



# The Arab Free Press Forum

The leading event for the independent  
press in the Middle East and North Africa





WAN-IFRA, based in Paris, France, and Darmstadt, Germany, with subsidiaries in Singapore, India, Spain, France and Sweden, is the global organisation of the world's newspapers and news publishers. It represents more than 18,000 publications, 15,000 online sites and over 3,000 companies in more than 120 countries. Its core mission is to defend and promote press freedom, quality journalism and editorial integrity and the development of prosperous businesses.

Learn more about WAN-IFRA at [www.wan-ifra.org](http://www.wan-ifra.org)

#### **WAN-IFRA Press Freedom and Media Development**

96 bis rue Beaubourg 75003

Paris, France

Phone: +33 (0) 147 428 500

Fax: +33 (0) 142 789 233

[www.wan-ifra.org/pressfreedom](http://www.wan-ifra.org/pressfreedom) / [press.freedom@wan-ifra.org](mailto:press.freedom@wan-ifra.org)

[www.wan-ifra.org/mediadevelopment](http://www.wan-ifra.org/mediadevelopment) / [media.development@wan-ifra.org](mailto:media.development@wan-ifra.org)



The Arab Free Press Forum is supported through a strategic partnership between WAN-IFRA and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency to advance media development and press freedom worldwide.

[www.sida.se](http://www.sida.se)

# The Arab Free Press Forum

---


” A unique event that welcomes media professionals from across the Arab world to exchange ideas, experience and best practice at every level of the news industry.

At the heart of WAN-IFRA’s on-going commitment to supporting the independent press in the Arab region, the Arab Free Press Forum compliments longstanding engagements with partners from across the media industry and the freedom of expression community.

The Forum asks penetrating questions about the future of Arab media from both editorial and business perspectives. Each edition of the Forum welcomes prominent speakers and contributors from the regional and international media and free-

dom of expression communities. Together with participants from across the Arab world, they contribute to a stimulating programme designed to explore the present realities and identify the future challenges of the independent Arab press.



A close-up portrait of a man with dark, wavy hair and a goatee, wearing a dark suit jacket over a white shirt. He is looking slightly to the left of the camera with a serious expression. The background is a plain, light-colored wall with a framed picture partially visible in the upper left.

*2010 Gebran Tueni Laureate  
Aboubakr Jamaï*

# Strong foundations for the future

---

WAN-IFRA's Arab Free Press Forum traditionally took place in Beirut, Lebanon, in close conjunction with An Nahar newspaper and in remembrance of publisher Gebran Tueni. A unique and highly influential figure in WAN-IFRA affairs for almost 20 years, Mr Tueni - an outspoken supporter of Lebanese democracy and key advisor to WAN-IFRA on press freedom issues in the region - was killed by a massive car bomb on 12 December 2005. Although he knew he was a high-priority target for the killers trying to undermine the political process in Lebanon, he chose to stay at the helm of his newspaper, which under his leadership was a beacon

for independent journalism in the Arab world.

WAN-IFRA honours Mr Tueni's memory with an annual award designed to encourage the emergence of other courageous and independent publishers, editors and newspapers in the Arab world. The Gebran Tueni Award is designed to recognise the publisher or editor who is judged to have best demonstrated the values incarnated by Gebran Tueni and his newspaper: an attachment to the freedom and independence of the press, courage, leadership, ambition, high managerial and professional standards. The award is presented at the Arab Free Press

Forum and reflects the spirit that underlines the event.

In recognition of its recent role as a catalyst for change in the region, the Tunisian capital Tunis hosted the 5th edition of the Forum in January 2012. It is hoped that as freedom of expression becomes embedded as a universal right and the independent press is permitted to play its role of informing and safeguarding the emerging Arab democracies, other cities will host the event and contribute their own unique perspective and individual character on the development of the Arab media.

[www.arabfreepressforum.org](http://www.arabfreepressforum.org)

# Strengthening the watchdog role of the independent Arab press

---

“The Arab Free Press Forum brings together frontline freedom of expression defenders with the media professionals who make this right a daily reality for millions through the pages of their newspapers and online media.

For decades, the independent Arab press has been scarred by dictatorship, violent oppression and government interference. Having been a continual thorn in the side of unchecked power and regularly suffering the brutal consequences, its very survival is nothing short of a miracle. As the winds of change sweep through the political and social landscape, a strong independent and financially viable Arab press is more vital than ever in assuring

the hard-won victories of many years of struggle for basic rights and freedoms are turned into meaningful democratic change.

Spaces for discussion, debate, argument and consensus are a vital part of this process, providing a meeting point for students, professionals, pragmatists, idealists and business entrepreneurs with the ideas and innovation to drive the Arab media forward to embrace the newfound optimism that now exists.

The media is a significant partner in the conversation as to how modern Arab societies should be formed. Helping to channel discourse on how the political and economic framework should develop transparently and democratically, the independent press expresses the voice of the people and provides a window through which the management of power and the actions of the state can be scrutinised.









# Exceptional networking

---

“Editors from Mauritania; journalists from Sudan; publishers from Jordan; rights activists from Bahrain. The opportunity to share experiences and form new alliances is unparalleled.”

In the fast-paced world of the news industry executive, having time to get together with your peers is often the first thing to be scratched off the agenda when things heat up. With over 60 years' experience organising international events around the world, WAN-IFRA knows that scheduling the time to talk is of the highest priority. Participants consistently tell us that networking is one of the most valuable aspects of our conference experi-

ence: the Arab Free Press Forum is no exception.

With an average of 175 participants from some 30 countries attending previous editions, the Forum offers unprecedented networking and partnership building opportunities as well as direct access to leading NGOs and international donor organisations. One-on-one expert legal and business advice sessions, side events tailored to specific

interests or issues of concern, as well as the all important refreshment breaks and evening social programme allow delegates to form lasting personal and professional relationships with people they otherwise may never have encountered. Whether it is an agreement to do business or consensus for action on an issue affecting freedom of expression, the Forum provides the space for the independent press to flourish in all its shapes and forms.

# Sharing and exchanging best professional practice

---

“Where else can you find such a wealth of professional experience with such a clear understanding of what it means to uphold the freedom of the press?”

---

## **The business of news**

Unique case studies from the regional and international newspaper community tell the story of those who have confronted business challenges and are eager to share experiences and insider knowledge. WAN-IFRA's unique position as the global organisation for the world's press offers unparalleled access to the best newspaper minds in

the business. Concrete examples from the Arab world and wider international community help Forum participants learn from the successes - and failures - of those who are revolutionising the business of news. Through years of first-hand experience across every market, WAN-IFRA knows that it is the exchange of best practice that helps drive

editorial and business excellence and that will secure the future of the newspaper. The Arab Free Press Forum provides a platform for Arab media businesses to encounter their regional counterparts and international peers in an atmosphere that stimulates learning and encourages long-term partnerships and inspiring cooperation.



# Become a patron of the independent Arab press

---

## Engage directly and make a difference to media across the Arab world:

- **Main conference partners** – corporate sponsorship or patrimonial endorsement. Become one of our main conference partners and contribute to hosting one of the foremost events for independent media in the Arab world.
- **Session sponsorship** – ensure the hot topics for discussion are not left out in the cold. Help WAN-IFRA offer as many opportunities for discussion, debate and knowledge transfer.
- **Participant sponsorship** – enable us to bring as many delegates – journalists, editors, publishers, human rights advocates - from as far afield as possible to benefit from the unique networking opportunities and expert advice available at the Arab world's leading independent media summit.
- **Pay-Your-Way** – WAN-IFRA's Arab Free Press Forum is a free event, but should you decide to pay a set conference fee we will guarantee your contribution goes to funding the participation of another delegate who otherwise would not have been able to share in the experience.
- **Social programme** – what does your city have to offer delegates from across the Arab region and beyond? Use this unique opportunity to showcase your local area and open up its rich culture to regional and international attention.

# Past sponsors

---



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



OPEN SOCIETY  
FOUNDATIONS



WORLD PRESS PHOTO





## About WAN-IFRA's MENA region engagements

WAN-IFRA's unique position as the global representative for the newspaper industry with a clear human rights mandate is reflected in the organisation's conviction that financially healthy media is an essential condition for the existence of a free press. Unlike the political, social, educational or judicial sectors of society that are essential for good governance and development, but that are mainly funded from fiscal revenues, the independent media sector carries out its public interest role while at the same time responding to commercial imperatives.

- The WAN-IFRA **Middle East and North Africa Media Professionals Programme (MPP)** provides mid-level media professionals with personalised, high-impact leadership development opportunities, supported by local and regional experts. It equips them with sustainable strategies, skills and support networks to advance their careers and contribute to the growth of strong local media enterprises.

- WAN-IFRA's **Arab Newspaper Development Programme (ANDP)**, conducted in partnership with the Danish-Egyptian Dialogue Institute (DEDI), is a ground-breaking project in which newspapers throughout the region learn from each other's experiences and exchange information on commercial and editorial strategies. The overall aim of the ANDP is to strengthen the viability of the independent press in the region.

- The WAN-IFRA **Media Professionals Programme (MPP)** provides mid-level media professionals with personalised, high-impact leadership development opportunities, supported by local and regional experts. It equips them with

sustainable strategies, skills and support networks to advance their careers and contribute to the growth of strong local media enterprises.

- WAN-IFRA has been actively involved in the International Freedom of Expression Exchange – **Tunisia Monitoring Group (IFEX-TMG)**, and in 2011 took the lead in the current phase of the campaign to examine censorship in the media and the arts.

- WAN-IFRA supported the **Palestinian Center for Development and Media Freedoms (MADA)** in the set-up and initial publication of its bi-monthly media affairs journal, ***MADA El-Elam***.

- WAN-IFRA has led and actively participated in press freedom missions to Tunisia, Libya, Egypt and Yemen to support and strengthen local media throughout the region.

More information can be found on WAN-IFRA's **Arab Press Network**, **Press Freedom** and **Media Development websites**

[www.wan-ifra.org](http://www.wan-ifra.org)



