artistic talents including violinist **Ronaldo Kandume** from the Namibian National Symphony Orchestra; seasoned, and dedicated singer/songwriter and actress, **Diolini**; Namibia's most celebrated guitarist, **Jackson Wahengo**; saxophonist, composer, and educator **Suzy Eises**; and one of Namibia's musical icons, Venaune Kandukira, better known by his stage name **Big Ben**.

## World Press Freedom Day celebrations around the world


Over **100 events** took place around the world in more than thirty countries to mark the World Press Freedom Day celebration, including **Uganda** discussing media freedom in the context of hybrid regimes, elections and Covid-19, and **Iraq's** event shed light on violations of journalists.

## Global Media Campaign

**WHY  
AN [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
BLACK  
MAN  
GET [REDACTED]  
BY  
FOUR  
[REDACTED]?**




when journalists  
can't ask,  
we can't act.




Larry Towell / Magnum Photos

**WHY  
IS [REDACTED]  
NOT DOING  
ANYTHING  
TO PREVENT  
THE  
[REDACTED]  
OF CHILD  
[REDACTED]  
VIDEOS?**



when journalists  
can't ask,  
we can't act.



Jan Socher

**WHEN  
JOURNALISTS  
CAN'T ASK  
WE CAN'T ACT.**

#QuestionsThatMatter

UNESCO launched on 3 May the global media campaign [#QuestionsThatMatter](#), developed by DDB, to recognize the reliable and accurate information that journalists provide. Among newspapers that printed the campaign ads on 3 May were **The New York Times, Le Monde, The Guardian, Globe and the Mail, Los Angeles Times, and Liberation**. The campaign main message “When journalists can’t ask, we can’t ask” was relayed by on social media by **New Yorker, NPR, Washington Post, NBC, Aristegui Noticias, Rappler**, among others.



## Other Partnerships

UNESCO and Cartooning for Peace launched for the fifth consecutive edition a joint digital campaign this year named ‘cartooning for #WorldPressFreedomDay’. Inspired by 2021 theme “Information as a Public Good”, the 10 selected cartoons focused on defending and cherishing journalism and the verified information that journalists provide and were shared by influential journalists and partners worldwide.

[See the cartoons](#)

World Press Photo opened its exhibition ‘[People Power](#)’ in Paris at the **Cité internationale universitaire**. The exhibition was curated in collaboration with UNESCO and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the 2020 World Press Freedom Conference in the Hague.



Twitter launched its campaign #FollowLocalJournalists to celebrate World Press Freedom Day and encourage news consumers, journalism advocacy organizations and reporters to share impactful examples of local journalism. Twitter also continued its partnership with UNESCO to help drive conversation around World Press Freedom Day and created **special emojis** for #FollowLocalJournalists, #PressFreedom, #WorldPressFreedomDay and #WPFD2021 in 20 languages. Twitter also organized Twitter Spaces around the world where people were able to hear directly from journalists about the issues. Twitter also provided trainings and Ads for good grants to non-profit press freedom organizations.

[Read more](#)

The graphic design platform **Canva** [joined the Day’s celebrations](#) with dedicated templates and video messages for UNESCO’s World Press Freedom Voices.

# Media

## Press releases published by UNESCO

- 26/04/2021 - [2021 World Press Freedom to promote Information as a Public Good in a severely challenged media landscape](#)
- 27/04/2021 - [World Press Freedom Day: Philippines journalist Maria Ressa to receive 2021 UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize](#)

## Joint Op-ed

- [Joint op-ed](#) by Audrey Azoulay, Director-General of UNESCO, Maria Ressa, and Gwen Lister

## News articles published by UNESCO

- 01/04/2021 - [2021 World Press Freedom Day Global Conference](#)
- 16/04/2021 - [Leading Minds Reflecting on Information as a Public Good to Participate in World Press Freedom Conference in Windhoek](#)
- 03/05/2021 - [UNESCO initiates global dialogue to enhance the transparency of internet companies, with release of illustrative high-level principles](#)
- 03/05/2021 - [Media Viability: a Pillar of Information as a Public Good](#)
- 04/05/2021 - [UNESCO releases pioneering discussion paper on online violence against women journalists](#)
- 06/05/2021 - [Windhoek+30 Declaration calls for affirming information is a public good](#)

## Media coverage

About 1,700 media articles in the 6 UN official languages mentioned World Press Freedom Day, reaching a potential number of 1.6B readers. Many Top-Tier media published stories on WPF, including CNN, Washington Post, Deutsche Welle, Le Figaro, Infobae, Le Monde, Lavanguardia, El Tiempo, El Universal, Voice of America, RFI, Le Point, Irish Times, Rappler, etc. At least 430 articles made a reference to Maria Ressa, 2021 UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize Laureate.

## Social Media

- An analysis report by the University of South Carolina' Social Media Insights Lab registered **463K mentions of World Press Freedom Day (in all 6 UN official languages)** on social media. The official Day hashtag **#WorldPressFreedomDay** was the **top hashtag** of sample taken from May 2 – 4, 2021, used in more than 150k tweets.
- Mentions broken down by language: French (3k mentions); Spanish (23k mentions); Arabic (1.5k mentions); Russian (almost 400 mentions); Chinese (1.6k mentions)

## Video Highlights

[Re-watch all sessions in UNESCO's YouTube Channel](#) / [Wrap-Up Session](#) / [Regional Fours](#)



INFORMATION  
AS A PUBLIC GOOD

WORLD PRESS FREEDOM DAY 2021

GLOBAL CONFERENCES  
29 April - 3 May | Windhoek, Namibia

PRIMECIS

A large billboard stands on a white, curved metal structure. The billboard features a colorful graphic with a white dove, a film strip, and various colored circles. The text on the billboard is in black and white. The billboard is set against a clear blue sky. In the background, there is a tall, modern apartment building and a yellow building with a red roof. A road with cars and pedestrians is visible in the foreground.

