



PRESS RELEASE

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CELEBRATION OF WORLD PRESS FREEDOM DAY 2018

Theme: “Keeping Power in Check: Media, Justice and the Rule of Law”

Windhoek, 18 April 2018 – The celebration of World Press Freedom Day (WPDF) 2018 takes place from 25 April to 8 May in Windhoek. UNESCO and the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology in collaboration with the Namibia Media Trust, Editors Forum of Namibia and other stakeholders (European Union, Namibia University of Science and Technology, Namibia National Commission for UNESCO and the Namibia Internet Society) will be organizing Public lectures, trainings as well as a panel discussion and official ceremony to commemorate the day. The theme for this year is **“Keeping Power in Check: Media, Justice and the Rule of Law”**.

This Day will provide a forum for diverse actors to discuss the interplay between media, the judiciary and the rule of law, within the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Day, observed on 3 May, will debate the issues of sustainability of the media and the transparency of the political process, the independence and media literacy of the judicial system, and the accountability of state institutions towards the public. In this context, strengthening the watchdog role of independent journalism will be explored, so that it can better expose electoral violations, gender-based inequalities, and human rights abuses which undermine the Sustainable Development Goals.

The first observance will take place on 25 April at the Namibia University of Science and Technology. Students from all the University interested in Media and Justice will attend a public lecture that will talk about SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and SDG 16 (Promotion of Just, Peaceful and Inclusive Societies). The second activity will be a Training of Bloggers that will take place at NUST on 7 May 2018. The training aims



to empower young people with ICT skills, stimulate internet usage demand and promote minority and diverse voices in national discourse. The commemoration will be concluded with an official ceremony and a panel discussion that will look at the Keeping Power in Check: Media, Justice and the Rule of Law and the sustainability of the media in Namibia. This is a paramount discussion for the sustainability of media to be possible there needs to be a conducive environment that allows for free, independent and pluralistic media.

The aim of all the celebrations that will take place across the Globe, as well as the main celebration in Accra, Ghana (2 May 2018) is to allow local NGOs and media actors across the world to take ownership of WPF. The Young reporters and media students will be sensitized to emerging challenges regarding press freedom and freedom of expression, and their journalistic capacities reinforced through live coverage of a major international event, mentored by media professionals. Media organizations will also have enhanced engagement on press freedom and safety of journalists' issues, through coverage, blogs and dedicated webpages in the run-up to WPF.

The idea of World Press Freedom Day (WPF) originated in the Windhoek Declaration on promoting an independent and pluralistic press, adopted in Namibia in 1991. In 2018, the global event returns once more to the continent where it all started. Accra, Ghana, will be the location of UNESCO's global commemoration in 2018, and the theme for the Day, will be also marked in many other countries around the world.

Under the topic **“Keeping Power in Check: Media, Justice and the Rule of Law”**, WPF 2018 will encourage discussion and promote understanding and awareness about current challenges to freedom of expression as well as achievements.

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