

INTERNATIONAL VISITOR LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

INDEPENDENT JOURNALISTS

A Project for Syria

These visitors are invited to the United States under the auspices of the Department of State's International Visitor Leadership Program. Their program is arranged by Meridian International Center.

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Accompanied by: Mr. Aziz Lachnani; Mr. Moataz El-Shehawy

August 7 - 25, 2006

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Syria

Mr. Adnan ABDEL RAZAK

Founder and Editor-in-Chief, *Al-Iqtisad Wa Al-Naql (Economy and Transport)* magazine

Mr. Huny AL HAMDAN

Executive Editor, *Al-Mal (Money)* magazine, Damascus

Mr. Ibrahim JABIN

Editor-in-Chief, *Boukaat Daw (Spotlight)* magazine, Damascus

Ms. Razan TOUMANI

Editor, *Shabablek (Youthful)* magazine, Damascus

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Syria

- Name:* **Mr. Adnan ABDEL RAZAK**
- Present Position:* Founder and Editor-in-Chief, *Al-Iqtisad Wa Al-Naql (Economy and Transport)* magazine
- Concurrent Position:* Head, Economic Section, *Al-Cham (Syria)* private satellite television channel, since 2006
- Head, Economic Section, *Al-Baath (Renaissance)* newspaper, since 2000
- Education/Training:* B.A. in Journalism, Damascus University, 1994
- Memberships:* Syrian Journalists Union
- Personal Data:* Born January 2, 1970 in Idleb, Syria
- Languages:* Arabic (native), Armenian, and English
- U.S. Travel:* None.
- Other Travel:* China, France, Turkey, United Kingdom, Yemen

Syria

Name: **Mr. Huny AL HAMDAN**

Present Position: Executive Editor, *Al-Mal (Money)* magazine, Damascus, since 2005

Concurrent Position: Editor Economics, *Tishreen (October)* newspaper, 1995-2005

Education/Training: B.A. in Journalism, Damascus University, 1990

Memberships: Syrian Arab Journalism Syndicate

Address: None provided

Personal Data: Born May 5, 1967 in Daraa, Syria

Languages: Arabic (native), English

Travel: Egypt, Lebanon, Qatar, Tunisia, Yemen

Syria

Name: **Mr. Ibrahim JABIN**

Present Position: Editor-in-Chief, *Boukaat Daw (Spotlight)* magazine, Damascus

Concurrent Position: Freelances for *Tishreen (October)* newspaper, and *Al-Thawra (The Revolution)* newspaper in Syria, and *Al-Nahar (Today)* and *Al-Safir (The Envoy)* newspapers in Beirut, since 1990

Previous Positions: Editor-in-Chief, *Al-Mobki (Tragic)* magazine, Damascus
Editor-in-Chief, *Al-Domari (The Lamplighter)* magazine, Damascus, 2001

Education/Training: High School, Al Furat School in Deir Ez-Zoor, 1987
Studied three years Civil Engineering at Damascus University

Publications: *Language of Mohammad*, 2004
Scenario for Osama Bin Laden movie, 2001

Address: None provided

Personal Data: Born December 9, 1971 in Hasaka, Syria

Languages: Arabic (native), English

Travel: Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey.

Syria

Name: **Ms. Razan TOUMANI**

Present Position: Editor, *Shabablek (Youthful)* magazine, Damascus

Concurrent Position: Reporter for Syrian TV - satellite channel, since 2002

Previous Positions: Journalist, *Al-Domari (The Lamplighter)* magazine, 2000-2001
Editor, *Al-Siaseh (Politics)* newspaper, 2001-2001

Education/Training: B.A. in Journalism, Damascus University, 2003

Memberships: Syria Journalists Union

Address: None provided

Personal Data: Born July 11, 1978 in Homs, Syria

Languages: Arabic (native), English

Travel: Libya, Switzerland, Tunisia

Program objectives

The participants in this project are editors of leading journals that deal with a wide variety of subjects including economic and financial issues, the arts and entertainment, and the attitudes and concerns of youth. In their visit to the United States, they will meet with their journalistic counterparts to discuss technical and professional aspects of their work. With fellow journalists and others, they will discuss philosophic, cultural, and political dimensions of American journalism. Specific thematic areas of exploration will include:

- Freedom of the press, its cultural and constitutional underpinnings, and how the news media meet challenges to that freedom;
- The process of editorial decision-making and the factors that influence and guide it;
- The practice of investigative journalism—balancing the public’s need to know, the government’s need to protect national interests, including security, and the right of individuals to privacy;
- Meeting the challenge of providing responsible reporting and analysis of news while maintaining the economic viability of publications; and
- Defining and cultivating the readership for journals that deal with special areas of interest.

Indonesia

Name: **Mr. Benny BUTAR-BUTAR**

Present Position: National Editor, ANTARA News Agency

Previous Positions: News Coverage Coordinator, ANTARA News Agency, 2000-2004
Reporter, Economic Affairs, ANTARA News Agency, 1996-2000
Reporter, Social, Political and Defense Affairs, ANTARA News Agency, 1993-1996

Education/Training: Degree candidate, M.A. in communication studies, University of Indonesia, Jakarta, 2004-Present
B.A. in political science, University of Lambung Mangkurat, Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan, 1992

Memberships: Persatuan Wartawan Indonesia/Indonesian Journalists Association

Publications: Articles in ANTARA News Agency

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Telephone: 62-21-3847305
Fax: 62-21-3865570
Email: bennybutarbutar@hotmail.com

Personal Data: Born July 10, 1968; Jakarta, Indonesia

Languages: Indonesian (primary), English

U.S. Travel: Reporting assignment, 1996

Other Travel: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Germany, Japan

Professional Background: Mr. Butar-Butar serves as national editor for the largest news agency in Indonesia, after having developed his career within the agency for over a decade. His coverage on economic and political affairs has included travel to several regional and international areas of conflict. He would like to explore issues of journalism ethics, freedom of expression and press law in the United States. He also has a great interest in the American political system and U.S. foreign policy.

Indonesia

Name: **Mr. NASIHIN**

Present Position: Managing Editor, *Republika* Daily Newspaper

Previous Positions: Chief Editor, *Tekad Tabloid*, Jakarta, 1998 - 2000
Metro and Political Editor, Jakarta, 1997 - 1998
Front Page Editor, Jakarta, 1996 - 1997
Bureau Chief, *Republika*, Bandung, 1995 - 1996
Reporter, *Republika*, Jakarta, 1993 - 1994

Education/Training: Degree in sociology, Jendral Sudirman University
Dr. Soetomo Press Council, 1992

Memberships: Alliance of Independent Journalists

Publications: Articles in *Republika*

Address: Jl. Warung Buncit Raya no. 37
Jakarta DKI Jakarta
Indonesia
Telephone: 62-21-7803747
Fax: 62-21-7800649

Personal Data: Born April 15, 1967; Cirebon, Indonesia

Languages: Indonesian (primary), English

Other Travel: Australia

Professional Background: As managing editor of Indonesia's leading Islamic-oriented publication, Nasihin works to promote effective tone, accuracy, and design within the paper. In addition, his strong advocacy of journalism ethics and professionalism has contributed to the widespread appeal of *Republika*. He is interested in learning more about newsroom operations and journalism ethics in the United States.