



PRESS RELEASE

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Yemen: ARTICLE 19 Launches Training of Media Monitors to Promote Gender Sensitive Press

SANA'A, YEMEN: On 1 July, ARTICLE 19 and the Yemen Female Media Forum launched a three-day training of media monitors with the aim of identifying gender biases in the Yemeni media and promoting women's freedom of expression.

The training is part of ARTICLE 19's longer commitment to the situation of freedom of expression in Yemen. ARTICLE 19 has repeatedly expressed its concern for the deteriorating situation for journalists in the country and works actively in partnership with local organisations to strengthen journalists and activists to promote a free and pluralistic press. ARTICLE 19 has previously held training for journalists from the Syndicate on best practices of freedom of expression. In January 2008, ARTICLE 19 published a report on the current situation entitled *Yemen: Freedom of Expression in Peril*.

In 2007, ARTICLE 19 facilitated the establishment of the *Media Law Working Group*, consisting of key governmental, civil society and media representative. The Group is developing proposals for reform of the 1990 Press and Publications Law, aiming at a free, pluralistic and independent media in Yemen. The Group is committed to ensure that all reform of laws affecting media freedom will be the result of genuine consultation between government, civil society and the media, and that the resulting legislation will be consistent with international standards.

"The current training aims at promoting a gender sensitive media in Yemen in which women's views are freely addressed," said Agnes Callamard, ARTICLE 19 Director. *"As elsewhere, stereotypical images of gender in the press impede the realisation of equality and democracy, and by reinforcing low levels of women's participation in public life. ARTICLE 19 is committed to promoting equality as a means to achieve a free, independent and pluralistic media."*

Over three days, the participants will be trained in qualitative and quantitative methods of analyses. The advanced training program, developed by ARTICLE 19, will give the participants skills in detecting gender biases and stereotypical images of women in the press. The 10 trained monitors will then over a period of two months undertake focused monitoring of newspapers using the ARTICLE 19 methodology. The results of this monitoring will take part of an upcoming report on Yemen, issued later this year.

Freedom of expression and the interrelated right of access to information constitute core human rights. As a State Party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), as well as the Arab Charter on Human Rights, Yemen is obligated as a matter of

international law to respect the right to freedom of expression. The Yemeni government has made further commitments to freedom of expression in its 2006 National Reform Agenda.

NOTES TO EDITORS:

- For more information, please contact: Sarah Richani, Programme Officer sarah@article19.org
- ARTICLE 19 is an independent human rights organisation that works around the world to protect and promote the right to freedom of expression. It takes its name from Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which guarantees free speech.

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