

# **EUROPEAN CHARTER ON FREEDOM OF THE PRESS**

Hamburg, May 25th, 2009

## **Article 1**

Freedom of the press is essential to a democratic society. To uphold and protect it, and to respect its diversity and its political, social and cultural missions, is the mandate of all governments.

## **Article 2**

Censorship is impermissible. Independent journalism in all media is free of persecution and repression, without a guarantee of political or regulatory interference by government. Press and online media shall not be subject to state licensing.

## **Article 3**

The right of journalists and media to gather and disseminate information and opinions must not be threatened, restricted or made subject to punishment.

## **Article 4**

The protection of journalistic sources shall be strictly upheld. Surveillance of, electronic eavesdropping on or searches of newsrooms, private rooms or journalists' computers with the aim of identifying sources of information or infringing on editorial confidentiality are unacceptable.

## **Article 5**

All states must ensure that the media have the full protection of the law and the authorities while carrying out their role. This applies in particular to defending journalists and their employees from harassment and/or physical attack. Threats to or violations of these rights must be carefully investigated and punished by the judiciary.

## **Article 6**

The economic livelihood of the media must not be endangered by the state or by state-controlled institutions. The threat of economic sanctions is also unacceptable. Private-sector companies must respect the journalistic freedom of the media. They shall neither exert pressure on journalistic content nor attempt to mix commercial content with journalistic content.

## **Article 7**

State or state-controlled institutions shall not hinder the freedom of access of the media and journalists to information. They have a duty to support them in their mandate to provide information.

## **Article 8**

Media and journalists have a right to unimpeded access to all news and information sources, including those from abroad. For their reporting, foreign journalists should be provided with visas, accreditation and other required documents without delay.

**Article 9**

The public of any state shall be granted free access to all national and foreign media and sources of information.

**Article 10**

The government shall not restrict entry into the profession of journalism.