Media Freedom:
Conceptualizing and Operationalizing the Outcome of Media Democratization

By

Lee B. Becker, Tudor Vlad and Nancy Nusser

James M. Cox Jr. Center for International Mass Communication Training & Research
Grady College of Journalism & Mass Communication, University of Georgia
Athens, GA 30602 U.S.A.
Tel. 1 706 542 5023 Fax 1 706 542 5036
Email: lbbecker@uga.edu; tvlad@uga.edu; nnusser@uga.edu

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I.   Introduction

In the last decade and a half, media reform and media freedom have come under close scrutiny by governmental and nongovernmental organizations as well as academic scholars. Media reform and freedom often are viewed as intrinsically important and are seen by many as related to development of democratic institutions and a civil society. In the view of some, media reform is needed for media freedom, and media freedom is a necessary condition for democratization.

Because of the importance of media freedom, western governments have invested heavily in training of media workers and in media reform in order to bring it about. In addition, a number of prominent governmental and nongovernmental organizations have developed indices of press freedom, at least implicitly so as to judge the consequences of and need for media reform. The methodologies employed in creating these indices of media freedom are not always transparent, however, and charges are often made about biases in the underlying assumptions behind them. Nor are the conceptual bases for the indices always obvious. It is possible that the competing indices measure different concepts, measure the same concept unreliably, or measure the same concepts in a reliable but invalid way.

Despite these uncertainties about the existing measures of media freedom and independence, no systematic analyses have been undertaken of their development, of the assumptions that lie behind their different methodologies, of the reliability of the resultant measures, or of the consistency of conclusions across the different measures.

This paper begins with an overview of the media evaluation enterprise. First, it provides a general overview of the scholarly writing on press freedom, focusing particularly on recent work on the outcome of media reform. Next it reviews the work of major and minor organizations that attempt to assess press freedom and related concepts. It compares this applied work with the more theoretical writing on press freedom, attempting to match the measures used with the theoretical concepts. Finally, the paper includes a comparative, empirical assessment of the most prominent measures of media freedom currently available.

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II.   Concept

The concept of press freedom is a contentious one in the literature of mass communication. McQuail (2000) argues that the concept of media freedom covers both the degree of freedom enjoyed by the media and the degree of freedom and access of citizens to media content.

> "The essential norm is that media should have a certain independence, sufficient to protect free and open public expression of ideas and information. The second part of the issue raises the question of diversity, a norm that opposes concentration of ownership and monopoly of control, whether on the part of the state or private media industries." (Pages 144-145)

Curran (1996) differentiates between a classical liberal perspective on media freedom and the radical democratic perspective. The former focuses on the freedom of the media to publish or broadcast. The latter focuses on how mass communications can "mediate in an equitable way conflict and competition between social groups in society (p. 55)." Within the classical liberal perspective, according to Curran, is a "strand" arguing that the media should serve to protect the individual from the abuses of the state. Within the radical democratic perspective, he continues, is a "strand" that argues that the media should seek to redress the imbalances in society.

For Price (2002), the "foundation requirement" for media freedom is that government does not have a monopoly on information. Rozumilowicz (2002) contends that the question of who has control is the critical consideration as to whether media are free and independent. There must be a diffusion of control and access supported by a nation's legal, institutional, economic and social-cultural systems, she argues. Thus, free and independent media "exist within a structure which is effectively demonopolized of the control of any concentrated social groups or forces and in which access is both equally and effectively guaranteed" (p. 14).

Rozumilowicz sees media independence as the outcome of a process of media reform. The general assumption is that the media "should progress ever nearer to an ideal of freedom and independence and away from dependence and control" (p. 12). In her view, a media structure that is free of

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"interference from government, business, or dominant social groups is better able to maintain and support the competitive and participative elements that define the concept of democracy and the related process of democratization."

Rozumilowicz sees the ideal media environment as one in which there are two media sectors, a market-led media sector and a nonmarket-sector. Within the market sector, advertisers are free to present their goods to target audiences, programmers can use fees provided by these advertisers to draw in audiences, and audiences are informed and entertained to the extent the market allows. The nonmarket-sector provides balance by ensuring that the needs of non-dominant groups are met. It also creates a forum in which a common discourse emerges and which allows people to function within the society.

For these two sectors to exist, there must be both legal and institutional support for them as well as social-cultural support. For example, the market sector can exist only if laws are in place protecting media from government interference. Audiences also must be protected via defamation laws from media abuse. Also needed are anti-trust legislation, ownership laws limiting concentration, licensing laws, and rules on advertising.

For the nonmarket-sector to exist, there must be legal and institutional support for the right to publish and the right of access. Citizens are guaranteed the right to information, and the various voices in society are guaranteed the right to communicate.

For Rozumilowicz, socio-cultural support for free media comes from training for and professionalism among journalists, a general educational system that instills values of tolerance within society, and training for politicians on the workings of a free press in an open society.

Following from this conceptualization, Rozumilowicz outlines four stages of media reform. The first stage, labeled a Pre-transition Stage, lays the groundwork for subsequent change. During this change, there is an opening or- freeing of a previously constrained media system. The regime signals a greater willingness to tolerate criticism and expressions of alternative points of view.

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The second stage is termed a Primary Transition Stage. During this stage, there is a systematic change within the formerly authoritarian regime. Statutes on access to information, defamation, ownership, and the like are passed. The culture of censorship is disrupted.

The next stage is called the Secondary Stage. During this period both politicians and journalists participate in training seminars to explain and clarify the new institutional and legal order. Networks of media professionals develop. Journalists receive training in new skills of investigative and responsible journalism.

The final stage is called the Late or Mature Stage. At this point, legal and institutional questions have been resolved. Educational opportunities for journalists are well established. Instruction to provide support for open communication is incorporated in primary and secondary schooling.

III.   Organizations Reporting on Media Freedom

More than 100 organizations throughout the world are currently engaged in some form of media system assessment and evaluation or media freedom promotion. Many of these are newly-formed in response to recent democratization in Europe and redemocratization in Latin America. The groups describe their missions variously as promoting free and independent media through activism, monitoring media freedom violations, evaluating media systems through indices and written reports, and defending and protecting journalists working in conflict zones and under repressive governments.

The organizations have applied rather than conceptual goals for their work. They are interested in media reform often because they believe it plays a role in the development of democratic states. (See USAID, 1999, for an articulation of this position. See Snyder, 2000, and McConnell and Becker, 2002, for a more skeptical view.) Their work is often described and cited in the popular media, giving weight to their operationalizations –and consequent conceptualizations—of media freedom. For this reason, their applied activity deserves close examination. Additionally, examination contributes to the future development of precise instruments for measuring media freedom.

This paper reviews the work of 14 organizations involved in media evaluation. The 14

organizations are all global or regional in scope, allowing for country by country comparisons of their findings and conclusions. Their reports are characterized by comprehensiveness, methodical research, and particular expertise in the areas they cover, often deriving from the organizations' longevity, the experience and knowledge of their staffs, and their use of varied, in-country sources.

The 14 selected organizations fall into two categories—nongovernmental organizations, or NGOs, and international governing organizations. Three of the NGOs—Freedom House (U.S.), the International Researches & Exchange Board (U.S.), and Reporters sans frontieres (Reporters Without Borders) (France)—produce global numerical indices of press freedom, and varying amounts of written analysis of the overall media environment. The eight other NGOs produce similar written reports, often known as country reports, and/or counts and descriptions of physical, psychological, and legal attacks on journalists and media organizations. Those groups are: Arab Press Freedom Watch (U.K.), Committee to Protect Journalists (U.S.), Center for Journalists in Extreme Situations (Russia), the European Institute for the Media (France, Germany), the Inter-American Press Association (U.S.), the International Federation of Journalists (Belgium), the International Press Institute (Austria), and the Media Institute of Southern Africa (Namibia).

Three international governing institutions, the Organization of American States (OAS), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and the United Nations have formed special media freedom offices, which produce reports for review by the entire organizations. Those reports are usually country and regional reports, as well as comprehensive analysis of particularly urgent media issues or controversies.

Foreign ministries of governments also monitor media freedom. For example, the U.S. State Department uses its overseas embassies and their contacts to produce extensive reports on media freedom, based on U.S. standards, to determine whether the United States should provide financial and other aid to nations. Under the 1961 Foreign Assistance Act, the reports are required to be submitted to the U.S. Congress. The U.K. government submits a human rights report, including coverage of media freedom,

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to inform Parliament of global conditions and U.K. efforts to promote human rights, while the Council of Europe relies on reports from the office of the media freedom representative for the OSCE. The work of these groups is not reviewed in this paper.

Table 1 categorizes the 14 organizations selected for analyses here and lists some of their characteristics.

A.   NGOs Producing Country Reports and Numerical Indices

1.   Freedom House

A non-governmental organization based in Washington D.C., Freedom House was founded more than 60 years ago to promote democracy globally. Since 1978, Freedom House has published a global survey of freedom, known as *Freedom in the World,* now covering 192 countries and 18 related or disputed territories, which is widely used by policy makers, academics, and journalists. In 1980, as a separate undertaking, Freedom House began conducting its media freedom *survey–Freedom of the Press: A Global Survey of Media Independence*–which in 2003 covered the same 192 countries (Freedom House, 2004).

Concept: Freedom of the media.

Conceptual Definition: In the 2004 report, Freedom House says that it attempts to measure "the legal environment for the media, political pressures that influence reporting, and economic factors that affect access to information" (Freedom House, 2004).

Operational Definition: To measure press freedom as defined, Freedom House attempts to assess the political, legal, and economic environments of each country and evaluate whether they promote and do not restrict the free flow of information.

Procedures: According to the Freedom of the Press managing editor Karin Karlekar (personal communication, July 6, 2004), Freedom House U.S.-based staff keep year-round files on media activities for each country. The files contain news articles by and on media in each country and other reports from governmental and international organizations. These files are consulted prior to the production of the annual reports. To augment that information, Freedom House staff members consult local and international

media organizations, multilateral and governmental organizations, and other NGO's. Staff members also rely on the Toronto-based International Freedom of Expression Exchange (IFEX), a global clearing house for media freedom organizations around the world, and on Freedom House's own world freedom surveys.

 In evaluating the collected material, Freedom House (2004) examines the legal environment, political influences, and economic pressures on the media. To assess the legal environment, Freedom House analyzes laws and regulations that could influence media, as well as governments' propensity for using those laws to manipulate media. It assesses the potentially negative or positive impact of various legal factors, as shown in Chart 1. Political influence is measured by evaluating the degree of political control over news media content. Issues examined are shown in Chart 2. Economic pressures are measured by evaluating five different characteristics of the media system, as shown in Chart 3.

Freedom House staff members then score each country, using a 20-item questionnaire that includes questions in the three areas of legal, political and economic influences. Higher numbers indicate less media freedom, as shown in Chart 4. The legal environment is scored on a 30-point scale, political environment on a 40-point scale, and economic environment on a 30-point scale. The three subindices are summed to come up with a final score for each country. The 2003 data were scored by 18 to 20 people and the 2002 data by five people; in preceding years, one senior staff member scored all countries, according to Karlekar (personal communication, July 6, 2004).

2**.** **International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX)**

IREX was founded in 1968 by U.S. universities to promote exchanges with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. A non-profit organization based in Washington D.C., IREX focuses on higher education, independent media, Internet development, and civil society in the United States and internationally.

In 2001, IREX, in cooperation with USAID, prepared its first Media Sustainability Index (MSI) to evaluate the global development of independent media (IREX, 2001). The report rates independent media sustainability in 20 states in four regions: Southeast Europe, Russia and Western Eurasia, Caucasus, and Central Asia. The final report (IREX, 2002; IREX 2003) includes ratings and an extensive Executive

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Summary of regional findings as well as individual country reports.

Concept: Independent media sustainability.

Conceptual Definition: Existence of sustainable, "independent media systems" (IREX, 2002, p. XXi).

Operational Definition: Extent to which political, legal, social, and economic circumstances and institutions, as well as professional standards within independent media, promote and/or permit independent media to survive over time.

Procedures: IREX assesses independent media sustainability using five criteria or objectives:1) legal and social norms that protect and promote free speech and access to public information; 2) journalism that meets professional standards; 3) multiple news sources that provide citizens with reliable and objective news; 4) independent media that are well-managed businesses, allowing editorial independence; 5) supporting institutions that function in the professional interests of independent media.

 To determine how well a country meets those five objectives, from 7 to 9 indicators for each of the objectives are assessed, as shown in Chart 5. The range of scores is from 0 to 4 for each of these indicators. The scores for each of the indicators within the five objectives are averaged to obtain a single score for the objective. The scores on the five objectives are averaged to arrive at a final score for each country.

To conduct scoring, IREX assembles in each country a panel of experts—local media representatives, members of NGOs and professional associations, international donors, and media development workers. Each panel is provided with the objectives, indicators and an explanation of the scoring system. Panelists review the information individually, then assemble to come to a consensus on scores. The panel moderator, in most cases a representative from one of the country's media or an NGO, prepares a written analysis of the discussion, which is edited by IREX representatives. IREX staff (in-country and in Washington, D.C.) also review indicators and objectives, scoring countries independently. The final score for a country is an average of the panel score and the IREX staff score.

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3.   **Reporters sans frontieres (RSF)**

The non-profit RSF works to defend journalists and media outlets by condemning attacks on press freedom worldwide, publishing a variety of annual and special reports on media freedom, and by appealing to governments and international organizations on behalf of journalists and media organizations. The group, based in Paris and including a network of 100 correspondents, works to reduce censorship, opposes laws devised to restrict press freedom, supports journalists and media outlets with financial aid, and has recently developed a judicial branch to promote effective prosecution of crimes against journalists. On an annual basis, RSF publishes comprehensive regional and country reports that assess political, economic, and legal environments for media freedom. In 2002, RSF released its first Worldwide Press Freedom (RSF, 2002a) report and ranking of individual nations.

Concept: Respect for media freedom.

Conceptual Definition: "The amount of freedom journalists and the media have in each country and the efforts made by government to see that press freedom is respected" (RSF, 2002b).

Operational Definition: Extent to which legal and political environments, circumstances, and institutions permit and promote media freedom and the ability of journalists to collect and disseminate information unimpeded by physical, psychological, or legal attacks and harassment.

Procedures: To create the index, RSF sends out a 53-item questionnaire to in-country sources, usually members of domestic and foreign media as well as legal experts and members of NGOs involved with media freedom. RSF receives an average of three to four completed questionnaires for each country, and if it does not receive at least three, the country is not included. The questions fall into the five categories of physical and psychological attacks on the journalists, legal harassment of and discrimination against journalists, obstacles to collecting and disseminating information, and government manipulation of the media. The complete questionnaire is shown in Chart 6.

After questionnaires are returned, RSF staff members in Paris score the surveys. Each of the questions is weighted. Lower scores indicate more media freedom. Points are summed and averaged to

arrive at final score.

B.   NGOs producing country reports or more limited indices

1.   Arab Press Freedom Watch (APFW)

APFW was formed in May 2000, describing itself as the first media freedom organization to monitor Arab countries. Based in London, the organization produced its first annual report in 2001 (APFW, 2001), which included regional and country analyses of media freedom conditions and a chronology of attacks on journalists. Its 2003 report (APFW, 2004) on 19 Arab countries included 235 cases of media freedom violations, including journalists' arrests, threats, injuries, imprisonment, kidnapping, and deaths.   This report also included cases of censorship and banning of media, as well as new press laws that APFW considers to be an obstacle to media freedom.

Concept: Freedom of media, opinion, and expression in Arab countries.

Conceptual Definition: Extent to which nations are characterized by violations of freedom of expression (Arab Press Freedom Watch, 2001) and media.

Operational Definition: Cases of censorship, overly restrictive press laws, and physical, psychological and legal attacks on or intimidation of journalists.

Procedures: The newly-formed organization draws on journalists and individuals described as media freedom supporters to compile information for the annual reports. It states that some contributors prefer to remain anonymous for fear of reprisal. Neither the annual reports or the APFW Web site provide more details on procedures.

2. Center for Journalists in Extreme Situations

The Center for Journalists in Extreme Situations (CJES) was formed in Moscow in February of 2002 as a division of the Russian Journalists Union (RJU) to protect the rights of journalists. Its main activities include monitoring violations of those rights and evaluating mass media systems in Russia and the Community of Independent States (CIS) (RJU, 2004). CJES investigates the most severe attacks on journalists, such as murder and physical abuse. It assesses conditions for and legal status of media

working in conflictive zones such as Chechnya, Karabach, and Abhasia. Additionally, the center provides legal assistance, conducts workshops for journalists working in extreme conditions and publishes related literature.

Concept: Freedom of MASS information in the CIS.

Conceptual Definition:"Violations of journalists' and media rights" (RJU, 2004) on the territory of the Russian Federation and of other former Soviet republics.

Operational Definition: The number of journalists who have been the victims of attacks, murders, threats and other harsh treatments or who have died in the line of duty.

Procedures: Since 2000, CJES has produced an annual compilation of reports on media violations of journalists rights in the CIS. To do so, CJES maintains files on each country, which generally contain the following categories of information: journalists' deaths, (related and unrelated to their profession, as well as cases under investigation and in which investigations are questionable); missing or kidnapped journalists; attacks on journalists (related/unrelated to their profession); detentions and arrests of the journalist; persecution of journalists; court persecution or other means of pressure on media, and gate-keeping and censorship.

The annual compilation is based on media reports in the CIS and information from NGOs in the 12 CIS countries. Each violation is described on CJES's website, with the source of information provided (RJU, 2004).

3.	**Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ)**

Formed in 1981 by a group of foreign correspondents, the New York City-based CPJ reports and investigates attacks on journalists and lobbies domestic and foreign governments on their behalf. With a full-time New York staff of 22 and one Washington D.C. staff member, CPJ (2004) monitors media in five different countries and regions: the Americas, Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and Europe. Developments are tracked through independent research, fact-finding missions, and contacts in the field. CPJ has published annual reports on attacks on the press since 1987 and country reports on more than 100 nations since

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1993. Its research staff now annually documents more than 500 attacks.

Concept: Freedom of the press

Conceptual Definition: "The rights of journalists to report the news without fear of reprisal" (Committee to Protect Journalists, 2004).

Operational Definition: The number of attacks or restrictions on journalists.

Procedures: Annual reports are prepared by a New-York CPJ regional director and sources in the country. CPJ checks each case from the field identified as a violation of press freedom by more than one source for factual accuracy, confirmation that the victims were journalists or news organizations, and verification that intimidation was the probable motive. Journalists are defined as people who cover news or write commentary on a regular basis. CPJ classifies abuses of journalists and the media using 10 definitions, shown in Chart 7.

In addition, CPJ publishes yearly evaluations of media freedom in various nations, which are known as country reports. Generally, the reports focus on the political, legal, and economic environments for media freedom. According to CPJ deputy director Joel Simon (personal communication, May 15, 2004), the report includes countries in which CPJ has intervened, as well as any other countries CPJ considers to have violated press freedom in a substantial way. Staff coordinators and researchers also rely for information on their own independent research, fact-finding missions to the countries, and contacts in the field, including government officials, human rights or press organizations, and individual journalists.

4. **European Institute for Media (EIM)**

The European Institute for the Media, a policy-oriented think tank, was created in 1983. In 1989, EIM, based in Paris and Dusseldorf, created the Media and Democracy Programme (MADP) to monitor media development in the emerging democracies of Europe. The EIM so far has monitored media coverage in at least 50 presidential, parliamentary, and municipal elections in Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, producing comprehensive written reports from each mission. Additionally, the project has published several books on related topics, such as media and elections and media and conflict.

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Concept: Media coverage of elections and media developments in former totalitarian countries.

Conceptual Definition: Extent to which media provide free, fair, and objective coverage of elections and contribute towards "diversity, participation and accountability in the society" (EIM, 2004).

Operational Definition: Equal media coverage for all political candidates participating in the election, defined as equal space in print media and equal time on broadcasts, as well as objective tones in reports.

Procedures: To produce its reports, EIM missions, which have included academics and journalists as well as EIM staff members, are sent to the selected countries to conduct field research. During monitoring of coverage of the March 2002 elections in the Ukraine, for example, the EIM mission oversaw monitoring of the print and broadcast media to produce quantitative data on the amount of media time was spent on competing candidates. Monitors also measured positive, negative and neutral references to provide an assessment of the tone of coverage. In addition, they conducted interviews with sources from media, political and regulatory fields. The interviews addressed issues of impartiality of election coverage, media access for all political parties and candidates, balance in the presentation of various political perspectives, and the ability of the media to report freely, fairly and objectively. Reports (EIM, 2004) include descriptions of staffing, methodology, political and regulatory background, as well as summaries of findings. http://www.eim.org/MaDP

5.   **Inter-American Press Association (IAPA)**

IAPA was formed in 1957 to provide technical assistance to Latin American media. Based in Miami, IAPA now includes members from more than 75 media organizations in Latin America, the United States, and Canada. The group is involved heavily in activist work, organizing conferences on media freedom, defending journalists, and acting in an advisory manner to governments developing new media laws and policies. It also produces a number of publications released during biannual conferences, including reports on media-related developments in 24 countries in the Americas. Generally, those focus on changes in media policies and laws, as well as working conditions for media operating in conflictive nations or zones.

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The biannual report (IAPA, 2004) also includes documentation of alleged crimes against journalists. The IAPA operates a number of online data bases, including reviews of media laws in 24 countries and profiles of unresolved crimes against journalists; the latter is known as the *Impunity* project.

Concept: Freedom of the press, safety of journalists in Americas.

Conceptual Definition: "Free expression, exchange of ideas, search for and dissemination of information" (Declaration of Chapultepec, 1994).

Operational Definition: Extent to which political, legal, economic and social environment that promotes and does not restrict media freedom and journalists' ability to do their work.

Procedures: IAPA country representatives and staff from Miami headquarters gather information from IAPA sources and contacts within each country; most often, sources are members of domestic media and NGOs, although IAPA sometimes works with foreign embassies. Using the Chapultepec (1994) principles (Chart 8) as a guide for measuring of media freedom, IAPA country representatives, in consultation with Miami headquarters, prepare biannual reports. IAPA also employs four investigative reporters, based in Mexico, Colombia, Brazil, and Argentina, who investigate crimes for the *Impunity* project. According, to Ricardo Trotti, director of the IAPA Press Institute (personal communication, June 7, 2004), when the circumstances of crimes are unclear, the investigative reporters sometimes assist in efforts to clarify them for the biannual report. (See Apendix for OAS Media Freedom Principles).

6.   **International Federation of Journalists (IFJ)**

Based in Brussels, the IJF is among the most longstanding media freedom organizations, claiming 500,000 members in more than 100 countries (IFJ, n.d.). First formed in the 1920s, it describes itself as politically neutral but committed to freedom of expression, defense of press freedom, partly through independent trade unions. IFJ chronicles the killings of journalists all over the world in the *IFJ Annual Report on Journalists and Media Staff Killed.*

Concept: Safety of journalists and media workers.

Conceptual Definition: Extent of "press freedom violations" throughout the world (IFJ, 2004).

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Operational Definition: Counts of cases of reported and unconfirmed murders of journalists, deaths of journalists covering news.

Procedures: IFJ monitors abuses of journalists and media workers, including translators, drivers, technicians and others. IFJ includes cases in which it is unclear why journalists were killed, and cases in which journalists were killed in accidents while on the job. The annual compilation of attacks includes the sources for each case, often other media freedom organizations such as the International Press Institute, Committee to Protect Journalists, World Association of Newspapers, Reporters sans frontieres, Canadian Journalists for Free Expression, and the International Freedom of Expression Exchange.

7.   International Press Institute (IPI)

IPI was formed in 1950 to promote press freedom and improve journalism practices. Based in Vienna, IPI has grown to include members in more than 115 countries and acts as a consultant to the United Nations, UNESCO, and the Council of Europe. IPI arranges annual meetings for media freedom organizations and defends individual journalists. Since 1995, IPI has produced the annual *World Press Freedom Review* (WFPR), which reports on media freedom in at least 175 countries, territories, and administered areas, according to WPFR editor David Dadge (personal communication, July 7, 2004). Prior to 1995, IPI produced a more limited global media freedom published in the quarterly *Global Journalist.* In annual reviews, WPFR (IPA, 2004a) chronicles media freedom conditions, events, and violations in each of the countries it covers, particularly assaults on and harassment of journalists and media. Annual reports include analysis of the political, legal, and economic climate for media freedom. IPI also produces the *IPI Watch List* (IPI, 2004b)*, a* list of countries that IPI considers to be moving toward a repressive media climate.

Concept: Press freedom and safety of journalists.

Conceptual Definition: "The state of media, ...press freedom violations" (IPI, 2004a).

Operational Definition: Extent to which political, economic, and social conditions promote, allow, and do not restrict media freedom or journalists' ability to cover the news.

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Procedures: IPI does not maintain criteria for evaluating media freedom or a classification system for categorizing physical or psychological attacks on or harassment of journalists and media organizations. IPI staff year-round keep files on media freedom in the countries surveyed, which are and are used as the basis for annual reports. To augment that material, IPI regional directors contact their in-country sources, usually members of IPI, to provide information or supply a full, written report. Final reports of anywhere from 500 to 3000 words, depending on media circumstances in the countries, are produced by the Vienna office, where they are reviewed by WPFR editor David Dadge (personal communication, July 7,2004).

In evaluating countries for the Watch List, IPI uses primarily the World Press Freedom Review and consultations between IPI staff members, although outside media experts are at times consulted. Countries under consideration for the Watch List are presented to the IPI Board during one of its twice-yearly meetings, which votes on whether a given country should be on the list. Those approved for the list are reevaluated twice a year and either retained for further monitoring or removed.

8.   **The Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA)**

MISA is a regional, nongovernmental organization that promotes free, independent media, as well as access to information in 11 South African countries: Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. MISA posts alerts about urgent media freedom violations in the countries it covers. It also produces a report on press freedom, *So This is Democracy 2003* (MISA, 2004*),* which is a compilation of all the alerts posted for the year. The report also includes events that MISA considers to be victories for the media (Chart 9).

Concept: Media developments in South African countries.

Conceptual Definition: The extent of "media freedom violations and successes" in South African nations (Media Institute of Southern Africa, 2004).

Operational Definition: A count of attacks on journalists and media organizations, events that promote media freedom.

Procedures: MISA counts by country the number of journalists who have been physically or

psychologically attacked or intimidated, the number of victories for media freedom, and the number of legislative actions that restrict or would restrict media freedom. MISA does not, however, provide a description of its procedures, with details on its sources, data-gathering techniques, and other processes.

C.   **International Governing Institutions**

1.   **OAS Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression**

An outgrowth of the OAS's Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), this office was created in 1997 in response to increasing concern about constraints on media freedom throughout the region. Among other duties, the Commission prepares annual reports on media freedom and freedom of expression that are presented to the OAS as part of the IACHR report, notifies the Commission about emergency situations, and reports on prosecutions.

Country and regional evaluations by the Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (OAS, 2003a) are guided by the freedom of expression principles adopted by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. OAS defines attacks on journalists and other violations of media freedom as: assassinations, threats, detentions, judicial actions (of or against journalists and/or media); acts of intimidation and/or censorship (of journalists and/or media); and legislation contrary to freedom of expression. The Office also reports on actions that promote freedom of expression, such as passage of freedom of information laws, and repeal of *desacato* (contempt) laws.

The Office receives information from media monitoring organizations, NGO's, news publications (all both domestic and international) and its own offices. (If the Office does not receive information about media problems in a country, that country is not included in the annual report.) The Office verifies and analyses alleged crimes against journalists and media and groups them into the above categories. In country and regional reports, the Office selects several cases that reflect the condition of media freedom in each country. The Office cites specific sources for most cases in footnotes. The Office also notes regression in media freedom.

Concept: Freedom of expression in the Americas.

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Conceptual Definition: Extent to which countries are chracterized by media freedom and freedom of expression and access to information (OAS, 2003).

Operational Definition: The Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression evaluates freedom of expression and information via an established classification system that includes individual country reports listing assassinations, "threats, detentions, judicial actions, acts of intimidation, censorship, and legislation contrary to freedom of expression" (OAS, 2003b, Chapter II).

Procedures: The Special Rapporteur receives information from independent journalists, independent human rights organizations, and from the individual member states upon the Office's request. In some cases, no data is received about certain states. Once the data is gathered, "it is analyzed and verified....[and] grouped based on the categories indicated above" in the form of anecdotal examples and summaries (OAS, 2003b, Chapter 2).

2.   **OSCE Office of the Representative on Freedom of the Media**

An outgrowth of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, this office's primary function is to monitor media developments in participating nations, make quarterly reports to the Permanent Council. Created in 1997, the Office on Freedom of the Media also intervenes in the event of serious non-compliance with OSCE principles. It seeks direct contact with the nations and the media involved, assesses the circumstances, and works to promote a resolution.

The OSCE (2003) collects and receives information on media developments from what it considers to be "bona fide" sources. The reports to the Permanent Council include primarily analyses of media issues, such as *Freedom and Responsibility Yearbook* (OSCE, 2003). OSCE special reports and books also focus on specific topics, such as the Internet and media freedom and the challenges of maintaining media freedom during a global anti-terrorist war.

Concept: Independence of media from government influence.

Conceptual Definition: Compliance with OSCE principles and commitments regarding freedom of expression and free media.

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Operational Definition: The OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media exposes cases of journalists arrested and sent to jail without a fair trial.   Procedures: The OSCE Office of the Representative on Freedom of the Media has a staff of nine. The staff gathers information from participating States and other interested parties (e.g. organizations or institutions, media and their representatives, relevant NGOs) that forward their requests, suggestions and comments related to strengthening and further developing compliance with OSCE principles and commitments, including alleged instances of intolerance by participating States (hate speech).

The *Freedom and Responsibility Yearbook* is a collection of studies and essays written by international media experts and scholars who are invited by the OSCE Representative to participate in an international conference, focusing on regional analysis of media issues, as well as review of specific media-related topics.

3.   UN Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of Right to Freedom of Opinion and Expression.

This office was created in 1993 to monitor violations of rights to freedom of expression and opinion as they are defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (UN, 2003). Those abuses include: extra judicial killings, torture, intimidation, persecution, harassment, and abuse of laws on criminal libel and defamation. It also defines its mission as appealing to nations when such rights have been abuses and taking action to resolve such conflicts. The UN Special Rapporteur (2004) receives its information from governments, international, regional, national, and local NGOs, associations of media professionals, trade unions, and political parties. Its reports are also derived from fact-finding missions to countries with current and specific media problems or issues.

Concept: Freedom of opinion and expression.

Conceptual Definition: Promotion and protection of the rights to freedom of expression in all its manifestations.

Operational Definition: Cases or circumstances in which media freedom and freedom of

expression principles, as defined by the United Nations, are violated.

Procedures: The Special Rapporteur goes to the country being studied. The Rapporteur meets with various representatives including NGO officials, government officials, working professionals in the industry, academics, and other media experts. The Special Rapporteur writes the report based on interviewing these people.

D.   Other Organizations

The rest of at least 90 media freedom organizations, many of them new groups formed in the 1990s, do not produce comparative numerical indexes of media freedom or comprehensive regional or country reports consistently covering the same nations and regions from year to year. The majority focus on a single country or a handful of countries and, as a result, respond to media issues specific to their regions. For example, in Colombia, often ranked by international media freedom organizations as the most dangerous place to work as a journalist, Fundacion para la Libertad de Prensa focuses on protecting journalists, while many media freedom organizations in the new European democracies focus on training journalists to work for newly independent newspapers and news broadcasters.

A listing of these media freedom organizations is presented in the Appendix.

E.   Organizations Reporting on Media Freedom: A Summary

It is clear that RSF and Freedom House have very similar approaches to defining and assessing press freedom. Both organizations attempt to measure media freedom as it is defined and influenced by the political, economic, and legal environments. Both RSF and Freedom House view media freedom as a function of whether legal, political, and economic environments promote and/or allow for media freedom or restrict it. Both groups employ questionnaires that address the legal, political and economic factors that might promote or restrict media freedom. And both employ a point system to arrive at final scores that are used to rate countries. The two organizations differ somewhat in the sources they use. Both use staff members, local and international media workers, media and regional experts, and other NGOs, but Freedom House, which includes governments and multilateral organizations in its source list, appears to

rely more heavily on official information.

The two organizations also differ in the emphasis they place on criteria. While Freedom House generally gives roughly equal weight to the three categories of legal, political and economic variables, RSF places more emphasis on physical assaults on journalists and other similarly severe methods for intimidating the media. That is clear from the RSF questionnaire, in which questions 1 to 16 address assaults, torture, imprisonment and other harsh tactics. Freedom House includes only one broadly stated question on intimidation tactics.

In contrast to both Freedom House and RSF, IREX measures a different concept–not media freedom at the moment research is conducted but sustainability of independent media over time. Its intent is to gauge whether independent media will be able to survive and remain independent despite fluctuations in economic conditions and political leadership. As a result, IREX's instrument includes questions about the professionalism of journalism and business practices within independent media, as well as the widely-used questions relating to legal, political and economic environments. IREX also employs different methods for scoring, appointing two panels to evaluate indicators for its five objectives and reach a consensus on final scores.

The European Institute for the Media (EIM) likewise measures a different concept. Rather than focus on general indicators for media freedom, it monitors, records, and analyzes media coverage of elections in new European democracies, using both quantitative and qualitative research methods, EIM attempts to judge whether election coverage has been free, fair, and objective.

IAPA, CPJ, and IPI produce regional and country reports that are comprehensive and detailed. These organizations also evaluate the widely used criteria of legal, economic, and political envrionments for media freedom.

The international governing institutions, perhaps because their primary missions are diplomatic intervention, are selective in their research and analysis. While their methodologies appear to be precise, generally they do not consistently cover the same countries over time. Rather, they tend to focus on

indices were included into the data base as well.

Specifically, data from the Freedom House Press Freedom Index from 1981 to 2004 were included. The Freedom House Press Freedom Index in a given year is for evaluation of the media system a year earlier, so the 1981 index covers the 1980 period. In 1981, ratings were of 155 countries. That number had grown to 175 by 1994. During this time period, only an ordinal level measure was available, with countries being classified as Free, Partly Free, or Not Free. From 1994 to 1999, the Freedom House Press Freedom total index was recorded, with a theoretical range of from 1 to 100. In fact, the lowest score (indicating freedom) was 5 during this period; the highest score was 100. In 1994, 183 countries were evaluated; in 1999, the evaluation was of 185. From 2000 to 2004, data were available not only on the total index score, but also on the three subparts, legal environment, political influences, economic pressures.

The Reporters sans frontieres indices have been reported only for 2002 and 2003. In each year, the period covered was from September 1 of the previous year through August 31 of the listed year. Only the total index, ranging in theoretical value from 0 to 100, was available. In 2002, 139 countries were rated; in 2003, ratings were available for 164 countries.

The IREX Media Sustainability index has been released for three years, 2001, 2002 and 2003. The reports, released in the following year, cover the listed year. The index covers 20 political entities: Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Tajikistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan. In creating the file, the data for Montenegro and Serbia were averaged to create a single score for that country. In each of the three years, the MSI score and each of its five subparts were entered into the data base. Those subparts are: free speech, professional journalism, plurality of news sources, business management, and supporting institutions. The theoretical range of scores for the total index and each of its parts is 0 to 4.

Data from the Committee to Protect Journalists were available only for 2003, covering that year. Both the total number of attacks on the press and the individual components making up that total were

entered into the data file. Included were the number of: physical attacks on journalists or facilities, cases of censorship, expulsions, harassments, imprisonments, murders of journalists, murders of journalists not documented as related to their work, legal actions against journalists, missing journalists, threats to journalists, and cases of kidnapping of journalists. A total of 126 countries were scored. Actual scores for the total index ranged from 0 to 46.

V.   Findings

The Reporters sans frontieres ratings and the Freedom House ratings are empirically quite similar, as Table 2 makes clear. In 2002, the Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient between the two ratings was .81. In 2003, the coefficient was .84. In other words, about 70% of the variance in ratings is shared. Despite the differences in measurement techniques and between the countries of the organizers, the two groups mostly agree on the classification of the media systems of the world.

More surprising is the strong relationship between the IREX Media Sustainability Index and both the Reporters sans frontieres and the Freedom House ratings. For the 18 countries rated by IREX and by the other two NGOs (Kosovo was not rated by either Reporters sans frontieres or Freedom House), the correlation coefficient was .82 and .91 respectively in 2003. (The sign of the relationship in the accompanying table reflects the reverse scoring of the Reporters sans frontieres and Freedom House indices.) In 2002, as Table 2 shows, the figures were .72 for RSF and .89 for Freedom House. In 2001, the correlation between the Freedom House index and MSI was .84.

Only the tally of attacks on the press by the Committee to Protect Journalists produces evaluations different from those of the other three groups. In 2003, the only year for which these comparisons are possible, the CPJ tally is correlated .30 with the RSF rating, .31 with the Freedom House rating, and .08 with the IREX Media Sustainabililty Index. The suggestion is that the CPJ data provide new information not fully incorporated in the other indices. The IREX Sustainabililty index seems to include more of the positive features of press operation than do the RSF and Freedom House measures. The Committee to Protect Journalists is a wholly negative measure. The lower–really almost trivial--correlation of the CPJ and the

Sustainability Index is, in this sense, not surprising.

Table 3 shows that the RSF index correlates equally well with the three subparts of the Freedom House Index (.81 for Legal Environment, .82 for Political Influences, and .80 for Economic Pressures). The RSF index, however, correlates less well with the business management part the IREX Sustainability Index (.62) than with the other parts.

The CPJ tally of attacks correlates best with the Political Influences part of the Freedom House index. The lowest correlation is with the Economic Pressures. These findings are consistent with the argument that the three components of the Freedom House index have some distinctiveness. The CPJ tally is more strongly related to the IREX Free Speech, Professional Journalism and Plurality of Sources subcomponents than to the Business Management and Supporting Institutions components, where the relationship is really nonexistent.

The interrelationships of the Freedom House and IREX subparts do not show clear patterns. The Freedom House Legal Environment is more highly correlated with the IREX Business Managment item than with other IREX components. The Freedom House Political Influences component is least correlated with the IREX Free Speech component. The Freedom House Economic Pressures component is highly correlated with the IREX Plurality of News and Supporting Institutions measures. The easiest interpretation is that the Freedom House and IREX measures have much in common internally as well as in the sum.

The part-whole correlations for both the Freedom House and the IREX indices, also presented in Table 3, show that each total index is roughly evenly influenced by the subparts. The three subparts of the Freedom House index also are very highly correlated, meaning that little new variance is obtained by any one of the three components. For the IREX index, on the other hand, more variance among components exits. IREX's sweep is a bit wider, it seems, in gathering components for its index.

In sum, the Reporter sans frontieres, Freedom House and IREX measures all seem to be measuring much the same thing. The Freedom House gain for including the three components is not great, at least as far as the 2003 measures are concerned. The IREX MSI index does seem to include

components not represented as fully in the other indices, but, in terms of the total index, little is gained from

the exercise. The IREX index is more strongly related to the Freedom House than the Reporters sans

frontieres indices, perhaps reflecting an American bias in the evaluation. The Committee to Protect

Journalists tally of Attacks on the Press is not the same as the other three indices. The relationship is

particularly weak between it and the IREX index. The suggestion is that it adds information not redundant

with that of the other indices.

These findings speak to the distinctiveness of the measures, or, in the reverse, to the consistency

and the reliability of the information they provide. What evidence is there that they vary in significant ways

across time, that is, reflect real changes that take place in the media environment?

Only the Freedom House measure has been used for a long enough period to allow for an

assessment of this question.

In general, Table 4 shows, the Freedom House measures from year to year are related, suggesting

more stability than change, as one would expect. Across time, however, the size of the relationship decline,

again as one would expect if real change is taking place in the system. This also suggests that the

evaluators are not simply using the rating from the year before the evaluate the current year. The

relationship between the 1981 evaluation and the 1982 evaluation is .92, but by 1993 (when the scale

changed), that relationship had dropped to .62. This pattern is repeated across the years and across

measurement type. The 1994 measure of Press Freedom by Freedom House is correlated .91 with the

measure a year later, but that relationship dropped to .85 by 2004.

Table 5 provides further evidence that there has been more consistency than change reflected in

the Freedom House measure across the more than 20 years that it has been reported. The mean scores for

the index changed not at all from 1981 to 1989, nor did the standard deviation of the measures (Table 4).

Treating the data as appropriate for computation of means and standard deviations is a stretch, of course,

as the measure used during that time period was truly ordinal. Given the small range of measures,

however, median change can hardly be expected.

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In the 1989 to 1993 period–a crucial one in world history and in the history of media democratization–the Freedom House index of Press Freedom did change in the expected direction. The overall score for the nations ranked move in the direction of press freedom. The standard deviation, as would be expected, did not change. Change from 1994 to 2004, based on the full 100-point scale, was not as dramatic, but it was in the direction of increased press freedom. The standard deviation has increased slightly as well.

Table 6 shows these same data only for the Warsaw Pact countries, where change was certainly dramatic. In 1981, the mean for all six countries (Poland, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria) was 3. There was no variance, as all countries had that score. In 1990, there was evidence of change, which continued through 1993. (East Germany dropped out of the analyses after 1989.) Based on the new scale used from 1994 to 2004, change continued to be in evidence. (The division of the Czechoslovakia into the Czech Republic and Slovakia created six states again.) In other words, the Freedom House measure across time seemed to pick up what most would argue was real change in the media environments of these countries across the 20 plus years it has been used.

Table 7 repeats these same analyses for the 15 states evolving from the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The data for 1981 to 1992 reflect the evaluation only of the Soviet state. From 1994 on, the 100-point measure reflects the situation in the 15 new states. Here, however, the measure shows a deterioration of the media landscapes in terms of press freedom. The change has not been overly large, but it is noticeable nonetheless. Absent other evidence, one would conclude that the media environment in these states as a whole did not improve, and that the Freedom House evaluators did not get swept up in the euphoria of the moment in reaching their assessment. (The ratings for the three Baltic states did improve during this time period, but it was offset by deteriorating media situations in other states, according to the Freedom House data.)

VI. Summary and Conclusions

The number of organizations involved in the evaluation of media around the world is impressive, as

is the volume of work they have produced. Clearly, much thought and effort has gone into the process of evaluating media systems by the NGOs and governmental organizations with policy concerns in the areas of media freedom and independence.

This paper has focused on the work of 14 of these organizations, though more than 100 organizations are involved in the enterprise. The selection was based on prominence and longevity of the work of the organization. Freedom House, for example, has been producing evaluations of press freedom since 1981, and its assessments of the media are widely referenced in the English-language writings on the topic.

Despite the large number of organizations identified, it is quite clear that they share a great deal of their basic information on the media. In fact, one organization, the International Freedom of Expression eXchange (IFEX, n.d.), serves as a sort of clearing house on media evaluations. Quite clearly, this sharing of information results in commonalities of perspectives on media freedom issues and on the data that underlie them.

The empirical analysis of the numerical ratings of four of these organizations–Reporters sans frontieres, Freedom House, IREX and Committee to Protect Journalists–shows that at least the first three of these organizations largely come to the same conclusions about the media. The RSF and Freedom House ratings for 2002 were correlated .81, while the figure in 2003 was .84. The IREX index correlated .72 with the RSF index and .89 with the Freedom House ratings in 2002. In 2003, the figures were .82 and .91.

The correlation of the IREX measures with those of Reporters sans frontieres and Freedom House is surprising, given that IREX tried to create a distinct concept, namely media sustainability. The goal was a measure that incorporated press freedom, but focused more heavily on the economic and social environment of the country thought necessary for the development of a durable, independent media. The comparisons are only for the 18 countries rated by all three organizations, but they suggest that IREX has not been successful in getting beyond the media freedom measurement–or that the RSF and Freedom House measures were already broad enough to capture the meaning sought by IREX.

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The higher correlation of the IREX measure with Freedom House's measure both years also suggests a nationality bias, as both IREX and Freedom House are the product of U.S. organizations, while RSF is a French NGO. This at a minimum raises a question about the independence of the evaluations of country perspectives on press freedom reflecting domestic, political concerns.

The Freedom House and IREX measures are designed to be multi-dimensional. In the case of Freedom House, the subindices are very highly correlated internally. This argues for internal reliability. But it also suggests that the measures do not sample elements of the concept widely –at least not as widely as is the case for the IREX MSI index, which has lower internal consistency. In other words, the internal consistency is at the cost of the face validity of the measure.

Clearly the Committee to Protect Journalists, through its measures of attacks on the press, has gathered information that is not redundant with the RSF, Freedom House and MSI indices. The CPJ counts of attacks correlates weakly with the first two measures and very poorly with the IREX measure.

One option would be to incorporate the CPJ data into a global index, perhaps one that also combined the RSF and Freedom House measures. Combining RSF and Freedom House into a single, averaged, index would improve the reliability of the measures–if each has random error associated with it. Adding the CPJ measure, on the other hand, would increase the breadth of the measure, that is, potentially improve its validity.

Another candidate for inclusion in a broader index of press freedom would be the work of the European Institute for Media. As, in principle, is the case with IREX, EIM adds a different dimension to media freedom measurement–namely free and fair coverage of election in Europe's new democracies. Because of the unusual pressures on individual journalists and media organizations covering campaigns and election results, the EIM findings would broaden the press freedom measure. EIM, as with IREX, however, is limited in the scope of its evaluations. For this reason, inclusion of EIM data would only be possible for the European countries.

The qualitative reports on press freedom by the Inter-American Press Association, the International

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Press Institute, Arab Press Freedom Watch, and others also might be content analyzed in an effort to produce additional data for a global index of press freedom. At present, however, it is not clear that any of these other organizations provide information sufficiently different from what already goes into the RSF and Freedom House measures. Further examination of these measures across time, however, could change that preliminary judgment.

One of the notable deficiencies of the existing indices is that they are heavily oriented toward application. Little effort has been made to define the theoretical concepts being used. Mostly, one must guess about what it is that the organization is actually trying to measure.

The evidence is, in the case of Freedom House, which has reported data across more than 10 years, that the measurement is consistent. The evidence also is that it has varied in meaningful ways across time, picking up the dramatic change in the media environment of the former Warsaw Pact countries following the fall of communism in 1989.

The usefulness of the Freedom House measure, or any amalgamation of the Freedom House measure with that of RSF, CPJ or other organizations, is its match to the theoretical concepts of interest and to other systemic variables, such as the evolution of a civil society and key democratic institutions.

It is possible to make some assessment of the first of these issues by reflecting back to the definitions of press freedom identified in the scientific literature on the media. McQuail (2000) has said that a free press should have a independence sufficient to protect free and open public expression of ideas and information. It also should be diverse. Others, such as Curran (1996) and Rozumilowicz (2002) have added additional requirements about mediation of societal interests and balance between commercial and public components. None of the existent measures seem adequate to address the diversity argument of McQuail let alone to respond to the broader concepts of press freedom called for by Curran and Roqumilowicz.

The relationship of the existing measures–or a broader measure incorporating already existing information on new information gathered to reflect the broader concepts of McQuail, Curran, Rozumilowicz and others–to other measures is virgin territory. The findings of this paper suggest it is territory worthy of

exploration.

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Chart 1. Freedom House Analysis of Laws and Regulations Affecting Media

Freedom House assesses the potentially negative or positive impact of:

1.	Legal and constitutional guarantees for freedom of expression

2.	Independence of the judiciary and official media regulatory bodies

3.	The ability of media to operate freely

4.	Security legislation

5.	Penal codes and other criminal statutes

6.	Penalties for libel and defamation

7.	Registration requirements for both media outlets and journalists

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Chart 2. Freedom House Analysis of Political Control Over News Media Content

Political influence is measured by evaluating:

1.	Access to information and sources

2.	editorial independence of both state-owned and private media

3.	Official censorship and self-censorship

4.	Vibrancy of the media

5.	Ability of both foreign and local reporters to cover news freely and without harassment

6.	Intimidation of journalists by the state and other actors, including murder, arbitrary detention and imprisonment, violent assaults, and other threats

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Chart 3. Freedom House Analysis of Economic Pressure on News Media

Economic pressure is measured by evaluating:

1.	The structure of media ownership, as well as the transparency and concentration of ownership

2.	The costs of establishing media outlets, as well as costs of production and distribution

3.	The existence of selective witholding of advertising or subsidies by the state or other actors

4.	The impact of corruption and bribery on content

5.	The extent to which the economic situation impacts media development

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Chart 4. Freedom House Media Freedom Questionnaire

A.   Laws and Administration (0-30 points)

1)   Are laws designed to protect freedom of the press not actually enforced? (0-8 pts)

2)   Do the penal code, security laws, or any other laws potentially restrict reporting or punish journalists? Are there penalties for irresponsible journalism? (0-6 pts)

3)   Is libel a criminal offense? (0-6 pts)

4)   Is independent broadcasting limited narrowly? Can individuals legally establish private media? (0-4 pts)

5)   Are journalists required by law to be licensed? To be part of a particular union? (0-4)

B.   Political influences (0-40 points)

1)   Are journalists' agendas/editorial stances set by the government or a particular party, or by the owner of the media? (0-6 pts)

2)   Do state media provide only an official point of view? (0-3 pts)

3)   Is access to official or unofficial sources generally controlled? (0-3 pts)

4)   Is there official censorship of certain subjects, such as corruption, human rights, or other contentious issues, making them off-limits to the media? (0-4 pts)

5)   Do journalists practice self-censorship? (0-4 pts)

6)   Are certain geographical areas of the country off-limits to journalists? Does a war, insurgency, or similar situation in a country inhibit the operation of media? Are journalists harassed while covering the news? (0-6 pts)

7)   Does the state or any other actor (organized crime, opposition paramilitaries, etc.) intimidate journalists by extralegal means such as murder, imprisonment, physical violence, harassment, threats, abduction, expulsion, or confiscation or destruction of property? Have journalists fled the country or gone into hiding to avoid such action? (0-10 pts)

8)   Are crimes that threaten press freedom generally not adequately prosecuted by authorities? (0-4.

C.   Economic Pressures (0-30 points)

1)   Are media solely owned or controlled by the government? (0-6 pts)

2)   Is non-governmental media ownership highly concentrated and does it influence diversity of content? (0-4 pts)

3)   Are there restrictions on means of journalistic production and distribution? Are there private printing presses? (0-4 pts)

4)   Does the state place prohibitively high costs on the establishment of media (i.e., to obtain a radio frequency, buy newsprint, or establish an ISP)? Does it control the allocations process and, if so, does it allocate equipment/licenses fairly? (0-4 pts)

5)   Does the state try to control the media through allocation of advertising or subsidies? (0-4)

6)   Does the economic situation in a country accentuate media dependency on the state, political parties, big business, or other influential political actors FOR FUNDING? (0-4 pts)

7)   Do journalists receive payment from private or public sources whose design is to influence their journalistic content? Are journalists susceptible to bribery? (0-4 pts)

(Personal communication with Karin Karlekar, Managing Editor, Freedom of the Press Survey, Freedom House, June 26, 2004)

Chart 5. International Research & Exchanges Scoring System

A.   Indicator scoring

Each indicator is scored using the following system:

0   Country does not meet indicator; government or social forces may actively oppose its implementation
1   Country minimally meets aspects of the indicator; forces may not actively oppose its implementation, but business environment may not support it and government or profession do not fully and actively support change
2   Country has begun to meet many aspects of the indicator, but progress may be too recent to judge or still dependent on current government or political forces
3   Country meets most aspects of the indicator; implementation of the indicator has occurred over several years and/or through changes in government, indicating likely sustainability
4   Country meets the aspects of the indicator; implementation has remained intact over multiple changes in government, economic fluctuations, changes in public opinion, and/or changing social conventions

B.   Objectives and indicators

<u>*Objective 1: Free Speech*</u>

Definition: Legal and social norms protect and promote free speech and access to public information

Indicators

1   Legal/social protections of free speech exist and are enforced.
2   Licensing of broadcast media is fair, competitive, and apolitical.
3   Market entry and tax structure for media are fair and comparable to other industries.
4   Crimes against journalists or media outlets are prosecuted vigorously, but occurrences of such crimes are rare.
5   State or public media do not receive preferential legal treatment and law guarantees editorial independence.
6   Libel is a civil law issue; public officials are held to higher standards, and the offended party must prove falsity and malice.
7   Public information is easily accessible; right of access to information is equally enforced for all media and journalists.
8   Media outlets have unrestricted access to information; this is equally enforced for all media and journalists.
9   Entry into the journalism profession is free, and government imposes no licensing restrictions, or special rights for journalists.

<u>*Objective 2: Professional Journalism*</u>

Definition: Journalism meets professional standards of quality.

Indicators

1   Reporting is fair, objective, and well sourced.
2   Journalists follow recognized and accepted ethical standards.
3   Journalists and editors do not practice self-censorship
4   Pay levels for journalists and other media professionals are sufficiently high to discourage corruption.
5   Entertainment programming does not eclipse news and information programming.
6   Technical facilities and equipment for gathering, producing, and distributing news are modern and efficient.
7   Quality niche reporting and programming exists (investigative, economics/business, local, political.)

<u>*Objective 3: Plurality of News Sources*</u>

Definition: Multiple news sources provide citizens with reliable and objective news.

Indicators

1   A plurality of affordable public and private news sources (e.g., print, broadcast, Internet) exists.
2   Citizens' access to domestic or international media is not restricted.
3   State or public media reflect the views of the entire political spectrum, are nonpartisan, and serve the public interest.
4   Independent news agencies gather and distribute news for print and broadcast media.
5   Independent broadcast media produce their own news programs.
6   Transparency of media ownership allows consumers to judge objectivity of news; media ownership in not concentrated in a few conglomerates.
7   A broad spectrum of social interests are reflected and represented in the media, including minority-language information sources.

<u>*Objective 4: Business Management*</u>
Definition: Independent media are well-managed businesses, allowing editorial independence.

Indicators

1   Media outlets and supporting firms operate as efficient professional, and profit-generating businesses.
2   Media receive revenue from a multitude of sources.
3   Advertising agencies and related industries support an advertising market.
4   Advertising revenue as a percentage of total revenue is in line with accepted standards at commercial outlets.
5   Market research is used to formulate strategic plans, enhance advertising revenue, and tailor products to the needs and interests of audiences.
6   Broadcast ratings and circulation figures are reliably and independently produced.

Objective 5: Supporting Institutions

Definition: Supporting institutions function in the professional interests of independent media.

Indicators

1   Trade associations represent the interests of private media owners and provide member services.
2   Professional associations work to protect journalists' rights.
3   NGOs support free speech and independent media.
4   Quality journalism degree programs that provide substantial practical experience exist.
5   Short-term training and in-service training programs allow journalists to upgrade skills or acquire new skills.
6   Sources of newsprint and printing facilities are private, apolitical, and unrestricted.
7   Channels of media distribution (kiosks, transmitters, Internet) are private, apolitical, and unrestricted.

C.   Final scores

The averages of all the indicators are then averaged to obtain a single, overall score for each objective. Finally, objective scores are averaged to provide an overall score for each country. IREX interprets country scores in following manner:

3 and up–Sustainable and free independent media
2-3--Independent media approaching sustainability
1-2--Significant progress remains to be made; society and/or government not fully supportive
0-1--Country meets few indicators and government/society actively opposing changes

International Researches Exchanges Board, 2004, Media Sustainability Index 2003, Retrieved on July 1, 2004
http//www.irex.org/msi/ms103-intro.pdf

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Chart 6. Reporters sans frontieres Questionnaire for 2003 Global Press Freedom Survey

1.   How many journalists were murdered? 1=5p / <5=10p / ≥5=15p

2.   How many journalists were murdered, with the state involved? 3p per case

3.   How many journalists were arrested or sent to prison (for whatever length of time)? ≤5=3p / <15=6p / ≥15=9p / ≥50=12p

4.   How many journalists are currently in jail and serving a heavy sentence (more than a year) for a media offense. 1=3p/<10=6p/

5.   How many journalists were threatened?<10=1p / ≥10=2p / ≥20=3p

6.   How many journalists were physically attacked or injured?<10=1p / ≥10=2p / ≥20=3p

7.   How many journalists fled the country? <3=1p / ≥3=2p / ≥6=4p / ≥10=6p

8.   Are there any journalists who have been illegally imprisoned (no arrest warrant, in violation of maximum period of detention without trial or court appearance)? Yes=1p

9.   Are there any journalists who have been tortured or ill-treated? Yes=2p

10.   Are there any journalists who have been kidnapped or taken hostage? Yes=2p

11.   Are there any journalists who have been disappeared? Yes=1p

Over the period, has/have there been:

12.   Armed militias or secret organisations regularly targeting journalists? Yes=3p

13.   Physical attacks on journalists or media companies? Yes=5p

14.   Improper use of fines or bond-posting against media outlets or journalists Yes=.50

15.   Improper use of legal action or summonses against journalists? Yes=.50p

16.   Failure to prosecute those violating press freedom? Yes=1p

17.   Prison terms stipulated by law for media offenses? Yes=.50

18.   Attacks on or threats against families or friends of journalists? Yes=.50

19.   Surveillance of local journalists (phone-tapping, being followed?) Yes=.50

20.   Problems of access to public or official information (refusal by officials, selection of information provided according to the media's editorial line or bureaucratic obstacles)? yes=1p

21.   Restricted physical or reporting access to any regions of the country (lawlessness, official ban)? Yes=2p

22.   Media outlets censored <10=3p / ≥10=6p

23.   Seizure or destruction of copies of newspapers or equipment? Yes=1p

24.   Searches of media offices or homes of journalists? Yes=.50

25.   Surveillance of foreign journalists working in the country? Yes=1p

26.   Foreign journalists deported? Yes=1p

27.   Problems getting journalist visas (undue delay, demand to know names of people to be interviewed)? Yes=.50p

28.   Censorship or seizure of foreign newspapers? Yes=2p

29.   Jamming of foreign radio or TV reception or regulating who has satellite dishes? Yes=1p

30.   Presence of elected media representatives on press regulatory bodies (broadcasting authority, national press or communications council)? No=.50

31.   Independent or opposition news media? No=20p

32.   An official censorship body? Yes=10p

33.   Widespread self-censorship in the state-owned media? Yes=.50

34.   Widespread self-censorship in the privately-owned media? Yes=.50

35.   Subjects that are taboo (such as the armed forces, political corruption, religion, the opposition, demands of separatists, human rights)? Yes=.50

36.   A state monopoly of TV? Yes=5p

37.   A state monopoly of radio? Yes=5p

38.   Privately-owned news radio stations, apart from musical or religious ones? No=1p

39.   A state monopoly of printing facilities? Yes=2p

40.   A state monopoly of newspaper distribution? Yes=2p

41.   A state monopoly of newsprint supplies? Yes=2p

42.   Government editorial control of state-owned media? Yes=2p

43.   Unjustified sackings of journalists in the state-owned media? Yes=.50

44.   Opposition access to state-owned media? No=1p

45.   Denigration (routine and unjustified accusations) of privately-owned media by government media? Yes=.50

46.   Controlled access to journalism (compulsory certificate or training, membership of journalists' institute or press card required)? Yes=1p

47.   Use of withdrawal of advertising (government stops buying ad space in some papers or pressures private firms to boycott media outlets)? Yes=.50

48.   Undue restriction on foreign investment in the media? Yes=.50

49.   Official permission needed to set up a newspaper or magazine? Yes=1p

50.   A state monopoly of Internet service providers (ISPs)? Yes=1p

51.   Official permission needed for a subscription to an ISP? Yes=.50

52.   Shutdowns or blocking of access of Internet sites? Yes=1p

53.   Cyber-dissidents imprisoned? Yes=2p

(Personal communication with Reporters sans frontieres, Jean-Francois Julliard, investigator, Reporters sans frontieres, June 17, 2004)

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Chart 7. Committee to Protect Journalists Lists of Abuses of Journalists and the Media

1.   Attacks: Wounded or assaulted journalists, damaged; raided or searched news facilities; attack on non-journalist workers because of employers news coverage or commentary

2.   Censorship: Official suppression or banning, confiscation of editions; closing of news outlets

3.   Expulsion: Forced departure from a country because of news coverage or commentary

4.   Harassment: Denial or limitation of access; confiscation or damage of materials; denial of entry into or exit from a country; attack on or threat to family members; dismissal or demotion at work, when it is clearly the result of political or outside pressure; impediment to freedom of movement; detention for up to 48 hours

5.   Imprisonment: Arrest or detention by government for at least 48 hours

6.   Killing: Murdered, or missing and presumed dead with evidence that the motive was retribution for news coverage or commentary; journalists killed in crossfire

7.   Killing (motive unconfirmed): Killing when the motive is unconfirmed but there is reason to believe that it was related to victims' journalistic duties

8.   Legal action: Denial or suspension of credentials; fines, prison sentences, denial or cancellation of visas; passage of restrictive laws; libel suits intended to inhibit coverage

9.   Missing: Kidnapped or detained by non-government forces for at least 48 hours; disappeared

10.   Threatened: Menaced with physical harm or some other type of retribution

(Committee to Protect Journalists, 2004. *How CPJ investigates and classifies attacks on the press.* Retrieved on June 24, 2004, from http//www.cpj.org/cases03/classify.html)

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Chart 8. Inter-American Press Association Chapultepec Declaration

Adopted by the Hemisphere Conference on Free Speech, Mexico City, March 11, 1994

PRINCIPLES

A free press enables societies to resolve their conflicts, promote their well-being and protect their liberty. No law or act of government may limit freedom of expression or of the press, whatever the medium.

Because we are fully conscious of this reality and accept it with the deepest conviction, and because of our firm commitment to freedom, we sign this declaration, whose principles follow.

1.   No people or society can be free without freedom of expression and of the press. The exercise of this freedom is not something authorities grant, it is an inalienable right of the people.
2.   Every person has the right to seek and receive information, express opinions and disseminate them freely. No one may restrict or deny these rights.
3.   The authorities must be compelled by law to make available in a timely and reasonable manner the information generated by the public sector. No journalist may be forced to reveal his or her sources of information.
4.   Freedom of expression and of the press are severely limited by murder, terrorism, kidnapping, intimidation, the unjust imprisonment of journalists, the destruction of facilities, violence of any kind and impunity for perpetrators. Such acts must be investigated promptly and punished harshly.
5.   Prior censorship, restrictions on the circulation of the media or dissemination of their reports, forced publication of information, the imposition of obstacles to the free flow of news, and restrictions on the activities and movements of journalists directly contradict freedom of the press.
6.   The media and journalists should neither be discriminated against nor favored because of what they write or say.
7.   Tariff and exchange policies, licenses for the importation of paper or news-gathering equipment, the assigning of radio and television frequencies and the granting or withdrawal of government advertising may not be used to reward or punish the media or individual journalists.
8.   The membership of journalists in guilds, their affiliation to professional and trade associations and the affiliation of the media with business groups must be strictly voluntary.
9.   The credibility of the press is linked to its commitment to truth, to the pursuit of accuracy, fairness and objectivity and to the clear distinction between news and advertising. The attainment of these goals and the respect for ethical and professional values may not be imposed. These are the exclusive responsibility of journalists and the media. In a free society, it is public opinion that rewards or punishes.
10.   No news medium nor journalist may be punished for publishing the truth or criticizing or denouncing the government.

The struggle for freedom of expression and of the press is not a one-day task; it is an ongoing commitment. It is fundamental to the survival of democracy and civilization in our hemisphere. Not only is this freedom a bulwark and an antidote against every abuse of authority, it is society's lifeblood. Defending it day upon day is honoring our history and controlling our destiny. To these principles we are committed.

(Inter-American Press Association (1994). *Chapultepec Declaration*. Retrieved June 12, 2004 from http://www.declarationofchapultepec.org/

Chart 9. Media Institute of Southern Africa Classification of Media Freedom Violations

MISA uses 11 categories in its reports on media freedom violations and successes. They are:

1.   Beaten: Incidents in which journalists are assaulted, attacked physically, tortured, or wounded during the course of their work. The statistic given is for the number of media workers involved.

2.   Threatened: Threat from a public official, a death threat, various forms of harassment (veiled warnings, threats of action, interference in editorial processes), or journalists being questioned or interrogated about sources. The statistic given is for the number of media workers or media organizations involved.

3.   Legislated: All aspects of the legislative process and the application of common law. Includes instances where official proposals are made for new laws, legislation is passed, laws are amended or struck down either in parliament or by the courts, and civil litigation is instituted against media. Also, legislation that enhances media freedom and freedom of expression. legislation' and 'positive legislation'. The statistic given is for the number of incidents reported under this category.

4.	Expelled– Incidents in which journalists are expelled from a country, prevented from entering a country through denial of visas, work papers or accreditation, prevented from leaving a country, barred from entering certain areas, and generally inhibited from moving freely in order to perform their work. The statistic given is for the number of media workers involved.

5.	Bombed–Incidents in which the home of a journalist or the office of a media house/outlet/organisation is sabotaged through bombing, arson, vandalism, theft, or is raided or occupied forcibly. The statistic given is for the number of media workers or media organizations involved.

6.	Victory–Incidents falling under this category have immediate implications for individual media workers or media organizations (being released unconditionally, having charges dropped, winning or avoiding civil litigation, overturning gagging orders and acquittal on criminal charges). Others have broad implications that advance media freedom, access to information or freedom of expression in general (favourable policy statements from public officials, the adoption of media-friendly laws or policies, favourable and precedent-setting court judgements, and favourable procedures and decisions by statutory or other bodies dealing with matters of media content or freedom of expression). The statistics given are for the number of incidents reported under this category.

7.	Censored–Information is suppressed or prevented from being published, or media workers are prevented from getting information out. Involves straight forward censorship (banning, gag orders) and interdicts (court orders or civil litigation resulting in the suppression of information). Also involves closure of a publication or broadcaster, suspension of a program, confiscation of equipment and/or materials. The statistic given is for the number of media workers or media organizations involved.

8.	Killed–Incidents in which journalists have been killed, kidnapped or disappeared.The statistic given is for the number of media workers involved, as opposed to the number of incidents reported.

9.	Sentenced–Judgement is handed down against a media worker involving a prison term or a fine. The statistic given is for the number of media workers involved.

10.	Detained–Involves a media worker being put behind bars. Can be legal or illegal and includes being sentenced to a jail term or being detained (without charge, incommunicado, preventative, arrest). The statistic given is for the number of media workers involved.

11.	Other–Incidents which do not necessarily involve the media, but which affect aspects of freedom of expression or speech in general. Can involve cases of sedition against a member of the public, a general curb on free speech, parliamentary speech or access to information, violation of the right to freedom of assembly and protest, or an incident relating to artistic or academic freedom. Incidents involving the media that do fall in this category involve media pluralism (closure of a publication for financial reasons) and public access to media. The statistic given is for the number of incidents reported under this category.

Media Institute for Southern Africa (2003). State of the media. Retrieved on July 6, 2004, from http://www.misa.org/sothisisdemocracy.html)

Appendix: Additional Media Organizations Involved in Press Freedom Activities

Advocates in Defense of Expression in the Media (ADIDEM)
African Journalists in Exile
Alliance of Independent Journalists (Aliansi Jurnalis Independen) Indonesia
American Booksellers Foundation for Free Expression
American Library Association-Office for Intellectual Freedom (United States)
Antonio Narino Project (Proyecto Antonio Narino, PAN) Colombia
Article 19, the Global Campaign for Free Expression
Association of Independent Electronic Media (ANEM) Serbia/Montenegro
Boston Coalition for Freedom of Expression (United States)
Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom (Canada)
Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom in Britain (United Kingdom)
Cartoonists Rights Network (CRN) United States, Romania
Centre algerien de defense de la liberte de la presse (Algeria)
Center for Democracy and Technology (United States)
Center for Human Rights and Democratic Studies) Nepal
Center for Journalism in Extreme Situations (Russia)
Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility (CMFR) (Philippines)
Central Asian and Southern Caucasus Freedom of Expression (CASCFEN)

Center for Media Freedom in the Middle East and North Africa, (United Kingdom)
Coalition for Academic Freedom of Expression (United States)
Digital Freedom Network (United States)
Electronic Frontier Canada (Canada)
Electronic Frontier Foundation (United States)
Electronic Frontieres Australia (Australia)
Ethiopian Free {Press Journalists Association (Ethiopia)
Federation professionnelle des journalistes du Quebec (Canada)
Feminists Against Censorship (United Kingdom)
Feminists for Free Expression (United States)
Foodspeak Coalition for Free Speech (United States)
Foundation for Press Freedom (Fundacion para la Libertad de Prensa (FLIP) (Colombia)
Free Expression Ghana (Ghana)
Free Expression Network Clearing House (United States)
Free Expression Policy Project (United States)
Free Media Movement (Sri Lanka)
Freedom Forum (United States)
Freedom of Expression-FreeEx Program (Romania)
Freedom of Expression Institute (South Africa)
Glasnost Defence Foundation (Russia)
Global Internet Liberty Campaign (International)
Guatemalan Association of Journalists, Press Freedom Committee (Comision de Libertad de Prensa de Asociacion de Periodistas de Guatemala) (Guatemala)
Hong Kong Journalists Association (Hong Kong)
Independent Journalism Center (Moldova)
Independent Journalism Center (Nigeria)
Index on Censorship (United Kingdom)
Informazione senza frontiere (Italy)
Institute for Press and Society (Instituto para la Prensa y Sociedad, IPYS) (Peru)
Institute for the Studies on the Free Flow of Information (Institut Studi Arus Informasi, ISAI) (Indonesia)
International Federation of Journalists (Belgium)
International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions-Free Access to Information and Freedom of Expression (IFLA-FAIFE) (Denmark)
International Media Support (IMS) (Denmark)
International Pen (United Kingdom)
Internet Free Expression Alliance (United States)
Journaliste en danger (Democratic Republic of Congo)
Journalists Against Corruption (El Salvador)
Journalists Trade Union (Azerbaijan)
Media Foundation for West Africa (Ghana)
Media Institute (Kenya)
Media Institute of Southern Africa (Namibia)
Media Resistance (Belgium)
Media Rights Agenda (Nigeria)
Media Watch (Bangladesh)
Medienhilfe (Switzerland)
MIT Student Association for Freedom of Expression (SAFE) (United States)
National A.C.T. Against Censorship Together (United States)
National Center for Social Communication (Centro Nacional de Comunicacion Social) Mexico
National Coalition Against Censorship (United States)
Netherlands Association of Journalists (Netherlands)
Network for the Defence of Independent Media in Africa (Kenya)
Norwegian PEN (Norway)
OZOD OVOS (Organization on Assistance Freedom of Speech) (Uzbekistan)
Pacific Islands News Association (Fiji)]
Pakistan Press Foundation (Pakistan)
PEN American Center (United States)
PEN Canada (Canada)
PEN Center USA West (United States)
PERIODISTAS (Argentine Association for the Defence of Independent Journalism (Argentina)
RAP 21 African Press Network for the 21st Century
Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press (United States)
Rock Out Censorship (United States)
Sindicato de Periodistas de Paraguay (Paraguay)
Society of Professional Journalists (United States)
Southeast Asian Press Alliance (SEAPA) (Thailand)
Student Press Law Center (United States)

Thai Journalists Association (Thailand)
West African Journalists Association (Senegal)
World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters
Thomas Jefferson Center for the Protection of Free Expression
Women's World Organization for Rights, Literature and Development (United States)
Writers in Prison Committee-International PEN (United Kingdom)

(Source: http://www.ifex.org)

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