OMNI NEWSLETTER #3 ON UN WORLD PRESS FREEDOM DAY, MAY 3, 2013, FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND PROTECTION OF JOURNALISTS, Compiled by Dick Bennett for a Culture of Truth and Peace  (#1 May 3, 2011; #2 May 3, 2012)

Here is the link to all OMNI newsletters:  http://www.omnicenter.org/newsletter-archive/  For a knowledge-based peace, justice, and ecology movement and an informed citizenry as the foundation for change.

See also: Journalists Killed Newsletter

OMNI NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL DAYS PROJECT

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Brave Marie Colvin killed in Syria siege

UN WORLD PRESS FREEDOM DAY 2013-05-04
Because of the crucial role that journalists play, they are frequent targets of violence. According to UNESCO, more than 600 journalists have been killed over the past decade. In addition, journalists in some regions are surveilled and intimidated, or subjected to cyberattacks. A number of Asian nations are particularly deadly for journalists. Mali, in Africa, has recently seen a downturn in press freedoms. In countries like Turkey and Tunisia, the courts are a preferred venue for silencing journalists who seek to publicize information that opposes the interests of the powerful. And in Southeastern Europe, business interests exert undue pressure on media. Besides fostering a safe environment for journalists, laws need to be created and enforced to protect freedom of expression, which continues to be fundamental to democracy. On World Press Freedom Day, DW takes a look at the state of press freedoms - and limitations upon them - across the globe.

**EUROPE**

**Journalists under pressure in Southeastern Europe**

Officially, freedom of the press has existed in Southeastern Europe for 20 years. But in reality, politics and business often exert undue influence on the media. The economic crisis has made the situation even worse. (03.05.2013)
'We live in two realities' in Ukraine
Well-known Ukrainian journalist Mustafa Nayem talks with DW about the difficult working conditions for the press in his country. (03.05.2013)

Turkish journalists imprisoned as 'terrorists'
In an interview with DW, Turkish journalist Ragip Duran accuses his country's government of imprisoning journalists without a sentence. (02.05.2013)

Freedom of expression under threat in Europe
On the Day of the Imprisoned Writer, PEN International is warning about developments in Europe. Vice President Sascha Feuchert is particularly worried about Turkey and Hungary. (15.11.2012)

Concerns over Internet censorship in Russia
Russia's political opposition is active on the Internet, but maybe not for long. A new youth protection law allows the blocking of websites - and that could take critical opposition sites off the web. (13.11.2012)

ASIA

Uncertainty looms over the future of Afghan press
Since the US-led invasion of Afghanistan, there has been a boom in the country's media sector. Some critics believe the withdrawal of international troops poses a huge threat to freedom of speech. (02.05.2013)

Tension flares over 'blasphemy' and free speech
Despite pressure from Islamist groups, Bangladesh's PM Sheikh Hasina has said her government will not introduce new blasphemy laws to punish bloggers. Meanwhile, rights groups demand the release of detained bloggers. (09.04.2013)

Online surveillance threatens Internet freedom
Iran and China are both - once again - among the "State Enemies of the Internet" by Reporters Without Borders. Bloggers from the two countries tell DW about online filtering and censorship in their home countries. (12.03.2013)

Perils of reporting in Balochistan
Media organizations say that 30 journalists have been killed in the restive south-western Pakistani province of Balochistan in the past four years, making it one of the most dangerous places for journalists in the world. (26.02.2013)
Families of murdered journalists demand inquiry
One year has passed since the killing of Sagar Sarowar and Meherun Runi, a journalist couple living and working in Dhaka, Bangladesh. The families of the two journalists are now demanding an international investigation. (08.02.2013)

Report highlights Asia's muzzled media
While North Korea languishes just one place from bottom on a new press freedom index, it's not the only Asian country where freedom of speech is stifled. Across the continent, journalists face censorship, and even death. (31.01.2013)

AFRICA

Press freedom under threat in Central African Republic
Journalists in the Central African Republic go on strike in protest against repression from the country’s new leaders, who seized power in a March coup. (02.05.2013)

Reporters Without Borders sees Malian media muzzled
Mali has plummeted in Reporters Without Borders' annual press freedom index. An African front-runner for years, Mali is now languishing in the bottom half of the table. The usual suspects bookended the index. (30.01.2013)

How independent is the reporting in Mali?
French troops are at war in northern Mali, but it’s not clear what is actually happening because journalists have been denied access. For many years, Mali had been a model for press freedom in Africa. (18.01.2013)

Freedom of information in Africa
Laws guaranteeing the freedom of information exist in only a dozen African states. Citizens and the press suffer from the lack of transparency. Worldwide, only few countries protect this right. (14.12.2012)

ARAB WORLD

Post-Arab Spring censorship on the rise
More journalists, bloggers, musicians and other public figures are increasingly being summoned to court in an apparent crackdown on freedom of expression in Egypt and Tunisia. But they’re not going without a fight. (07.04.2013)
Press freedom is under pressure in Tunisia

Journalists in Tunisia have gone on strike for the first time since the country won its independence. They accuse the government of restricting freedom of speech. Is press freedom in danger after the revolution? (18.10.2012)

GLOBAL

A deadly year for press freedom

A new report by Reporters Without Borders reveals the bleak dangers that journalists are faced with in their daily work. With 141 people killed, 2012 has been one of the worst years for press freedom in a long time. (19.12.2012)

New website fights censorship

In many countries, journalists have to fight censorship when trying to publish critical stories. The organization Reporters Without Borders has launched a website to publish stories otherwise suppressed by the censors. (02.12.2012)

DW.DE

The enemies of press freedom 2013

WWW LINKS

Reporters Without Borders' 2013 Press Freedom Index

AUDIOS AND VIDEOS ON THE TOPIC

Freedom of speech still eludes many

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Syria's peace envoy Brahimi poised to quit 04.05.2013
Just a few months after taking over as the UN-Arab League's Joint Special Representative for Syria, Lakhdar Brahimi is preparing to resign. The prospects for a peaceful solution in Syria are less likely than ever.

The enemies of press freedom 2013 03.05.2013
Every year, Reporters Without Borders (RWB) publishes a press freedom index. Most enemies of press freedom have been on the list for years, but in 2013, some rankings have changed.

Transatlantic Review 02.05.2013
Get the latest reports and analyses connecting Washington and Europe by subscribing to our newsletter.

World Press Freedom Day: a guide to press freedom around the world
Friday 3 May marks World Press Freedom Day. Reporters Without Borders have produced this map showing press freedom – or the lack of it – around the world, reproduced below. White marks the gold standard of free press, while black is the countries
where journalists are at greatest peril.

- More on press freedom
- More data journalism and data visualisations from the Guardian

[Map in color, so go to this web site: --Dick
http://www.guardian.co.uk/news/datablog/interactive/2013/may/03/world-press-freedom-day-guide]
On the front line: Marie Colvin, who lost an eye reporting on the Sri Lankan civil war, is the first British journalist to be killed in Syria

22 February 2012

One of Britain’s leading war reporters was killed in Syria today when 10 rockets slammed into a makeshift press centre.

Marie Colvin of the Sunday Times died and her photographer Paul Conroy was injured in the rebel city of Homs.

She is the first British journalist to be killed during the onslaught unleashed by president Bashar Assad to suppress a pro-democracy movement.

Hours earlier she told the BBC of the "unrelenting" attack and "absolutely sickening" scenes including one where she watched a two-year-old child die after being hit in the stomach by shrapnel. Colvin had worked in war zones from Kosovo to Chechnya and lost an eye in a 2001 mortar blast in Sri Lanka.

French photographer Remi Ochlik, 28, also died in today's attack in the Baba Amr district. At least one other Western journalist was reportedly wounded in the rocket and artillery attack on a house that had been turned into a media centre.

Sunday Times colleague Jon Swain said: "Marie was extremely brave and her mission in life was to travel to difficult places and expose the human tragedy of war."
Pro-opposition areas of Homs have been under a sustained bombardment from government forces since February 3 leaving several hundred people dead. Activists say more than 40 died yesterday.

Amnesty International put the death toll at almost 400 this month alone. Colvin, in her fifties, yesterday told the BBC: "There are 28,000 people in Baba Amr. The Syrians will not let them out and are shelling all the civilian areas.

"There is Free Syrian Army here. They're very, very lightly armed. People are terrified they will leave. There is just shell, rocket and tank fire pouring into civilian areas of this city."

Activist Omar Shakar said three as yet unnamed foreign journalists were also injured in the attack.

Witnesses reported shells falling as fast as 10 per minute as Assad’s forces stepped up their pressure on the city which has become a symbol of resistance after withstanding months of attacks despite locals being armed only with light weapons.

Tributes flooded in for the fearless journalist who twice won the British Press Award for Best Foreign Correspondent for her work covering wars in Bosnia, Iran, Sri Lanka and Zimbabwe.

Middle East correspondent for The Independent Robert Fisk said: "Marie was a dauntless lady of tremendous courage." A spokeswoman for the Duchess of Cornwall, who met Colvin at a service commemorating British journalists killed in conflicts, said: "She is very, very sad to learn of the death of Marie Colvin."

Rana Kabbani, the Syrian writer and daughter of former Syrian ambassador to the United States, tweeted: "Marie Colvin covered real humanitarian horror all over the world, but said Homs was the worst she had EVER seen. RIP, heroine.

"(She) was a striking, sassy and serious journalist. She never suffered fools like Assad gladly. He has left her body in bloody pieces."

In November 2010, Colvin made an emotional speech at journalists' church St Bride's in Fleet Street during a service to commemorate the 49 journalists killed this century.

She said: "Covering a war means going to places torn by chaos, destruction, and death ...and trying to bear witness. It means trying to find the truth in a sandstorm of propaganda when armies, tribes or terrorists clash. And yes, it means taking risks, not just for yourself but often for the people who work closely with you.

Colvin said the scene of war had remained "remarkably the same for hundreds of years". She added: "Craters. Burned houses. Mutilated bodies. Women weeping for children and husbands. Men for their wives, mothers children. Our mission is to report these horrors of war with accuracy and without prejudice.

"We always have to ask ourselves whether the level of risk is worth the story. What is bravery, and what is bravado?"

Also see article by Jon Swain in Columbia Journalism Review (May-June 2012).
Dick Bennett
My blog:
War Department/Peace Department
http://jamesrichardbennett.blogspot.com/
Newsletters
http://www.omnicenter.org/newsletter-archive/

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