

## **Towards Professional Media: *The Role of Libyan Media and its Responsibility in times of Crises***

***(27-30 July, 2015) Madrid – Spain***

***Madrid Declaration***

***(Unofficial Translation)***

Libyan media managers and journalists who participated in seminar discussions 27-30 July 2015 in the Spanish capital Madrid facilitated by UNESCO and the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, are aware of their important role in shaping an enlightened and informed public opinion which will help the Libyan people make crucial decisions in favor of ending the ongoing crisis that threatens the present and the future of their country. They reassert that:

- The high importance of all types of media in reshaping public opinion through a dialogue within society that leads to a comprehensive national reconciliation and the establishment of a nation state based on the rule of law, justice, and human rights.
- The historical role that the media workers and intellectuals play in shaping a national vision that rearranges the priorities of the current critical period which Libya is going through; in a way that will preserve Libya's existence as an entity, its unity as a homogenous society and its sovereignty as an independent country.
- Society's and decision makers' urgent need for the correct information that is based on tangible facts without distorting, falsifying, or employing them in a way that may favor other interests but the real interest of Libya and its people.

### **They hereby declare and vow that:**

- Libyan media managers and journalists abide by the values of the right to freedom of expression and responsible opinion. They consider mutual accusations among parties to the Libyan conflict through the media without providing tangible evidence or proof, an act that goes against freedom of expression.
- They reject hate speech, Takfir, and the questioning of the patriotism of others; they also consider all types of incitement that aim to break up the Libyan social fabric and weaken it, an act that goes against society's values and all international covenants.

- They (the participants) urge the Libyan Legislative authority and the Constitution-Drafting Assembly to positively embrace all the initiatives related to this by:
  1. Issuing regulations for media and press to protect the rights of those who work in this vital sector, ensuring their independence and preventing their submission to material or moral blackmail. Such regulations shall also allow for the creation of syndicates that protect their rights and develop their performance.
  2. Creating an independent entity in charge of putting forward suggestions and legal regulations for this profession through engaging professionals and those interested in this sector in an inclusive national discussion. This shall also include a specialized committee that will issue periodic reports about the level of commitment of media outlets and media professionals to the stipulated professional standards.
  3. Including the protection of freedom of expression and the right to circulating information and protecting its sources in the Constitution.

**Finally:**

We, who sign this document, are aware of the dimensions of our responsibility in this critical transitional period, and call upon our colleagues, experts and all those interested in the media sector to sign this declaration and join it, and consider it a founding document that will be a nucleus for debates about Libyan media in order to develop a unifying national vision for media. We also reconfirm the role of the United Nations and the international community in supporting media and press entities.

**Signed by**

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Khaled Masood Al-Bahloul	Toobaktoos Radio and Television Network
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## Witnesses

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