

Press Freedom to Be Monitored Online in Brazil

Contributed by Newsroom
Friday, 22 April 2005

The "Press Freedom Network", an online tool to monitor and denounce press freedom violations in Brazil, was launched with support from UNESCO's International Program for the Development of Communication (IPDC) in Porto Alegre on April 11, during the 3rd Regional Meeting on Press Freedom.

The Network was created by the Associação Nacional de Jornais (National Newspapers Association - ANJ), which includes the country's major newspapers companies. Through the website, ANJ will receive, investigate and disseminate threats against press freedom in Brazil.

The Network has its origin in the "Press Freedom Defense Program", created by ANJ in 1997, which recorded many cases of press violations, ranging from aggressions, threats, censorship to legal suits and assassinations.

Most of the network's funding comes from IPDC, which promotes free and pluralistic media in developing countries and the countries in transition.

Through media development IPDC helps strengthen communicative & analytical skills of the people and their participation in democratic governance.

The priority is given to the projects promoting press freedom and media pluralism, development of community media, enhancing professional capacity and building partnerships for media improvements.

Apart from the compilation of cases of press freedom violation in Brazil, the Network Website offers a database of legislation on the issue and links leading to press freedom organizations worldwide.

"Press freedom plays a key role in the information society", says UNESCO's Representative to Brazil, Jorge Wertheim, adding that "press freedom must be accompanied by other measures that facilitate access to information".

Issues such as the right to information, privacy, and access to public domain information were the central focus of the debates of regional meetings that were held in São Paulo, Fortaleza and Porto Alegre to launch the Network. Journalists, communication scholars and students, as well as legal experts participated in the events.

The next meetings will be held in Rio de Janeiro (May 2) and Brasília (June 8).

Associação Nacional de Jornais
www.anj.org.br

Unesco
www.unesco.com