



IJCSL NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 4 ISSUE 2

JANUARY 2007

WARM WISHES FOR THE NEW YEAR TO ALL OF OUR READERS
FROM THE STAFF OF IJCSL

THANKS FOR ALL OF YOUR SUPPORT IN 2006!

ANTI-TERRORISM LEGISLATION

EUROPE—ANTI-TERROR PROVISIONS STRUCK DOWN BY COURT OF FIRST INSTANCE

In a [12 December 2006 ruling](#), the Court of First Instance of the European Communities annulled a decision of the European Union to label an organization as a “terrorist” organization, resulting in a freeze on its assets in 2002. An action against the Council of the European Union was brought in the Court of First Instance by the “Organisation des Modjahedines du Peuple d’Iran” (People’s Mujahidin of Iran) (OMPI) to annul the decision, which had been made pursuant to Common Positions on combating terrorism and on the application of specific measures to combat terrorism, adopted by the Council of the European Union in order to implement [Security Council Resolution 1373 \(2001\)](#) against terrorism. The decision in the case was based on the EU Council’s failure to provide adequate reasons for the “terrorist” label and on a failure of process in reaching the determination.

SRI LANKA—ANTI TERRORISM LEGISLATION INTRODUCED

The Emergency (Prevention and Prohibition of Terrorism and Specified Terrorist Activities) Regulations were enacted on 6 December 2006. According to a news article published by [BBC NEWS](#), contravention of these regulations carries penalties varying from imprisonment from 10 to 20 years, or 5 to 10 years. [Freedom of expression advocates](#) claim the new measures have the potential to compromise freedom of expression as well as fundamental human rights. They have urged the Sri Lankan government to clarify the language and implications of the regulations and to ensure that issues of public security are properly weighed against those of fundamental rights and open democracy.

UNITED KINGDOM—NEW TERROR BILL EXPECTED IN 2007

A new counter-terrorism bill will be introduced in the new year, the Home Secretary has announced. A news article published by [POLITICS.CO.UK](#) on 12 December 2006 says that it is not yet clear what the bill may include. The bill will be a response to the perceived need for a “seamless, integrated, driven, politically-overseen counter-terrorism strategy.”



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CITIZEN PARTICIPATION AND FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

CANADA—FEDERAL ACCOUNTABILITY ACT PASSED

The Federal Accountability Act, which aims to clean up the way government does business and make politicians more accountable, received royal assent on 12 December 2006, according to a news article published by [CBC NEWS](#). The legislation includes new ethics regulations and oversight, and places a cap on political donations to candidates or to parties. It also bans union and corporate donations to political parties.

GUYANA—ACCESS TO INFORMATION BILL INTRODUCED

A news article published by [STABROEK NEWS](#) on 15 December 2006 indicates that a private member's bill to allow access to records held by government bodies has been tabled in the [Guyana](#) National Assembly. The bill seeks to provide rights of access to official documents, but with certain exemptions. The documents exempted from access includes official records of the Cabinet and its deliberations; documents that would, upon publication, prejudice Guyana's international relations with other countries; the defense of Guyana; law enforcement documents meant to preserve investigations, intelligence reports, and protect the lives or safety of persons engaged in law enforcement; documents which are considered trade secrets of business, financial or commercial undertakings; and documents which affect the country's economy and the commercial affairs of public authorities.

SIERRA LEONE—CIVIL SOCIETY LAUNCHES CAMPAIGN FOR FOI ACT

A coalition of over fifty civil society groups across the country launched the collection of 1 Million signatures and thumbprints of citizens in support of the Freedom of Information Bill being made into an Act of Parliament. This campaign, spearheaded by the Freedom for Information Coalition-Sierra Leone (FoIC-SL), was discussed in a news article published by [AWARENESS TIMES NEWSPAPER](#) on 6 December 2006. The Freedom of Information Act, is aimed at giving citizens and foreign residents legal access to information held by all public sector institutions, as well as businesses engaged in public welfare activities. The Act will also make it mandatory for public sector institutions to employ information officers in order to make information held by these institutions easily accessible.

FISCAL MATTERS

BELARUS—GOVERNMENT CONFISCATES PROPERTY OF BELARUSIAN HELSINKI COMMITTEE

Belarusian officials have confiscated property of Belarusian Helsinki Committee, including a computer, a fax machine, and other necessities of the organization's offices. A news article published by [CALEIDOSCOPE](#) on 5 December 2006 reports that



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the action is based on tax evasion charges in connection with a human rights project undertaken with European Union funds, which are legally tax-exempt. The [International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights \(IHF\)](#) has urgently appealed to the European Union and all members of the OSCE to help the Helsinki Committee and all human rights defenders in Belarus. The Helsinki Committee is the last nationwide human rights organization still legally registered in Belarus. It has been under severe legal pressure for several years, and its leaders were threatened with criminal prosecution on charges that, while politically motivated, can result in strict-regime prison terms.

ERITREA—GOVERNMENT IMPOSES FINANCIAL CONTROLS ON ORTHODOX CHURCH

The government of Eritrea has wrested financial and personnel control away from the Eritrean Orthodox Church, according to a news article published by [COMPASS DIRECT NEWS](#) on 14 December 2006. The state demanded all offerings collected through the Orthodox Church be deposited directly into a government account. The monthly salaries of all Orthodox priests are to be paid out from this government-controlled fund of church income. The government has also restricted the number of priests to serve in each parish throughout the country.

GLOBAL—CAF RELEASES SURVEY ON INTERNATIONAL CHARITABLE GIVING TRENDS

A new study, recently published by [Charities Aid Foundation](#) (CAF), highlights some fundamental differences in the way countries approach giving to charity, according to CAF [press release](#) on 24 November 2006. The report contributes to the understanding of charitable giving in an international context by comparing levels of individual giving within a number of different countries. “[International Comparisons of Charitable Giving](#)” shows that each year people in France donate an amount equal to 0.14% of GDP (at the low end of the scale), compared to donors in the U.S. who give 1.7% each year (at the top end of the scale). People living in countries with comparatively lower taxes give more to charity than those living in places with higher personal taxes, in particular taxes for social insurance. In addition, the amount and type of tax incentives for giving are relevant to the total amount given to the charity sector.

UNITED STATES—

• COURT OVERTURNS KEY SEGMENT OF CAMPAIGN FINANCE LAW

On 21 December 2006, a 3-judge Federal District Court in Washington, D.C., declared a portion of the [McCain-Feingold law](#) unconstitutional. In [Wisconsin Right to Life v. Federal Election Commission](#), the federal court ruled that corporations, unions, and special interest groups have a free speech right to run some broadcast ads during the campaign season that refer to candidates seeking election. The law banned groups from using unrestricted money to run advertisements that name candidates two months before a general election or one month before a primary. The law has been applied to non-profit advocacy



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organizations such as Wisconsin Right to Life. The [organization's website suggests](#) that the FEC will appeal the decision.

- **IRS ISSUES INTERIM GUIDANCE ON THE APPLICATION OF NEW TAX PROVISIONS**

The IRS has issued [interim guidance](#) on the application of new tax provisions under the [Pension Protection Act of 2006](#) affecting supporting organizations, donor advised funds, and private foundations that make grants to supporting organizations. Notice 2006-109 states that comments on the guidance are due by 1 February 2007. The Pension Protection Act of 2006 was signed into law on 17 August 2006.

FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION AND PEACEFUL ASSEMBLY

AZERBAIJAN—NEXT ROUND OF TALKS ON LAW ON FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY BEGINS

The Azerbaijan government and Venice Commission experts have begun discussions on the law “On Freedom of Assembly.” According to a news article published by [TODAY.AZ](#) on 23 December 2006, a working group for the preparation of amendments to the law on Freedom of Assembly has already been formed. The group is working on proposals reflecting the comments of the Venice Commission, which were reported on in the [December 2006 issue of the IJCSL-Newsletter](#).

EUROPE—ECHR UPHOLDS FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION FOR CZECH POLITICAL PARTY

The [European Human Rights Court in a Chamber decision](#) issued on 12 December 2006 held that the Czech Republic will be required to compensate Vaclav Linkov because the Czech authorities’ refusal in 2002 to register his Liberal Party constituted a violation of Article 11 of the European Convention on Human Rights. Upholding the freedom of association of Mr. Linkov and his associates, the Court followed earlier case law (the earlier cases are discussed in case notes published by [ICCSL](#) in its Documentation Center) that had placed severe limitations on states’ parties ability to limit the right to form political parties. The Interior Ministry had rejected the registration application on the grounds that one of the party’s goals was inadmissible, but the Court disagreed.

KENYA—POLITICAL PARTIES BILL 2006 INTRODUCED IN PARLIAMENT

The Political Parties Bill 2006, published by the [Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs](#) on 1 December 2006, will secure rights not currently available under Kenya’s Constitution. An article written by Paul Mwangi in [THE DAILY NATION](#) and published by [ALLAFRICA](#), clarifies that the Constitution secures the rights to freedom of assembly and association, expressly recognizing the right to form or belong to trade unions, but does not mention the right to form political parties. Mr. Mwangi hopes that the bill may also open a new era in the relationship between political parties and



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the state. Not only will every political party be entitled to funding from the state, it will also be entitled to the protection and assistance of security agencies for purpose of facilitating peaceful and orderly meetings. All parties will also be entitled to equitable access to state owned media to present their programmes to the public. His article contains a detailed discussion of the bill.

PAKISTAN—PROVINCIAL HIGH COURT UPHOLDS RIGHT OF FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION AND EXPRESSION

The Sindh High Court has annulled the ban on the teachers' union, noting that the Societies Registration Act does not prohibit registration of associations of civil servants. It also concludes that even an unregistered union or association can function and engage itself in collective bargaining under the right guaranteed by the Constitution, according to a news article published by [DAWN](#) on 14 December 2006. In its judgment, the court said any such ban violates the fundamental right of freedom of association and expression guaranteed by Articles 17 (1) and 19 of the Constitution.

UGANDA—QUESTIONS RAISED ABOUT DECISION BY LOCAL GOVERNMENT TO BAN PUBLIC RALLIES

A column posted to [ALLAFRICA.COM](#), originally published in NEW VISION, discusses when and how local government bodies may interfere with freedom of peaceful assembly of political parties. The recent decision by the Kampala Central Division to ban a Forum for Democratic Change rally at the Constitutional Square raised debate as to whether local leaders have the power to do so. While Godfrey Nyakaana, the division chairman defends his decision saying it was to safeguard peace and security, and that he acted within the law, other leaders and constitutional lawyers have said local councils do not have such powers.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

CAMBODIA—FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION GROUP PREVENTED FROM STAGING EVENT FOR LEGAL REFORMS REGARDING PEACEFUL DEMONSTRATIONS

Local authorities of Daun Penh District in Phnom Penh prevented the Alliance for Freedom of Expression in Cambodia (AFEC) from expressing its demand for legal reforms to allow for peaceful demonstration in public places. AGFEC had attempted to hold a demonstration on 27 November 2006, flying kites for freedom of expression. According to a news article published by [SEAPA](#) on 7 December 2006, in its open letter to the members of Parliament, AFEC called on the government to proceed with the draft law on assembly quickly. See related report under ANNOUNCEMENTS, below.

FIJI—MILITARY VOWS TO UPHOLD MEDIA FREEDOM

Following a meeting between military representatives and senior executives of four media companies and the chairman of the Fiji Media Council, the military command in control of the country has made an undertaking that there would be no media



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ensorship and no further interference in the role of nation's media. A news article published by [FIJI TIMES ONLINE](#) on 7 December 2006, states that the undertaking comes following the voluntary closure of THE FIJI TIMES and FIJI TELEVISION newsroom when the military attempted to impose censorship on reporting.

INDONESIA—CONSTITUTIONAL COURT UPHOLDS RIGHT TO FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

On 6 December 2006, the Constitutional Court of Indonesia upheld the right to freedom of expression by declaring unconstitutional the 'lese majesté' article that criminalizes insulting the president and vice-president. [SEAPA](#) reports that the court held the provisions to create a curb on freedom of expression, freedom of information and the principle of legal certainties. The provisions created legal uncertainties because of its arbitrary interpretation of the terms "protests" and "statements of opinion as criticisms or insults against the president."

LEBANON—IPI RELEASES REPORT ON PRESS FREEDOM

The [International Press Institute](#) (IPI) has released a report on press freedom conditions in Lebanon, following a fact-finding mission to the country in December 2006. According to IPI [press release](#) on 19 December 2006, the report "[Media in Lebanon: Reporting on a Nation Divided](#)" looks at four main areas: the impact of politics on the press; threats to journalists' safety; censorship, and restrictions on access to information; and economic pressures on the media.

MALDIVES—NEW DEFAMATION REGULATIONS POSTPONED

New defamation regulations scheduled to take effect in Maldives from 1 January 2007 has been postponed to 21 January, with an amendment decreasing the amount in damages to Rf 5,000 (USD 390) from Rf1 million (USD 78,125), according to a news article published by [HAVEERU ONLINE](#) on 31 December 2006. The announcement comes after reporters from several news organizations [appealed](#) to the President asking him to scrap his plans to introduce draconian new defamation regulations, which reporters had feared would severely limit press freedom in the Maldives.

TANZANIA—MEDIA ADVOCATES REJECT DRAFT MEDIA FREEDOM BILL

The media industry in Tanzania has rejected the draft Freedom of Information Bill 2006, claiming that it will adversely affect operations of journalists, press freedom, and freedom of expression. [IPP MEDIA](#) reported on 14 December 2006 that the most controversial provision in the draft bill is the introduction of a Media Standards Board (MSB). Under the draft bill, the MSB would be a government-owned media council to accredit journalists, identify and recommend journalists for further training in media studies, receive and determine complaints against the media outlets and against journalists, and make and enforce the code of ethics. The media stakeholders will present a counter-proposal on what should be included the Bill by the end of January, before the draft is tabled in Parliament for endorsement.



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VENEZUELA—THREAT TO FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION THROUGH CLOSURE OF INDEPENDENT TELEVISION STATION CONFIRMED BY PRESIDENT CHAVEZ

Venezuela will not renew the license of an opposition-aligned TV station when it expires in 2007, said President Hugo Chavez on 27 December 2006, accusing the broadcaster of backing plots to topple him. A news report published by SFGATE.com quoted him as saying “There will be no new concession for that coup-plotting television channel named Radio Caracas Television.” But the head of the station, Marcel Granier, said the channel had a legal right to continue broadcasting under its current license for many years.

FREEDOM OF RELIGION AND BELIEF

EGYPT—BAHAIS’ RIGHT TO STATE THEIR RELIGION ON OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS DENIED

The Supreme Administrative Court has denied Bahais the right to state their religion on official documents and described them as pro-Israeli apostates. According to a news article published by ARAB NEWS on 17 December 2006, the court ruled against the right of Hossam Ezzat Mussa and his wife, Rania Enayat, to state their religion on official documents noting that “the constitution promotes freedom of belief for the three recognized - Islam, Christianity and Judaism.” In a related story, the INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE reports that the United States has condemned the decision.

INDIA—HIMACHAL PARDESH PASSES ANTI-CONVERSION LAW

The government of Himachal Pradesh state in northern India has introduced an anti-conversion law. DAILY INDIA reported on 31 December 2006 that the new legislation caused alarm among minority communities, especially Christians. Under the new legislation, if someone has been forced to change his religion without his consent, he could come back to his own religion within a month. Those who force or induce others to change their religion are liable to be severely punished.

PAKISTAN—GOVERNMENT VOWS TO PROMOTE RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE THROUGH SCHOOL TEXT BOOKS

In the hope of promoting more modern, broad-minded education and to encourage tolerance towards religious minorities and women and counteract extreme Islamic views, the Pakistani authorities have vowed to amend school text books. According to a news article published by THE PENINSULA ONLINE on 19 December 2006, Islamic studies would still be compulsory, but students would be taught the country was not set up as a theocracy. Religion would also be removed from text books for general subjects.



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ROMANIA—CONTROVERSIAL NEW RELIGION LAW PROMULGATED BY PRESIDENT
Human rights activists and members of several religious communities expressed surprise and concern to [Forum 18 News Service](#) that, on 27 December 2006, Romanian President Traian Basescu approved the controversial new Religion Law. Some had earlier called for the President to send the Law back for reconsideration. The law completed a hasty passage through parliament on 13 December 2006, and the presidential website reported that it was promulgated by President Basescu on 27 December. However, the adoption of the Law gained little attention in the Romanian media – even though its rushed final stages broke parliamentary procedures [according to Forum 18](#). A challenge to the law is expected in the European Court of Human Rights.

RUSSIA--RELIGIOUS LEADERS APPEAL FOR ABOLITION OF A FORM OF REPORTING UNDER NEW NGO LAW

[NOVOSTI](#) reported on 8 December 2006 that religious leaders of traditional faiths in Russia plan to ask the president and government to abolish a new form of reporting applied to religious bodies under the law on non-governmental organizations (NGOs) adopted in 2005. Under the new law the clergy members have been asked to inform the Russian Registration Agency (*Rosregistratsia*) about the number of visiting worshippers, which of them made contributions to the churches, and how much they contributed. The clergy members objected to this requirement on the grounds that religious organizations cannot be put on the same footing as other NGOs and that any such controlling measures are an encroachment on the inner life of the church. The religious leaders have appealed to the official authorities to exempt religious organizations from this requirement.

UNITED STATES—FIRST MUSLIM ELECTED TO U.S. CONGRESS VOWS TO USE KORAN DURING HIS SWEARING IN CEREMONY

[Keith Ellison](#), the first Muslim elected to the U.S. Congress on a Democratic Party ticket from the State of Minnesota in the 7 November mid-term elections, announced his intention to take the oath of office by placing his hand on Islam's supreme holy book, the Koran, when the new 110th Congress convenes in January 2007. According to a news article published by [YAHOO NEWS](#) on 21 December 2006, the Muslim congressman-elect's plan to use the Koran in his private swearing-in ceremony has sparked political [controversy](#). His critics allege it threatens America's traditions. Ellison, a Detroit native, was a Roman Catholic and attended the University of Detroit Jesuit High School and Academy. He later became an advocate of Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan before embracing Islam himself.



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LEGAL FRAMEWORK

PERU—CONGRESS PASSES NGO LAW

The Peruvian Congress has passed the controversial NGO law extending state control over NGOs. According to a news article published by [UPSIDE DOWN WORLD](#) on 12 December 2006, the law modifies the activities and powers of the governmental Peruvian Agency for International Cooperation (APCI). It stipulates that NGOs must register with the APCI and that their work plans should be in line with the development guidelines and priorities established by the state (For previous coverage, see [December issue of IJCSL-Newsletter](#)). The text of the [law](#) and [amendments](#) to it are available on the [ICCSL](#) website.

RUSSIA—PRESIDENT SIGNS BILL FORBIDDING FUNDING OF POLITICAL PARTIES THROUGH NPOS

President Vladimir Putin has signed into law a bill amending regulatory acts which restrict donations by NPOs to political parties and their regional branches, and to election and referendum funds, according to a news article published by [INTERFAX](#) on 31 December 2006. The bill was approved by the State Duma and upheld by the Federation Council on 22 and 27 December 2006, respectively.

UNITED KINGDOM—

- **CHARITY COMMISSION VOWS TO REDUCE BURDEN ON CHARITIES**

The Charity Commission has announced its commitment to reduce the administrative burden it places on charities by at least 25% over the next three years, according to GNN [news release](#) on 11 December 2006. The [Simplification Plan](#) published on 11 December, includes Charities Act provisions, such as changes in audit thresholds, as well as proposals aimed at improving guidance so less external costs are incurred in preparing Annual Returns.

- **MONITORING OF CROSS-BORDER CHARITIES DEFERRED**

The [Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator \(OSCR\) announced on 7 December 2006](#) that its formal monitoring of cross-border charities, which are now required to register with both OSCR and the Charity Commission, will be deferred for a period of at least 12 months. A joint statement issued by OSCR and the Charity Commission deals with the concerns raised by the monitoring process. Cross-border charities are English and Welsh charities which, because of their presence or activities in Scotland, must register with OSCR. Registration of these charities is under way and all applications must be received by February 2007.

UNITED STATES—STATE DEPARTMENT ISSUES GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR NGOS

On 14 December 2006, U.S. Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice, announced a new U.S. initiative to support NGOs and others who defend human rights worldwide. The U.S. government has issued [10 core NGO principles](#) meant to complement existing



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United Nations and European Union documents dealing with NGOs. These principles will also serve as a resource for governments, international organizations, civil society groups and journalists. The NGO principles include provisions stating that NGOs must be permitted to carry out their peaceful work without facing harassment, must have access to domestic and foreign media, should be free to seek financial support and should only face criminal or civil legal actions that are based on due process and equality before the law. ICCSL is grateful for having been consulted in the development of the Guiding Principles.

MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS

PAKISTAN—SC BLOCKS HASBA BILL

Supreme Court of Pakistan has issued a stay order against the Hasba Bill 2006, and has urged the North West Frontier Province (NWFP) government to withdraw the controversial bill, according to a news article published by [DAILY TIMES](#) on 18 December 2006. In the initial hearing of a presidential reference filed under Article 186 of the Constitution, the Court stayed the Bill from being enacted in the province. Further hearing of the case will take place in the third week of January. The bill provides for the appointment of an ombudsman, whose staff will police implementation of Islamic values and codes. The federal government, for its part, has challenged the bill and sought the opinion of the Supreme Court on the constitutionality of the Hasba law in general and specifically on whether it violates fundamental rights guaranteed under the constitution. The NWFP Assembly approved the bill on 15 July 2006. It, however, remains invalid until signed by the President Pervez Musharraf.

YEMEN—ANTI-CORRUPTION LAW ENACTED; INCLUDES CIVIL SOCIETY IN MONITORING PROCESS

The “Anti-corruption law,” number 39 for the year 2006, was enacted after it received presidential approval on 25 December 2006. The new law establishes a national independent anti-corruption authority for fighting corruption. According to a news article published by [YEMEN OBSERVER](#), the law also aims at implementing principles of transparency and integrity in all administrative, financial and economical enterprises. This will guarantee good governance for public properties and money. It will augment the role played by the monitoring and auditing units. This will include easing the access to information and reaching concerned authorities in a first step to an open and transparent government. Moreover, the law encourages civil society organizations in their active and effective role as it relates to combating corruption.



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ANNOUNCEMENTS

ASIA—AHRC HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT 2006 RELEASED

[Asian Human Rights Commission](#) (AHRC) has released its Human Rights Report for 2006 entitled “[The State of Human Rights in Eleven Asian Nations](#).” The report includes in-depth analysis of the situation of human rights in Bangladesh, Burma, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

CAMBODIA—BRIEFING PAPER “ATTACKS AND THREATS AGAINST HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS” PUBLISHED

On 1 December 2006, the [Cambodian League for the Defense and Promotion of Human Rights \(LICADHO\)](#) launched its briefing paper entitled “Attacks and Threats Against Human Rights Defenders.” The Report states: “2006 has been a bad year for human rights defenders in Cambodia....Due to a crackdown on free expression that threatened to paralyze Cambodia’s vibrant yet vulnerable civil society, [the arrests of human rights activists in January] set the scene for one of the worst years for human rights defenders in recent memory.”

CENTRAL AFRICA—JED RELEASES 2006 REPORT ON PRESS FREEDOM

[Journaliste en Danger](#) (JED) has published its 2006 yearly report on the situation of the press freedom in Central Africa. A JED news release published on 8 December 2006 reveals that press freedom has deteriorated over the past year, mainly due to lack of democratic structures to protect freedom of expression in Central Africa. The [2006 report](#) examines the state of press freedom in eight countries: Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, and Gabon. It is the third annual report produced by JED on behalf of the Organisation of Central African Media (Organisation des Média Afrique Centrale).

GLOBAL—TI LAUNCHES GLOBAL CORRUPTION BAROMETER 2006

Transparency International’s [Global Corruption Barometer 2006](#) was launched on 7 December 2006. The 2006 Barometer is a public opinion survey which looks at the extent of corruption through the eyes of ordinary citizens around the world, according to Transparency International [press release](#). It explores the issue of petty bribery in greater depth than ever before, highlighting people’s personal experience of bribery, and identifying the sectors most affected by corruption, its frequency, and how much people must pay. The survey reveals that most respondents have a poor opinion of their government’s anti-corruption efforts. Sixty nine percent say their government is not effective in fighting corruption, or that it makes no effort to fight it, or that it actually encourages corruption. Only 22 percent labeled their government’s actions “effective” or “very effective.”



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GLOBAL—INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS DAY 2006 OBSERVED

10 December 2006 marked the annual and global commemoration of [Human Rights Day 2006](#). Human Rights Day is celebrated every year by the United Nations and thousands of human rights groups worldwide on 10 December to commemorate the adoption of the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) in 1948. This year's theme was on the linkage between poverty and human rights.

RESOURCES

MEDIA DISCUSSION FORUM

[MEDIA HELPING MEDIA](#) is a discussion forum for those involved in establishing independent media in transition, post-conflict countries, and areas where freedom of expression and media freedom is under threat. Members can share information about events, news and training resources.

RESOURCE GUIDE ON UN ISSUES

The website [RESOURCE GUIDE FOR UN ISSUES](#) is a comprehensive compilation of online resources on the work of the United Nations and US-UN policy analysis. The website includes useful links to research centers, nongovernmental organizations, U.S. government, the United Nations, and related daily news.

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