

CHAPTER SIX

REPORTING YOUR RESULTS:

Releasing Reports & Press Relations

The three main questions that a media monitoring project attempts to answer are: “Do voters have accurate and unbiased information upon which to make an informed political choice?” “Do political contestants have a fair opportunity to present their campaign messages to the electorate?” “Are the media free to perform their responsibilities as ‘watch dogs’ of the public’s interest in the electoral context?” By providing an impartial and accurate answer to these questions in measurable and graphic form, a media monitoring project sets the stage for advocating for proper media conduct. This is the reason for reports, and these questions should be kept in mind when presenting the project’s findings.

The tone and language of monitoring reports are extremely important if they are to have influence. Reports should be impartial, carefully worded — with verifiable findings — and presented professionally.

Media monitoring reports must be thorough yet easy to read, so that findings and comparative data can be taken from them quickly by the press and others. (See Appendix 8 for sample media monitoring reports from Bulgaria, Peru, Slovakia, and Togo.) In addition to the report, a press release should be pre-

pared presenting the main message that the project determines should be projected about the monitors’ findings. Press releases should be no longer than one-page or one-and-one-half-pages.

A report should include several types of information that will be useful to those who are interested in the project. Among them are the following:

- A brief description of the sponsoring organization(s), if any, and of the media monitoring project itself;
- A summary of the media monitoring project’s mission statement, concerning the purpose of the project, addressing why media monitoring is important and why the project is being conducted;
- A summary of the highlights of the findings and conclusions for the time period that the report covers;
- The particular media being monitored and why those outlets were chosen;
- A description of the monitoring methodology;
- A reasonably detailed discussion of the findings from the monitoring period;
- Graphs and charts showing amounts of coverage and positive and negative assessments of how subjects were portrayed by each media outlet monitored;
- Appropriate recommendations for improving media conduct and/or government conduct toward the media; and

- Acknowledgments of the project's volunteers, staff, funders and partners.

Charts and graphs should accompany the report and separate explanations should be provided for them. Conclusions should be drawn about basic factors such as media access, impartiality versus bias, sufficiency and accuracy of coverage.

The tone and language of monitoring reports are extremely important if they are to have influence. The report should be impartial, carefully worded—with verifiable findings—and presented professionally. Credit should be given for positive developments in media conduct, as well as showing the media's shortcomings and failures to perform properly. Reports should also address the government's treatment of the media and the election authority's responsibility to provide adequate voter education.

In addition to periodic reports on results from the ongoing monitoring activities, the project should be prepared to issue urgent action reports if events demand them.

In addition to periodic reports on results from the ongoing monitoring activities, the project should be prepared to issue urgent action reports if events demand them. Special statements could be issued if there are attacks on the media or acts of censorship.

Background reports on the legal framework for media conduct and other contextual issues, such as a history of censorship during conflicts or states of emergency and/or natural disasters, should be prepared and released separately from periodic monitoring reports. In addition, a "final" comprehensive report on media conduct should be published soon after the election process is completed. (See Chapter Four: *The Basics of Monitoring*, section entitled "Final Reports on Election Coverage" at page 32.)

LANGUAGES

An important question to address is whether to translate the reports into other languages. If the project is intended to convey a message to the international community or to minority language populations in a country, translation will be important to the project, but it will add significantly to the time required for report preparation. In cases where time and resources are limited and other languages are judged to be important, the project might consider releasing a summary of findings in those languages.

THE INTERNET

If possible, the project should create a website where all reports and diagrams are made available immediately following press conferences. In addition to presenting each of the project's reports, the website can provide other information in a lively format. The address of the project can be made widely available in your country and around the world and can be linked to the websites of partner organizations. Linkages can be established between your website and those of other organizations. (See Appendix 1 for the website addresses of established media monitoring projects; also see Chapter 2, section entitled "Monitoring Political Coverage on the Internet.")

E-mail groups also should be set up for distributing notices of press conferences, urgent action reports, press releases and periodic reports following press conferences. These distribution groups should include the main offices outside the country of key international media, as well as key international non-governmental and intergovernmental organizations.

PRESS CONFERENCES

The manner in which reports are released is critical. Often, holding well-organized press conferences is the best way to ensure that the project gets attention and that monitoring reports have a significant impact. There are many considerations that must be addressed with regard to press conferences. The project's press and public relations secretary must

prepare files of the names, addresses, e-mail addresses, telephone and fax numbers, radio and television dial numbers, as well as times of newscasts, and deadlines for submission of information for all relevant international and national media outlets. The files, best set up in a notebook as well as stored electronically, should also include the names of publishers, editorial board members, assignment editors and journalists who are likely to cover the media monitoring project's work.

These materials will be valuable for organizing press conferences. They also will be useful for setting up meetings with editorial boards and inviting the press to become familiar with the project's operations. Similar information should also be compiled about journalist associations, human rights and other interested civic organizations, media regulatory and oversight bodies (including parliamentary committees and ministries), electoral authorities, embassies, relevant international organizations and funding agencies, all of which should be part of a reporting and media strategy.

The press and public relations secretary should develop professional relationships with assignment editors and journalists who cover the media monitoring project's work—being mindful that these are professional, rather than social, relationships. The press secretary must always speak as a representative of the project and keep in mind that the project cannot open itself to the accusation that it favors specific journalists. These relationships will be important over time in seeking coverage of monitoring findings and following up with media outlets to ensure accurate coverage of the project's work.

Among the main additional factors to consider in organizing a press conference are the following points.

Timing

Carefully consider the best day and time to hold your press conference. Having an established time and place for your regular press briefings will increase the turnout. In selecting the time, consider questions like: When are the journalists' deadlines? Are other newsworthy events held reg-

ularly on specific days with which the project might not want to compete (such as, a weekly press conference by the Prime Minister or the release of periodic economic data)?

Attendees

Consider in advance the media outlets, specific journalists and others from the domestic and international communities to invite to press conferences and have their contact information organized for fast notification and follow-up contacts. Send out a press notice/advisory several days prior to the event, and make follow-up phone calls the day before to remind potential attendees of the time and place of the press conference.

Venue and Set-Up

The press conference location should be well known and convenient to the press. All of the media monitoring project's press conferences should be held at the same place, on the same day and time each week or every other week or other regular interval. The room must be the right size to accommodate a reasonable audience and not be too big. A better sense of interest is created if the room is little crowded than is created in a room so large that it appears "empty." The room must be set up to display results on a projector, and it must accommodate a microphone and sound system. It should be arranged with a table at the front of the room for the speakers and perhaps include a podium for the introducer and the presenter of the report, depending on the number of spokespeople and their speaking style. Have the logo and name of the media monitoring project as a large backdrop, keeping in mind that it will appear in film footage and photos of the conference. Also, keep this visual image in mind when placing the speakers at the table.

Set up a sign-in table just outside the entrance to the room or just inside if that is not possible. Have a sign-in sheet for the press and others, as well as a press packet (discussed below). The reports themselves may be included in the press packet, but reporters may take them and not stay for the session itself. If the press conference is at a time that

The spokesperson must be keenly aware of the main message that the project determines is important to present about the monitoring findings and must consistently present that message.

allows for easy filing of reports by journalists' deadlines, then copies of the project's reports could be distributed at the conclusion of the press conference or after the findings have been presented. In addition, a table with materials (such as, the media monitoring project's mission statement and prior reports) should be set up. Also, a table with refreshments should be provided, which will be appreciated by the attendees.

Press Packets

Press packets should be prepared in advance for distribution at press conferences. They also are valuable to have at other times to give to journalists and others who express an interest in learning about the media monitoring project. Press packets should contain: the project's mission statement; a description of the project's sponsoring organizations, if any, and its board of directors or board of advisors, if any; an explanation of the project's methodology; and the press release concerning the media monitoring report to be released at the press conference.

Spokesperson(s) and Press Conference Presentations

The official spokesperson(s) for the media monitoring project must be carefully chosen to establish and maintain the credibility of the project (as noted in Chapter Three). This person must be an excellent public speaker and be able to present the project's findings succinctly and clearly at press conferences. This must include presentation of charts and graphs. Moreover, the spokesperson must be adept at answering questions from the media.

Presentation of media monitoring reports also requires discipline. The spokesperson must be keenly aware of the main message that the project determines is

important to present about the monitoring findings and must consistently present that message—in opening presentations and in answering questions from the journalists. In other words, the spokesperson(s) must “stay on message.” Journalists will likely have intense interest in the findings of the project—after all, the findings concentrate on their media outlets and those of their rivals. Spokespersons therefore must be polished at fielding questions, challenges and even accusations from the press. They must be comfortable defending reports and the project's methodology, based on facts and without becoming defensive or argumentative.

This requires focused attention, doing homework before press conferences and practice. Spokespersons should receive the media monitoring report and corresponding press release well in advance of the press conference, so that she or he can study it and prepare remarks. The spokesperson(s) should also work with the technical personnel before the press conference to be sure that projection of graphs can be done easily and in the proper order of presentation. It is also wise to have the project director and team leaders involved in press conference preparation and for the director to sit at the table during the press conference to help in answering questions if necessary. If the project director serves as the official spokesperson, another respected figure, who is thoroughly familiar with the project's operations and the report's findings and who is a clear and disciplined speaker, should sit at the table. It is always wise to have a back-up spokesperson and a second person at the table to help ensure that nothing important is missed or misrepresented.

Press Conference Simulations

It is wise to conduct simulated press conferences before the media monitoring project is prepared to issue its first report. This is fun and valuable for all participants, particularly spokespersons. Even after the project is underway, practice sessions should be organized before each press conference to go over technical issues, as discussed above, and for a few people to simulate questions from the press to the spokespersons concerning the report that is about to be released.

Follow-Up

There are significant follow-up activities to accomplish after press conferences. The sign-in sheet must be examined to determine whether any important media representative or representatives from other sectors were absent. Copies of the report and corresponding press release must be delivered immediately to all such persons, by hand, fax or email.

The press and public relations secretary also must be sure that the media are monitored for coverage of the media monitoring project itself. Monitoring forms should be filled out by the monitoring teams, noting any coverage of the project. (See Appendix 6 for sample forms.) A separate analysis should be made of this coverage and should be given to the project director and the press and public relations

secretary. The project should analyze this data for internal purposes of determining impact and how media outlets conduct themselves toward the project. This coverage should not become part of the project's periodic reports. However, it, as well as improvements in coverage of electoral competitors and positive action on laws, regulations, media self-regulation and other factors, can be important for evaluating the impact of the project over time.



HELPFUL INFORMATION

If successful, the project reports should serve to:

- Raise public confidence in the media to the degree warranted and reassure political contestants of the fairness of the media's performance.
- Alert voters to any concerns and to the need to question biased information they may get and, perhaps, seek additional information from other sources.
- Alert journalists, editors and owners of media outlets of their shortcomings or failures and prompt them to take corrective action.
- Alert government regulatory bodies of problems that might be correctable by existing enforcement mechanisms or cause them to explain their failings in this regard.
- Alert government authorities of the need to institute reforms that could correct the problems.
- Alert political contestants of problems that they can seek to correct by their own activities.
- Alert journalists' associations or societies of problems that might be addressed through membership rules or codes of conduct.
- Alert the international community of problems in the pre-election environment that should contribute to their assessment of the nature of the election process; or seek their assistance on problems that can be addressed through existing international agreements.
- Alert other civic groups about information they need to conduct their civic programs related to the elections or human rights.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Conclusion

Media monitoring is an exacting, time-sensitive exercise. It demands meticulous efforts by monitors, careful analysis by team leaders and astute judgments by those who prepare and present monitoring reports. Where findings demonstrate that the media are contributing to genuine, democratic elections, media monitoring can help develop public confidence in the mass communications media, as well as in government protection of freedom of expression and the election process itself. Media monitoring also can have a significant impact on improving the environment in which journalists operate and can contribute to improving media conduct toward political contestants and toward providing accurate and balanced information upon which informed and free political choices are made by the public.

Media monitoring by its nature addresses relatively complex questions. There is more than one method for conducting credible media monitoring. Moreover, those organizing a media monitoring project must adapt monitoring methodologies to address the particular conditions of their country.

This handbook stresses specific issues related to media coverage in the electoral context. Elections provide a critical opportunity to examine media conduct, just as they provide an opportunity to examine a wide range of institutions and processes that surround elections. This is because – while genuine elections are a fundamental human right and a right that, if realized, helps to reinforce systems that protect and promote other fundamental rights – genuinely democratic elections cannot be achieved unless other civil and political rights can be freely exercised. Freedom of expression, and the media’s role in it, is an essential part of this mutually reinforcing dynamic. Media

monitoring to promote democratic elections therefore is important for human rights and democracy advocates in any country.

There are many reasons to monitor the media before and after elections. The problems that arise as a consequence of manipulation of the media by public or private interests can threaten the health of a vibrant democratic nation and significantly hinder democratic progress elsewhere. Most citizens groups in nascent democracies, and in countries where democratic progress is stalled or threatened, focus initially on media conduct in the electoral context. They often expand their media monitoring to other times and may monitor media coverage of political processes and governmental affairs on a permanent basis.

Active citizens shining the spotlight on actions that corrupt the proper role of the media and on the media’s presentation of inaccurate, biased or incomplete information can help those seeking to remedy these important problems. Media monitors can play a vital role in advocating for improved media laws and regulations and for effective governmental action to promote and protect press freedoms, the right of political competitors to seek public support through the media and the right of the population to receive accurate, balanced and complete coverage of political processes and governmental affairs. Media monitors can also encourage media and journalist associations to improve self-regulation by promoting adherence to professional standards. Media monitors thereby can help ensure that all citizens have the information they need to make the important decisions that democracy requires of them. It is hoped that this handbook will contribute to such efforts.

Appendices

LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS THAT MONITOR MEDIA CONDUCT IN ELECTIONS OR ASSIST MEDIA MONITORING BY OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

National Organizations:

Albania	Society for Democratic Culture (SHKD)
Bangladesh	Fair Election Monitoring Alliance (FEMA)
Bulgaria	Bulgarian Association for Fair Elections and Civil Rights (BAFECR) www.bia-bg.com/Business/directory/bschigp_english.htm
Cambodia	The Committee for Free and Fair Elections in Cambodia (COMFREL) www.bigpond.com/kh/users/comfrel/
Kenya	Kenyan Human Rights Commission (KHRC) www.hri.ca/partners/khrc
Kosovo	Kosova Action for Civic Initiatives (KACI) www.kaci-kosova.org
Mexico	Academia Mexicana De Derechos Humanos (Mexican Academy of Human Rights—AMDH) and Alianza Cívica (Civic Alliance) www.unam.mx/amdh ; http://www.laneta.apc.org/alianza/
Montenegro	Association of Young Journalists of Montenegro (AMN) www.amncg.com/amn
Peru	Transparencia (Transparency) www.transparencia.org.pe
Romania	Asociatia Pro Democratia (Pro-Democracy Association—APD) www.apd.ro
Slovakia	MEMO'98 www.memo98.sk
South Africa	Media Monitoring Project (MMP) www.sn.apc.org/mmp/index.html
Sri Lanka	Center for Policy Alternatives and INFORM www.cpalanka.org
Ukraine	Committee of Voters of Ukraine (CVU) www.cvu.kiev.ua
Zimbabwe	Media Monitoring Project Zimbabwe (MMPZ) mmpz.icon.co.zw

International Organizations:

Article 19, the Global Campaign for Free Expression
www.article19.org

Electoral Reform International Services (ERIS)
www.eris.org.uk/

European Institute for the Media (EIM)
www.eim.de

European Union (EU)
europa.eu.int/comm/development/index_en.htm

National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI)
www.ndi.org

Osservatorio di Pavia (Pavia Institute)
www.osservatorio.it/

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR)
www.osce.org/odihr

Reporter sans frontières (Reporters Without Borders—RSF)
www.rsf.org

The Asia Foundation (TAF)
www.asiafoundation.org

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
www.undp.org

ASSESSING THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK CONCERNING MEDIA AND ELECTIONS

Legal Framework

- What are the relevant constitutional and legal provisions? Review them and understand the rights and obligations as they relate to freedom of expression, including freedom of the press and the right to seek, receive and impart information. Are there court decisions that might help in the interpretation of these rights and obligations? Have the opinions of the courts been respected?
- What are the libel and defamation laws in your country and what is their history of enforcement? Are there laws relating to hate speech? Does an aggrieved party have any right to reply to defamatory speech? Have these laws been used by government officials or private individuals to pressure or interfere with journalists or media owners who have been critical?
- Are there references in the election law to rights and obligations of the media during an election? Are there provisions requiring accurate and balanced news coverage of political contestants and prohibiting political bias? Are there provisions to allow for free direct access to programming by parties or candidates during an election? How are time slots allocated? Are paid political advertisements allowed? Are there requirements concerning publication of voter education? Are there any restrictions on broadcasting or printing news or information at any time leading up to or during an election? Is there a mechanism for obtaining a remedy if the rights of political contestants are violated by the media? Does the law give the election commission any authority over the media in the electoral period?
- Has your country signed international treaties or other commitments that obligate it to protect the right to genuine democratic elections, freedom of expression, freedom of the press and the right to information?
- Are there laws on broadcast and/or print media, media ownership and licensing or other relevant matters, such as importation of necessary equipment and supplies?

Licensing

- How do broadcasters acquire licenses in your country? Review these requirements and history of how existing licensees acquired their stations and the right to broadcast on them. When do licenses expire and what is required for renewal? How can licenses be revoked and by whom? Does this process seem fair?
- Is there a licensing requirement for print media, for importing, owning or operating a printing press, regulations pertaining to the import or pricing of newsprint or distribution of printed materials?

- Is there a regulatory body with responsibility for state-controlled and/or private media? What are its powers and history? Review any printed regulations that have been promulgated as well as decisions made and fines levied.

Censorship

- Is there a history of official government censorship of the media in your country (e.g., related to civil conflict or other matters)? If so, are there any lingering effects on media freedom?
- Is there a history of physical attacks against journalists, editors or media owners in your country? Has the government brought the perpetrators to justice? Are there any effects on media coverage as a result of such attacks or threats of attacks?
- Are there any credible reports of self-censorship in the media as a result of any of the factors listed above or other factors? If so, what is the likely impact of this on electoral-related coverage?

Ownership and Influence

- Does the government own or control any media outlets? Learn who controls these stations. Are there independent boards for such outlets? If so, who is on them, and how were they appointed?
- Who owns or controls private media outlets in your country? Are they identified with certain partisan or other influential individuals or organizations?
- What are the government and private sources of income for media outlets? Review government subsidies and advertising revenues. To what degree are various media outlets dependent on government advertising or subsidies for their financial well-being or survival?

Self-Regulation

- Is there an association of media owners or publishers? What are the criteria for membership? Does it have a code of ethics or similar document? Is there a board or committee that considers violations of the code? Does it have the power to censure, suspend or revoke membership? Can a non-member bring a complaint to the board? Does the board have the power to order a correction, right of reply or similar remedy?
- Is there a national press council or an association of journalists? Does it have a code of professional responsibility, code of conduct or similar document? Are members required to adhere to the code, or do they pledge to do so? Is there a complaints committee or press “ombudsoffice” or similar place for citizens to take complaints about journalists’ conduct? Does the complaints committee have the power to censure, suspend or expel a journalist from the council or association?

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS PROVISIONS ON DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS AND FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Article 2

Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

Article 19

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

Article 21

1. Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives.
2. Everyone has the right to equal access to public service in his country.
3. The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

Article 2

1. Each State Party to the present Covenant undertakes to respect and to ensure to all individuals within its territory and subject to its jurisdiction the rights recognized in the present Covenant, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.
2. Where not already provided for by existing legislative or other measures, each State Party to the present Covenant undertakes to take the necessary steps, in accordance with its constitutional processes and with the provisions of the present Covenant, to adopt such legislative or other measures as may be necessary to give effect to the rights recognized in the present Covenant.
3. Each State Party to the present Covenant undertakes:
 - a. To ensure that any person whose rights or freedoms as herein recognized are violated shall have an effective remedy, notwithstanding that the violation has been committed by persons acting in an official capacity;

- b. To ensure that any person claiming such a remedy shall have his right thereto determined by competent judicial, administrative or legislative authorities, or by any other competent authority provided for by the legal system of the State, and to develop the possibilities of judicial remedy;
- c. To ensure that the competent authorities shall enforce such remedies when granted.

Article 19

1. Everyone should have the right to hold opinions without interference.
2. Everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of his choice.
3. The exercise of the rights provided for in paragraph 2 of this article carries with it special duties and responsibilities. It may therefore be subject to certain restrictions, but these shall only be such as are provided by law and are necessary:
 - a. For respect of the rights or reputations of others;
 - b. For the protection of national security or of public order (*ordre public*), or of public health or morals.

Article 25

Every citizen shall have the right and the opportunity, without any of the distinctions mentioned in Article 2 and without unreasonable restrictions:

- a. To take part in the conduct of public affairs, directly or through freely chosen representatives;
- b. To vote and to be elected at genuine periodic elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret ballot, guaranteeing the free expression of the will of the electors;
- c. To have access, on general terms of equality, to public service in his country.

International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

Article 5

In compliance with the fundamental obligations laid down in Article 2 of this Convention, States Parties undertake to prohibit and to eliminate racial discrimination in all its forms and to guarantee the right of everyone, without

distinction as to race, colour, or national or ethnic origin, to equality before the law, notably in the enjoyment of the following rights:

...

c. Political rights, in particular the rights to participate in elections – to vote and to stand for election – on the basis of universal and equal suffrage, to take part in the Government as well as in the conduct of public affairs at any level and to have equal access to public service;

d. Other civil rights, in particular;

...

viii. The right to freedom of opinion and expression... .

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women

Article 7

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life of the country and, in particular, shall ensure to women, on equal terms with men, the right:

(a) To vote in all elections and public referenda and to be eligible for election to all publicly elected bodies;

(b) To participate in the formulation of government policy and the implementation thereof and to hold public office and perform all public functions at all levels of government;

(c) To participate in non-governmental organizations and associations concerned with the public and political life of the country.

Article 8

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure to women, on equal terms with men and without any discrimination, the opportunity to represent their Governments at the international level and to participate in the work of international organizations.

Convention on the Political Rights of Women

Article I

Women shall be entitled to vote in all elections on equal terms with men without any discrimination.

Article II

Women shall be eligible for election to all publicly elected bodies, established by national law, on equal terms with men, without any discrimination.

Article III

Women shall be entitled to hold public office and to exercise all public functions, established by national law, on equal terms with men, without any discrimination.

African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights*Article 9*

1. Every individual shall have the right to receive information.
2. Every individual shall have the right to express and disseminate his opinions within the law.

Article 13

1. Every citizen shall have the right to participate freely in the government of his country, either directly or through freely chosen representatives in accordance with the provisions of the law.

American Convention on Human Rights*Article 13. Freedom of Thought and Expression*

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of thought and expression. This right includes freedom to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing, in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of one's choice.
2. The exercise of the right provided for in the foregoing paragraph shall not be subject to prior censorship but shall be subject to subsequent imposition of liability, which shall be expressly established by law to the extent necessary to ensure:
 - a. respect for the rights or reputations of others; or
 - b. the protection of national security, public order, or public health or morals.

Article 23. Right to Participate in Government

1. Every citizen shall enjoy the following rights and opportunities:
 - a. to take part in the conduct of public affairs, directly or through freely chosen representatives;
 - b. to vote and to be elected in genuine periodic elections, which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and by secret ballot that guarantees the free expression of the will of the voters; and
 - c. to have access, under general conditions of equality, to the public service of his country.

2. The law may regulate the exercise of the rights and opportunities referred to in the preceding paragraph only on the basis of age, nationality, residence, language, education, civil and mental capacity, or sentencing by a competent court in criminal proceedings.

American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man

Article IV.

Every person has the right to freedom of investigation, of opinion, and of the expression and dissemination of ideas, by any medium whatsoever.

Article XX.

Every person having legal capacity is entitled to participate in the government of his country, directly or through his representatives, and to take part in popular elections, which shall be by secret ballot, and shall be honest, periodic and free.

Inter-American Democratic Charter

Article 1

The peoples of the Americas have a right to democracy and their governments have an obligation to promote and defend it.

...

Article 3

Essential elements of representative democracy include, inter alia, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, access to and the exercise of power in accordance with the rule of law, the holding of periodic, free, and fair elections based on secret balloting and universal suffrage as an expression of the sovereignty of the people, the pluralistic system of political parties and organizations, and the separation of powers and independence of the branches of government.

European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms

Article 10

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of expression. This right shall include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of frontiers. This Article shall not prevent States from requiring the licensing of broadcasting, television or cinema enterprises.

2. The exercise of these freedoms, since it carries with it duties and responsibilities, may be subject to such formalities, conditions, restrictions or penalties as are proscribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society, in the interests of national security, territorial integrity or public safety, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, for the protection of the reputation or rights of others, for preventing the disclosure of infor-

mation received in confidence, or for maintaining the authority and impartiality of the judiciary.

Protocol (No. 1) to the [European] Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms

Article 3

The High Contracting Parties undertake to hold free elections at reasonable intervals by secret ballot, under conditions which will ensure the free expression of the opinion of the people in the choice of the legislature.

Document of the 1990 Copenhagen Meeting of the Conference on the Human Dimension (the 1990 Copenhagen Document)

...

[The participating States] recognize that pluralistic democracy and the rule of law are essential for ensuring respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms, the development of human contacts and the resolution of other issues of a related humanitarian character. They therefore welcome the commitment expressed by all participating States to the ideals of democracy and political pluralism as well as their common determination to build democratic societies based on free elections and the rule of law.

...

In order to strengthen respect for, and enjoyment of, human rights and fundamental freedoms, to develop human contacts and to resolve issues of a related humanitarian character, the participating States agree on the following:

...

(3) They reaffirm that democracy is an inherent element of the rule of law. They recognize the importance of pluralism with regard to political organizations.

...

(5) They solemnly declare that among those elements of justice which are essential to the full expression of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all human beings are the following:

(5.1) - free elections that will be held at reasonable intervals by secret ballot or by equivalent free voting procedure, under conditions which ensure in practice the free expression of the opinion of the electors in the choice of their representatives;

...

(5.10) - everyone will have an effective means of redress against administrative decisions, so as to guarantee respect for fundamental rights and ensure legal integrity;

(6) The participating States declare that the will of the people, freely and fairly expressed through periodic and genuine elections, is the basis of the authority and legitimacy of all government. The participating States will accordingly respect the right of their citizens to take part in the governing of their country, either directly or through representatives freely chosen by them through fair electoral processes.

(7) To ensure that the will of the people serves as the basis of the authority of government, the participating States will

(7.1) - hold free elections at reasonable intervals, as established by law;

...

(7.5) - respect the right of citizens to seek political or public office, individually or as representatives of political parties or organizations, without discrimination;

(7.6) - respect the right of individuals and groups to establish, in full freedom, their own political parties or other political organizations and provide such political parties and organizations with the necessary legal guarantees to enable them to compete with each other on a basis of equal treatment before the law and by the authorities;

...

(7.8) - provide that no legal or administrative obstacle stands in the way of unimpeded access to the media on a non-discriminatory basis for all political groupings and individuals wishing to participate in the electoral process;

(8) The participating States consider that the presence of observers, both foreign and domestic, can enhance the electoral process for States in which elections are taking place. They therefore invite observers from any other CSCE [now OSCE] participating States and any appropriate private institutions and organizations who may wish to do so to observe the course of their national election proceedings, to the extent permitted by law. They will also endeavour to facilitate similar access for election proceedings held below the national level. Such observers will undertake not to interfere in the electoral proceedings.

(9) The participating States reaffirm that

(9.1) – everyone will have the right to freedom of expression including the right to communication. This right will include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of frontiers. The exercise of this right may be subject only to such restrictions as are prescribed by law and are consistent with international standards. In particular, no limitation will be imposed on access to, and use of, means of reproducing documents of any kind, while respecting, however, rights relating to intellectual property, including copyright... .

(10) In reaffirming their commitment to ensure effectively the rights of the individual to know and act upon human rights and fundamental freedoms, and to contribute actively, individually or in association with others, to their promotion and protection, the participating States express their commitment to

(10.1) - respect the right of everyone, individually or in association with others, to seek, receive and impart freely views and information on human rights

and fundamental freedoms, including the rights to disseminate and publish such views and information;

...

(10.3) - ensure that individuals are permitted to exercise the right to association, including the right to form, join and participate effectively in non-governmental organizations which seek the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including trade unions and human rights monitoring groups;

(10.4) - allow members of such groups and organizations to have unhindered access to and communication with similar bodies within and outside their countries and with international organizations, to engage in exchanges, contacts and co-operation with such groups and organizations and to solicit, receive and utilize for the purpose of promoting and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms voluntary financial contributions from national and international sources as provided for by law.

(24) The participating States will ensure that the exercise of all the human rights and fundamental freedoms set out above will not be subject to any restrictions except those which are provided by law and are consistent with their obligations under international law, in particular the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and with their international commitments, in particular the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. These restrictions have the character of exceptions. The participating States will ensure that these restrictions are not abused and are not applied in an arbitrary manner, but in such a way that the effective exercise of these rights is ensured.

Any restriction on rights and freedoms must, in a democratic society, relate to one of the objectives of the applicable law and be strictly proportionate to the aim of that law.

In addition to the provisions of these international human rights instruments, which create obligations for the states that are parties to them, there are a number of other significant declarations and documents of associations of states and of the associations of the legislative branches of governments. Included among those that are directly relevant to democratic elections are the following: The Harare Commonwealth Declaration (1991) of the Commonwealth of Nations; Documents of the Summit Meetings of the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe subsequent to the 1990 Copenhagen Document; the 2001 Norms and Standards for Elections in the SADC Region adopted by the Southern Africa Development Community Parliamentary Forum; and the 1994 Declaration on Criteria for Free and Fair Elections of the Inter-Parliamentary Union. In addition, interpretation of the provisions of international human rights instruments and opinions and decisions on individual cases by international tribunals provide important sources of law concerning democratic elections and freedom of expression.

SAMPLE ORGANIZATIONAL TIMELINE FOR MEDIA MONITORING PROJECT

(Many Items Listed Will Be Ongoing Tasks and Interrelate)

Month One—Founding Tasks

- Setting Organizational Goals
- Developing the Strategic Plan
- Creating the Mission Statement
- Deciding Upon the Project's Name and Logo
- Framing Organizational Structure
- Recruiting the Oversight or Advisory Board, If Appropriate
- Selecting the Project Director
- Securing Initial Funding

Month One—Initial Organizational Tasks

- Analyzing the Legal and Regulatory Framework
- Deciding What Outlets to Monitor
- Deciding What Subjects to Monitor
- Considering Monitoring Methodologies
- Developing a Public Relations and Media Strategy
- Locating Appropriate Space
- Hiring Team Leaders
- Securing Expert Assistance

Month Two—Setting Up Operations

- Acquiring Equipment and Supplies
- Deciding on Data to Be Collected, Methodologies to Employ and Setting Up Computer Programs
- Writing Monitoring Forms and Training Materials
- Developing Training Techniques
- Deciding on Monitoring Schedule and Staffing Needs
- Recruiting and Training Monitors and Other Staff and Volunteers
- Practicing Use of Computer Software
- Deciding on Report Formats and Languages of Publication
- Selecting and “Training” Spokesperson(s)
- Developing Contact Lists, Email Groups and Other Communications Tools
- Setting Up a Website
- Continuing Fundraising Efforts
- Organizing Senior Staff Meetings to Evaluate Progress

Month Two—Beginning Monitoring Operations

- Assigning Monitors and Others to Teams and to Monitoring/Analysis and Report Development Schedules
- Setting Up Simulation Exercises for Monitoring, Analyzing Data, Developing Reports and Practicing Public Presentations

- Arranging Meetings with Media Outlets, Editorial Boards, Media Council, Journalist Association, Media Oversight Board, Political Parties and Candidates and Electoral Authorities to Introduce the Project
- Inviting Those Listed Above to Visit the Project and Become Acquainted with the Methodologies and Operations
- Conducting a Full Week’s “Dress Rehearsal” Exercise to Test All Systems and Evaluate Operations
- Launching First Media Monitoring Cycle
- Setting Up First Periodic Press Conference and Presenting Initial Periodic Report and Any Separate Background Reports on Contextual Issues

Month Two Through Immediate Post-Election Period—Periodic Monitoring & Reporting

A Typical Weekly Schedule:

Monday:

- Begin Weekly Monitoring; Monitors Turn In Daily Forms
- Team Leaders Collect Data from Previous Week’s Monitoring and Prepare Weekly Tally Sheets and Analysis
- Begin Report Drafting Process
- Hold Meeting of Team Leaders/Senior Staff to Evaluate Status of Operations
- Send Out Press Notice about Thursday’s Press Conference and Monitoring Report

Tuesday:

- Continue Monitoring and Turning in Forms
- Enter Data from Weekly Tally Sheets into Computer Spreadsheet Software
- Start Initial Preparation of Charts and Graphs
- Continue Report Drafting Process

Wednesday:

- Continue Monitoring and Turning in Forms
- Complete Charts and Graphs on Previous Week’s Monitor Findings
- Complete Report on Previous Week’s Findings
- Develop Recommendations and Include in Report, If Appropriate
- Write Press Release Communicating Main Message about Findings
- Meet with Partners and/or Board, If Applicable, to Review and Approve Report and Press Release
- Translate Press Release and Summary of Report into Additional Necessary Languages for Distribution

Thursday:

- Continue Monitoring and Turning in Forms
- Hold Press Conference and Release Report
- Distribute Report and Press Release to Email Groups and Post on Website
- Follow-Up with Important Journalists and Others on Report

Friday and Saturday:

- Continue Monitoring and Turning In Forms
- Complete Follow-Up on Report Distribution and Reactions to Report
- Evaluate Whether Any Appropriate Advocacy Efforts Are in Order Following the Report and Recommendations and Plan Such Actions

Sunday:

- Continue Monitoring and Turning in Forms
- Begin Process of Compiling Data into Weekly Tally Sheets
- Begin Analysis for Next Report

Month Two through Post Election Period—Ongoing Tasks & Future Planning

- Evaluating Status of Operations and Steps to Improve Them—including Encouraging Staff and Volunteers
- Improving Communications Networks and Outreach
- Determining Whether Law and/or Regulatory Reforms and/or Journalist Self-Regulatory Improvements Are Needed and Planning Effective Advocacy Campaigns
- Continuing Fundraising Efforts Appropriate to Needs and Plans
- Developing Urgent Action Reports and Reports on Contextual Issues, as Needed
- Preparing a Comprehensive Post-Election Report with Recommendations and Potentially Link It to Roundtable Discussions and/or Advocacy Efforts
- Conducting Lessons Learned Activities and Communicating Them Internally and to Other Monitoring Organizations
- Revising Strategic Plan in Light of Potential Longer-Term Activities and Possibilities for Monitoring Additional Aspects of Media Conduct, Freedom of Expression for Political Contestants and Citizens' Right to Information

SAMPLE NONPARTISAN MONITORING PLEDGE FORM

Media Monitoring Pledge

I hereby pledge that:

- 1) I will serve as a nonpartisan media monitor or otherwise work with _____ [the name of the project or organization conducting the media monitoring effort];
- 2) I am not a candidate nor am I an activist for any candidate, political party or other association that is seeking public office in the upcoming elections;
- 3) I do not intend to become a candidate in the upcoming election nor do I intend to use any nonpartisan election monitoring organization as a basis for supporting my candidacy in any future election;
- 4) I will maintain strict nonpartisanship throughout the election process, by remaining impartial in all activities concerning the elections, refraining from expressing publicly any preference for or against any candidate, political party or other association seeking public office, and rejecting all favors offered or threats issued by any of the political contestants or their agents;
- 5) In all media monitoring activities, I will work diligently to be impartial and accurate in monitoring, analyzing, reporting and representing the media monitoring project to others, without regard to who wins or loses the elections and putting aside my personal views about those seeking public office, except when I exercise my right to cast a ballot in the secrecy of a polling booth;
- 6) I will attend media monitoring training sessions and will act in all media monitoring activities to the best of my abilities; and
- 7) I have read and understood the "Code of Conduct for Media Monitoring for the Upcoming Elections," and I agree to promote its goals and principles and to follow its requirements.

..... Signature Date

..... Printed Name in Block Letters

..... Address

..... Other Contact Information

..... Interests and Skills that Apply to Media Monitoring

.....

.....

.....

.....

SAMPLE MEDIA MONITORING CODE OF CONDUCT**Code of Conduct for Media Monitoring for the Upcoming Elections**

We, individuals and members of civic organizations who have agreed to conduct nonpartisan monitoring of media conduct in the upcoming elections:

Recognizing that the will of the people is the basis of authority of any democratic government and that genuine, democratic elections are a fundamental human right, and recognizing further that, in order for elections to be genuine, the will of the people expressed at the ballot box must be based on a free and informed choice;

Acknowledging that the mass communications media are critical to the population receiving adequate accurate information upon which to make electoral choices and appreciating that contestants for political office must have a fair opportunity to present their messages to the public via the media in order to win electoral office and realizing that the mass media must be free to conduct their proper role as sentinels of governmental and political processes;

Being aware of the role that nonpartisan election monitoring plays in ensuring genuinely democratic elections and being concerned with safeguarding the integrity, impartiality and effectiveness of monitoring efforts, agree to abide by this code of conduct for media monitoring.

WE WILL BE IMPARTIAL AND NONPARTISAN

Everyone who conducts activities with this media monitoring project shall in all cases act, write and speak without prejudice or preference towards: any political party, candidate or association that seeks electoral office; any region of the country; any ethnic group or persons; or any media outlet, publisher, editor, journalist, media oversight body or electoral authority.

WE WILL REPORT IN AN IMPARTIAL, ACCURATE AND VERIFIABLE MANNER

Monitors must report impartially and accurately on all news coverage, direct access messages by political contestants (political parties, candidates or others), whether in paid political advertisements or unpaid messages, public affairs programs, civic or voter education messages or any other broadcast programs or printed stories or ads – no matter what the subject of these may be. The events, issues and subjects must be recorded properly and records maintained so that all findings will be verifiable.

WE WILL ANALYZE DATA AND PRESENT IT IN AN IMPARTIAL, ACCURATE AND VERIFIABLE MANNER

Everyone who analyzes and presents data compiled by the monitors will do so impartially and accurately and will record analysis and written reports of findings in a verifiable manner.

WE WILL NOT INTERFERE WITH THE NEWS MEDIA, JOURNALISTS, ELECTION AUTHORITIES,
POLITICAL CONTESTANTS OR VOTERS

No one involved with this media monitoring project will interfere with the activities of any media outlet, publisher, editor, journalist, political contestant, election authority or media oversight body. No one involved in this media monitoring project will attempt to influence voters in a partisan manner nor will they direct or obstruct the election process.

WE WILL OBSERVE ALL RELEVANT LAWS, RULES AND REGULATIONS

Everyone involved with this media monitoring project must know the laws, rules and regulations that guide the conduct of elections and of the media and must strictly adhere to these laws and regulations in the performance of their functions.

The media monitoring project and its spokespersons may bring improper media conduct or improper conduct of governmental authorities toward the media to the attention of relevant authorities and to the public.

WE WILL MAINTAIN A CONSTRUCTIVE RELATIONSHIP WITH MEDIA OUTLETS, MEDIA OWNERS,
PUBLISHERS, EDITORS, JOURNALISTS, MEDIA OVERSIGHT BODIES, POLITICAL CONTESTANTS AND
ELECTION AUTHORITIES

Everyone involved with this media monitoring project shall maintain a respectful and principled relationship with media outlets, media owners, publishers, editors, journalists, media oversight bodies, political contestants and election authorities.

No one involved with this media monitoring project must ever accept any reward or favor from someone involved with the media, political contestants, media oversight bodies, election authorities or others that might in any way be seen as an attempt to influence her or his activities with this media monitoring project. Anyone involved with this project who receives an offer of such a reward or favor or any threat from anyone that could be seen as an attempt to influence his or her activities with the project must report this immediately to the project's leaders.

WE WILL COOPERATE IN OBSERVING THE ELECTIONS

Everyone involved with this media monitoring project will endeavor to work together with organizations conducting nonpartisan monitoring programs and with international election observers by sharing reports of media monitoring findings.

Television News Monitoring Form — Headline Segment

Please write very clearly!!!

Monitor Number _____

Broadcast Outlet Monitored _____

Program Name _____

Date _____ Time Start _____ Time End _____

News Item: Word-for-word headlines in order of presentation

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

Subject of the Headline	Length of Time of the Headline	Type of Graphic or Picture Presented with the Headline	Monitor's Impression of the Headline: Pos., Neg., Neutral
1.	1.	1.	1.
2.	2.	2.	2.
3.	3.	3.	3.
4.	4.	4.	4.
5.	5.	5.	5.
6.	6.	6.	6.
7.	7.	7.	7.
8.	8.	8.	8.

Television News Program Item Summaries Form

Score for each RELEVANT news item only.
Use separate sheet for each news item.

Monitor Number _____ Outlet _____

Program Name _____ Program Date/Time _____

1. Item Number/title (from news program headlines) _____

2. Item Start Time _____ End Time _____ Elapsed Time _____ min. _____ sec.

3. Transcribe the opening line, word-for-word

4. Summary of Main Theme of Item

5. Name and organizational affiliation of individuals on camera, in order of appearance (do not include reporter)

Name/Affiliation Gov't/Party/Other	Picture/Voice (P/V) Voice Only (V) Picture Only (P)	Time on Camera Minutes/Seconds	Positive/Negative (1-5)
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			

6. Name and organizational affiliation of individuals/organizations quoted or cited but not on camera, in order, and by time

Name/Affiliation	Time	Positive/Negative (1-5)
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		

Television News Program — Brief Commentary Form

Monitor Number _____ Outlet _____

Program Name _____ Program Date/Time _____

1. Were any important News items of the day NOT reported?
 (if it was reported in other media, please identify that media here)

2. Did you note any "Media Effects" that could indicate bias or distortion?
 (please cite item and time, and describe fully)

3. Please note any statements or reporting you feel were distorted, untruthful or prejudicial against certain individuals or groups.
 (please cite item and time, and quote word-for-word)

4. Were there any descriptions or language used that you feel was biased or incorrect? Please be as specific as possible.
 (please cite item and time, and quote word-for-word)

**Please feel free to use the back of this sheet for additional comments.
 Please be sure to note date, time and name of any program mentioned.
 Please be as specific as possible in your comments. Thank you!**

Television News Daily Top Stories

Date _____

TOP 5 TELEVISION STORIES

State Television 1

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____

State Television 2

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____

Private Television 1

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____

Private Television 2

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____

Private Television 3

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____

Television Weekly Tally Sheet

Station Monitored _____

Monitoring Period From ___ / ___ / ___ Through ___ / ___ / ___

GOVERNMENT

Date	Time				# Positive	# Negative	# Neutral
	P/V	P	V	Not on Camera			

Total Time

 =

 (add 4 totals)

PARTY 1

Date	Time				# Positive	# Negative	# Neutral
	P/V	P	V	Not on Camera			

Total Time

 =

 (add 4 totals)

PARTY 2

Date	Time				# Positive	# Negative	# Neutral
	P/V	P	V	Not on Camera			

Total Time

 =

 (add 4 totals)

MEDIA MONITORING PROJECT/INDIVIDUALS

Date	Time				# Positive	# Negative	# Neutral
	P/V	P	V	Not on Camera			

Total Time

 =

 (add 4 totals)

Radio News Monitoring Form — Headline Segment

Please write very clearly!!!

Monitor Number _____

Broadcast Outlet Monitored _____

Program Name _____

Date _____ Time Start _____ Time End _____

News Item: Word-for-word headlines in order of presentation

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____
- 6. _____
- 7. _____
- 8. _____

Subject of the Headline	Length of Time of the Headline	Music or Sound Effect with the Headline	Monitor's Impression of the Headline: Pos., Neg., Neutral (1-5)
1.	1.	1.	1.
2.	2.	2.	2.
3.	3.	3.	3.
4.	4.	4.	4.
5.	5.	5.	5.
6.	6.	6.	6.
7.	7.	7.	7.
8.	8.	8.	8.

Radio News Program Item Summaries Form

Score for each RELEVANT news item only.

Use separate sheet for each news item.

Monitor Number _____ Outlet _____

Program Name _____ Program Date/Time _____

1. Item Number/title (from news program headlines) _____

2. Item Start Time _____ End Time _____ Elapsed Time _____ min. _____ sec.

3. Transcribe the opening line, word-for-word

4. Summary of Main Theme of Item

5. Name and organizational affiliation of individuals on radio, in order of appearance (do not include reporter)

Name/Affiliation Gov't/Party/Other	Voice Only (V)	Minutes/Seconds	Positive/Negative (1-5)
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			

6. Name and organizational affiliation of individuals/organizations quoted or cited but not heard, in order, and by time

Name/Affiliation	Time	Positive/Negative (1-5)
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		

Radio News Program — Brief Commentary Form

Monitor Number _____ Outlet _____
 Program Name _____ Program Date/Time _____

1. Were any important News items of the day NOT reported?
 (if it was reported in other media, please identify that media here)

2. Did you note any "Media Effects" that could indicate bias or distortion?
 (please cite item and time, and describe fully)

3. Please note any statements or reporting you feel were distorted, untruthful or prejudicial against certain individuals or groups.
 (please cite item and time, and quote word-for-word)

4. Were there any descriptions or language used that you feel was biased or incorrect? Please be as specific as possible.
 (please cite item and time, and quote word-for-word)

**Please feel free to use the back of this sheet for additional comments.
 Please be sure to note date, time and name of any program mentioned.
 Please be as specific as possible in your comments. Thank you!**

Radio News Daily Top Stories

Date _____

TOP 5 RADIO STORIES

State Radio 1

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

State Radio 2

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Private Radio 1

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Private Radio 2

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Private Radio 3

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Radio Weekly Tally Sheet

Station Monitored _____

Monitoring Period From ___ / ___ / ___ Through ___ / ___ / ___

GOVERNMENT

Date	Time		# Positive	# Negative	# Neutral
	Voice Heard	Voice Not Heard			

Total Time

--	--	--	--

 =

--

 (add 4 totals)

PARTY 1

Date	Time		# Positive	# Negative	# Neutral
	Voice Heard	Voice Not Heard			

Total Time

--	--	--	--

 =

--

 (add 4 totals)

PARTY 2

Date	Time		# Positive	# Negative	# Neutral
	Voice Heard	Voice Not Heard			

Total Time

--	--	--	--

 =

--

 (add 4 totals)

MEDIA MONITORING PROJECT/INDIVIDUALS

Date	Time		# Positive	# Negative	# Neutral
	Voice Heard	Voice Not Heard			

Total Time

--	--	--	--

 =

--

 (add 4 totals)

Print Media Monitoring Form — Front Page Coverage (page 1 of 4)

Please write very clearly!!!

Monitor Number _____

Newspaper Monitored _____

Date _____

News Item: Word-for-word headlines in order of size on front page

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Front Page News Articles

	Subject	Square CM	Positive/Negative (1-5)
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			

Front Page News Photos

	Subject	Square CM	Positive/Negative (1-5)
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			

Print Media Monitoring Form — Inside Coverage (page 2 of 4)

Please write very clearly!!!

Monitor Number _____

Newspaper Monitored _____

Date _____

Headlines Not on Front Page (word-for-word)

	Subject	Pg. #	Square CM	Positive/Negative (1-5)
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				

Other Articles Not on Front Page

	Subject	Pg. #	Square CM	Positive/Negative (1-5)
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				

News Photos Not on Front Page

	Subject	Pg. #	Square CM	Positive/Negative (1-5)
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				

Print Media Monitoring Form — Front Page References (page 3 of 4)

Please write very clearly!!!

Monitor Number _____

Newspaper Monitored _____

Date _____

List total number of references to a political figure or political party on the front page of this newspaper, in alphabetical order.

Name	# of References
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	
11.	
12.	
13.	
14.	
15.	
16.	
17.	
18.	
19.	
20.	
21.	
22.	
23.	
24.	
25.	

Print Media Monitoring Form — Inside References (page 4 of 4)

Please write very clearly!!!

Monitor Number _____

Newspaper Monitored _____

Date _____

List total number of references to a political figure or political party on the inside pages of this newspaper, in alphabetical order.

Name	# of References
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	
11.	
12.	
13.	
14.	
15.	
16.	
17.	
18.	
19.	
20.	
21.	
22.	
23.	
24.	
25.	

Newspaper Coverage Brief Commentary Form

Monitor Number _____

Newspaper Name _____ Date _____

1. Were any important News items of the day NOT reported?
 (if it was reported in other media, please identify that media here)

2. Did you note any "Media Effects" that could indicate bias or distortion?
 (please cite item and time, and describe fully)

3. Please note any statements or reporting you feel were distorted, untruthful or prejudicial against certain individuals or groups.
 (please cite item and time, and quote word-for-word)

4. Were there any descriptions or language used that you feel was biased or incorrect? Please be as specific as possible.
 (please cite item and time, and quote word-for-word)

**Please feel free to use the back of this sheet for additional comments.
 Please be sure to note date, time and name of any program mentioned.
 Please be as specific as possible in your comments. Thank you!**

Newspaper Daily Top Stories

Date _____

TOP 5 NEWSPAPER STORIES

Newspaper 1

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____

Newspaper 2

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____

Newspaper 3

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____

Newspaper 4

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____

Newspaper 5

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____

Newspaper Coverage by Outlet Weekly Tally Sheet*

Date _____ Outlet _____

Subject _____

#	Date	Reference Individual/Affiliation or Organization (including the media monitoring project)	Space (Square CM)		Positive/Negative (1-5)
			Front Page Headline (F/H)	Front Page Photo (F/P)	
1.			Front Page Article (F/A)	Inside Headline (page #/H)	
2.			Inside Article (page #/A)	Inside Photo (page #/P)	
3.					
4.					
5.					
6.					
7.					
8.					
9.					
10.					
11.					
12.					
13.					
14.					
15.					
16.					
17.					
18.					
19.					
20.					
21.					
22.					
23.					
24.					
25.					
26.					
26.					
26.					
27.					
28.					
29.					
30.					

* A Weekly Tally Sheet should be completed for each political subject, for each publication. Over time coverage of each subject can be tracked in each publication, and their treatment can be compared across various publications.

Newspaper Coverage by Political Subject Weekly Tally Sheet

Dates (week of) _____

Newspaper _____

Name of Individual or Organization Covered _____
(including the media monitoring project)

FRONT PAGE

Item	Space (SQ CM)	Positive/Negative (1-5)
Front Page Headline (F/H)		
Front Page Photo (F/P)		
Front Page Article (F/A)		
Front Page SQ CM Subtotal		

INSIDE

Item	Space (SQ CM)	Positive/Negative (1-5)
Inside Headline (F/H)		
Inside Photo (F/P)		
Inside Article (F/A)		
Inside SQ CM Subtotal		

SQ CM Total

Positive Total

Negative Total

SAMPLE MEDIA CODE OF CONDUCT—GUYANA**A MEDIA CODE OF CONDUCT****for reporting and coverage of Elections in Guyana in 2001**

Agreed to on 9th October 2000 at the “Media Code of Conduct Roundtable” at Le Meridien Pegasus, Old Seawall Road, Georgetown, and signed by: Andaiye, Mark Bhagwandin, Anthony Calder, Hugh Cholmondeley, Rockliff Christie, Karen Davis, David De Caires, David De Groot, Patrick Denny, Omar Farouk, Martin Goolsaran, Alex Graham, David Granger, Albert Henry, Catherine Hughes, Julia Johnson, Sharief Khan, Prem Misir, Kit Nascimento, Compton Peters, Abraham Poole, Khrishna Ramdhani, Rudy Saul, Lalan Shewcharan, Savitree Singh, Henry Skerret and Colin Smith.

I. PREAMBLE

Given the desirability for a fair, peaceful and well-regulated election and the avoidance of the aggravation of ethnic tension and unnecessary political discord,

We agree and accept that a Code of Conduct for the Media—taken to mean newspapers and radio and television stations—generally respected and observed, will contribute to the holding of a free and fair election.

We agree to accept, to subscribe to, and, to the very best of our ability, to comply with this Code of Conduct and to take all reasonable steps to ensure its observance.

We accept and subscribe to this Code of Conduct on the clear and unqualified understanding that the government or any of its agencies and the Elections Commission, will not impose nor seek to impose any prior restraint or censorship on any publication by the media.

II. THE CODE OF CONDUCT

1. The Media in its coverage and reporting of the elections during the period of campaigning agree:

- i. to refrain from the publishing or broadcasting of any matter with the potential for, or likely to promote or incite racial hatred, bias or contempt or any matter with the potential for, or likely to, promote or cause public disorder, pose or become a threat to the security of the nation;
- ii. to refrain from ridiculing, stigmatising or demonising people on the basis of gender, race, class, ethnicity, language, sexual orientation and physical or mental ability;
- iii. to hold themselves independent and free of any, or all, government and political opposition control and direction;
- iv. to hold themselves independent and free of any, or all, control and direction from any of the political parties officially registered to contest the elections;

- v. to hold themselves free of any, or all, control and direction from any individual, group, or organisation representing or promoting the special interests of any of the political parties officially registered to contest the elections.

2. The Media in the exercise of their constitutional right of free expression, and in recognition of their consequential social responsibility to the society which they serve, will at all times endeavour to:

- i. provide a truthful, comprehensive, accurate, balanced and fair account of events in a context which gives them meaning;
- ii. serve as a forum for the exchange of public comment, opinion, discussion and criticism in a balanced and reasonable manner;
- iii. offer an accurate picture of the constituent groups, organisations and parties contesting the elections and of the society in general;
- iv. present and clarify, as far as possible, the goals and values of the constituent groups, organisations and parties contesting the elections and of the society in general.

3. The Media, in accepting the principle of "fair and balanced" reporting, recognise that:

- i. No story is fair, if it omits facts of major importance or significance and is therefore incomplete;
- ii. No story is fair, if it includes essentially irrelevant information, rumour or unsubstantiated statements at the expense of significant facts;
- iii. No story is fair, if it consciously or unconsciously misleads or even deceives the reader, listener or viewer.

4. The Media, in accepting the principle of "accuracy and balance" in reporting, particularly during periods of campaigning for elections, acknowledge that these two main characteristics, accuracy and balance, seek to distinguish good journalism from bad, and journalism from propaganda. From this perspective, we accept that:

- **Accuracy** requires the verification (to the fullest extent possible) and presentation of all facts that are pertinent and necessary to understand a particular event or issue, even if some of the facts conflict with a journalist's, or a broadcaster's particular beliefs and feelings;
- **Balance**, or impartiality, requires the presentation of all the main points of view or interpretations of an event or an issue, regardless of whether the journalist, reporter, broadcaster, editor or the audience agrees with these views.

5. The Media further acknowledge that both these ingredients—accuracy and balance—are necessary for citizens to gain a full and realistic picture of the issues during election campaigns, as well as of the world around them. Democracy, which requires the active participation of informed citizens, depends on journalists and broadcasters to keep citizens informed about major issues.

6. The Media accept that omitting relevant facts and points of view from the reporting of major issues of public interest inevitably distorts the view of reality a journalist, reporter or broadcaster presents and so misleads and misinforms the public.

7. The Media acknowledge that the deliberate distortion of reality so as to lead the public to a particular understanding of events and issues, without regard for reality can poison the processes of democracy.

8. The Media support the establishing of an independent Elections Media Monitoring and Refereeing Panel with the requisite resources empowered to monitor and receive complaints and pronounce on the performance of the media. The Media agree to publish the findings of the panel on all complaints received by it.

III. GUIDELINES

These GUIDELINES were examined on 1st November 2000 at the “Draft Guidelines: Media Code of Conduct Roundtable” at Le Meridien Pegasus, Old Seawall Road, Georgetown. This Roundtable was attended by Mark Benschop, Anthony Calder, Andrew Carmichael, Hugh Cholmondeley, Rockliff Christie, Dennis Cuffy, Karen Davis, David de Caires, David DeGroot, Patrick Denny, Omar Farouk, Martin Goolsarran, Alex Graham, David Granger, Nicole Griffith, Adam Harris, Catherine Hughes, Mike James, Glenn Lall, Margaret Lawrence, Marie Maltais, Prem Misir, Roger Moore, Kit Nascimento, Rawle Nelson, Abraham Poole, Christopher Ram, Lalan Shewcharran, Savitree Singh, Colin Smith, Oneidge Waldron, Bert Wilkinson, Vivian Williams and Enrico Woolford.

1. *“Inciting Racial Hatred and Promoting Public Disorder.”*

Media organisations may not censor, or edit any material or materials submitted by political parties, or their agents, for either free, or paid for, publication in newspapers or broadcast on radio or television stations.

However, media organisations observing the law and exercising editorial judgment in favour of good taste and a respect for public safety and decency, should refuse any material submitted by political parties, or their agents, likely to be hateful, ethnically offensive, to promote public disorder or threaten the security of the State.

In all cases of such refusal, the concerned political party must be immediately informed of the reasons for rejection, and, assuming that time permits, the concerned party, or its agent, must be given the opportunity to modify the rejected material in order to conform to acceptable legal, moral and other standards.

The media shall not publish or broadcast any report, which, by its content, carries a clear risk of inciting ethnic hatred or political disorder without having the accuracy and authenticity of the report confirmed by at least 2 (two) independent sources.

2. *“Free space and time for political parties AFTER Nomination Day.”*

In the period *after* Nomination Day, and in the interest of even-handed treatment for all political parties, the media agree to make available an equal amount of free space and time for all political parties that have met the legal criteria for contesting the election.

Print and broadcast media will make available, free of charge, their technical facilities such as layout and printing, basic studio, audio and video recordings for the production and presentation of articles and programmes, but not including the provision of editing, talent, or outside production or broadcast facilities, or reproduction and distribution for use by any other media organisation.

3. *“Equal access to Paid Political Advertising.”*

Media organisations acknowledge their obligation to provide equal access and opportunity to all political parties without discrimination, to purchase space in newspapers and prime time on radio and television stations to promote their respective views during the period of electioneering.

In this regard, the media will make available to contesting political parties full information about space and time availability for advertising and their published advertising rates to be available to all public relations firms, advertising agencies and the proposed Independent Elections Media Monitoring and Refereeing Panel to be established for the purpose of monitoring adherence to the Code of Conduct and these Guidelines.

4. *“News Reports and Current Affairs programmes.”*

All media organisations agree that news reports and current affairs programmes may, at any time, subject to the Media Code of Conduct, deal with any issue, cause, organisation or individual. However, given the large number of contesting parties, coverage of election campaign events and other related issues will be limited by the capacity of media organisations to assign staff for these activities. The allocation of free and paid-for time and space for political parties to present their views in the media is a response to this constraint.

Editorial judgments therefore continue to rest solely with the respective organisations. These judgments aim to subscribe to the highest principles of impartiality, fairness and integrity, always separating fact from inference in matters of political and other controversy and supported by eye-witnessed and attributable official statements and other sources to corroborate facts in particular stories.

5. *“Political activities of media functionaries and the likelihood of charges of bias.”*

Media organisations agree that individual owners, full-time staff members,

part-time employees or other individuals contracted to write, produce or present articles, scripts, programmes, commentaries or other material intended for public dissemination and who (a) **are publicly identified as candidates for election to Parliament;** or, (b) **hold office in a political party,** are likely to be open to charges of bias. Accordingly, media organisations agree that such individuals will, in the performance of their functions, refrain from using their programmes for the purpose of promoting political objectives during the period beginning with the date of signature of the Media Code of Conduct and its accompanying Guidelines, and ending the day after the results of elections will have been declared.

6. *“Errors of Fact.”*

The media undertakes to deal responsibly with any complaints received in respect to reports published or broadcast and containing errors of fact, and where, in their opinion, these are justified to publish or broadcast appropriate corrections.

7. *“Coverage on the day of Polling.”*

Media organisations agree that no coverage of any activity by the political parties shall take place for a period to begin 24 (twenty-four) hours prior to the opening of Polling Stations on the day of Polling and continue to the close of Polling Stations.

8. *“The Monitoring of Media Performance.”*

Media organisations agree to the establishment of an Independent Elections Media Monitoring and Refereeing Panel for the overall purpose of being a point of reference for the submission of complaints about performance in the reporting and coverage of events during the election campaign.

Media organisations expressed appreciation for the efforts of the Guyana Elections Commission and other donors to identify and secure resources to support this work.

Media organisations however agreed that the terms of reference, functions and structure as well as the articulation of sanctions and other measures aimed at improving performance should be formulated by those media organisations which have signed the Media Code of Conduct and its accompanying Guidelines and stand ready to work collaboratively with the Guyana Elections Commission to achieve the objective of a functional Independent Elections Media Monitoring and Refereeing Panel.

THE INDEPENDENT MEDIA MONITORING AND REFEREEING PANEL
These TERMS OF REFERENCE were examined on 8th November 2000 at the Third and Final “ Media Code of Conduct Roundtable” at Le Meridien Pegasus, Old Seawall Road, Georgetown. This Roundtable was attended by Mark Benschop, Hugh Cholmondeley, Dennis Cuffy, Karen Davis, David de Caires, David de Groot, Martin Goolsarran, Alex Graham, Nicole Griffith, Cathy Hughes,

Mike James, Marie Maltais, Prem Misir, Kit Nascimento, Bob Norris, Compton Peters, Abraham Poole, Savitree Singh, Colin Smith and Enrico Woolford.

I. BACKGROUND

The domestic context

Some forty-odd media owners and practitioners in Guyana, between 9th October and 1st November 2000, attended and participated in two Roundtable Sessions. The deliberations were sponsored by the Guyana Elections Commission (GECOM) and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and convened by Mr. Hugh Cholmondeley. The objective of the Roundtables was the formulation of a Media Code of Conduct and accompanying Guidelines that would enhance the performance of media organisations during the campaign leading up to General Elections in 2001. The domestic context for these deliberations was set by:

- the absence of regulations governing standards and performance of the electronic media;
- the absence of an Electoral Code of Conduct for Political Parties contesting the 2001 elections; and,
- the recognition that cooperative action by media personnel provided the best opportunity for improving performance standards during the election campaign period.

Following a consensus on the Media Code of Conduct, and the accompanying Guidelines, media representatives recommended establishment of an **Independent Elections Media Monitoring and Refereeing Panel** that would serve as a point of reference for the submission of complaints and other views by the public, contesting political parties and others about media performance in the reporting and coverage of events during the campaign period.

The international context

The deliberations and conclusions of the Roundtables are within an international Human Rights context set by three important developments.

(i) In 1990, the United Nations Secretary General cautioned:

“We cannot be unmindful of the fact that, while democracy is a necessary condition for the recognition of basic human rights, it is not in itself sufficient to ensure the actual enjoyment of those rights. Indeed, genuine political democracy has little chance to survive, and stability is bound to prove elusive, without social justice. Such justice to be consolidated needs the help of those who can rightly encourage it, though too often, they abandon it just after it has been brought about.”

(ii) In 1991, the General Assembly of the United Nations (Res: 46/137 of 17 December 1991) stressed that ...

“Periodic and genuine elections are a necessary and indispensable element of sustained efforts to protect the rights and interests of the governed and that, as a matter of practical experience, the right of everyone to take part in the government of his or her country is a crucial factor in the effective enjoyment by all of a wide range of other human rights and fundamental freedoms, embracing political, economic, social and cultural rights.”

(iii) In 1991, the Secretary General of the United Nations (Report A/46/609) stated ...

“Elections in and of themselves do not constitute democracy. They are not an end, but a step, albeit an important and often essential one on the path to the democratization of societies and the realization of the right to take part in the governance of one’s country as enunciated in major international human rights instruments. It would be unfortunate to confuse the end with the means and to forget that democracy implies far more than the mere act of periodically casting a vote, but covers the entire process of participation by citizens in the political life of their country.”

SCOPE OF WORK

The scope of work of an **Independent Media Monitoring and Refereeing Panel** for elections in Guyana in 2001 should therefore be also seen from an international perspective of UN Human Rights standards regarding elections in general, and more specifically, media access and regulation. The following extract is taken from “Human Rights and Elections” the handbook on the Legal, Technical and Human Rights Aspects of Elections published in 1994 by the United Nations Centre for Human Rights in Geneva.

“Arrangements for fair media access by candidates and parties are an important focus of electoral law. This is especially evident where the major information media are government-controlled. Media regulations should provide for safeguards against political censorship unfair government advantage and unequal access during the campaign period.

“Fair media access implied not only equality of time and space allotted, but also attention to the hour of broadcasting (i.e. prime-time versus late broadcasting) and the placement of printed advertisements (i.e. front page versus back page). Fair media use implies responsibility on the part of all persons or parties delivering messages or imparting information via the mass media (i.e. truthfulness, professionalism and abstaining from false promises or the building of false expectations).

“A valuable mechanism for assuring fair and responsible broadcasting during elections periods is an independent body charged with monitoring political broadcasts, civic education programmes and allocation of time to various political parties, as well as receiving and acting upon

complaints regarding media access, fairness and responsibility. This function might be discharged by representative transitional bodies, by the electoral administration, or by a separately constituted media commission.

“Securing responsible electoral broadcasting and publication in the media can, in part, be served by agreement on a code of conduct for the media. Such codes may be preferable as a method of media regulation (i.e. self-regulation) to legislative or governmental action, which might raise the issue of impermissible censorship and interference with the human rights of freedom of information and expression.

II. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The **Independent Media Monitoring and Refereeing Panel** will collaborate with media owners and practitioners with the specific objective of improving the quality of reporting and coverage by newspapers and radio and television stations during the campaign leading to elections in 2001. More generally, the Panel’s work should also contribute to the process of adoption and maintenance of higher standards of performance in periods outside of elections. Consequently, through the sharing of knowledge and experience during the campaign a learning process would be engaged that would assist in increasing skills and improving competencies of media practitioners.

Specifically, the **Independent Media Monitoring and Refereeing Panel** will serve as the point of reference for assessing the performance of media organisations and practitioners who have endorsed the Media Code of Conduct and its accompanying Guidelines. The Panel has no statutory, legal or other powers.

Its moral strength and integrity would therefore be derived from the principles on which the Code of Conduct is founded, together with the practices that have been adopted in its Guidelines. It would receive complaints submitted by members of the public, duly accredited representatives of political parties or candidates contesting the elections, officials of the Guyana Elections Commission, or representatives of domestic, regional or international election observers. In this regard, during the election campaign period the Panel will:

- i. monitor, review and analyze the output of newspapers, radio and television stations in order to determine adherence to the standards set in, and implied by, the wording, spirit and intent of the Code and its Guidelines;
- ii. receive complaints, commendations and other communications on the performance of newspapers, radio and television stations and issue appropriate public statements;
- iii. obtain or collect all relevant documentation including correspondence, articles, scripts, audiotapes, videotapes or other materials concerning any complaint formally submitted for its consideration;

- iv. undertake a review of all relevant materials and other information to determine, in the Panel's discretion, whether or not the complaint constitutes non-adherence of the Code of Conduct, or non-compliance with its Guidelines, and therefore justifies an investigation of the performance of the particular medium;
- v. undertake an investigation, by whatever appropriate means, including interviews with representatives of the concerned medium and the complainant, of any complaint formally submitted;
- vi. submit its findings and conclusions regarding any investigation which the Panel may have undertaken in response to a particular complaint and issue these findings and conclusions to all media organisations that have formally endorsed the Code of Conduct and its Guidelines so that prominence may be given to publication and broadcast of the Panel's views.

III. COMPOSITION OF THE PANEL

It is recommended that membership of the **Independent Media Monitoring and Refereeing Panel** be approved by media owners and practitioners who have endorsed the Media Code of Conduct and Guidelines. It is envisaged that the Panel's functions would cover the official period of campaigning from Nomination Day to, say, one week after the results of the elections would have been declared.

The Panel should be comprised of a full-time Chairperson and two part-time members. The Chairperson should be a Caribbean national with substantial national and regional experience in radio and television broadcasting. The second member could be either a local or Caribbean journalist with substantial experience in the print media and the third member could be a local attorney-at-law.

Accommodation arrangements

The Panel should be housed in an appropriate office with access to basic office equipment including a desktop computer, printer, telephone, facsimile and Internet facilities. An assistant to perform administrative functions; a secretary fully competent in word processing applications and a budget to cover office supplies, transportation and contingencies is also envisaged.

Operational arrangements

It is essential that the Panel has unfettered access to an efficient technical facility with the capacity to listen to, view, record, play-back and copy the output of Guyana's radio and television stations. It is also important for the Panel to have access to current and future programme schedules for radio and television stations, as well as a small team of resource personnel capable of tracking, monitoring and cataloguing media output on a continuous basis throughout the campaign period.

It is noted that within the Guyana Elections Commission's overall responsibilities for the administration and conduct of elections in 2001, the Joint Assistance Programme to GECOM has made available resources for a Media Monitoring Adviser to the Commission. In addition to providing for a team of technical personnel to undertake monitoring-related tasks, resources have also been allocated for acquiring essential instruments such as radios, television sets, videotape machines and other equipment.

Organizational arrangements

In order to avoid duplication of human resources and equipment, it is suggested that the Elections Commission, the Joint Assistance Programme to the GECOM and the Independent Media Monitoring and Refereeing Panel should aim to reach formal agreement on specific terms of reference and a detailed work programme for the technical monitoring team.

The aim should be to ensure transparency and the team's technical independence to deliver professional services of the highest quality to both the Commission and the Panel. In this manner, the Panel's work would benefit from the resources made available for media monitoring by the donor community. Additionally, the services of media organisations that have formally endorsed the Code of Conduct and Guidelines would also support the work of the Panel.

MALAWI ELECTORAL COMMISSION

Procedures for media coverage of Parliamentary and Presidential Elections

Purpose

These Procedures apply to electronic media (the Malawi Broadcasting Corporation in particular) and in specified instances to the Press. Their purpose is to ensure that full and fair coverage is given, without censorship, to the campaigns of all registered Political Parties during the period of campaigning and up to the close of the poll in Parliamentary and Presidential elections.

The purpose of the procedures is also to ensure that the media provide the public with the necessary programme of civic education and information on every relevant aspect of the electoral process and on each citizen's electoral rights. Such support for the electoral system by publicly owned media is at the heart of democracy.

The procedures are based upon the authority given to the Electoral Commission and the Parliamentary and Presidential Elections Act 1993.

Section 1 News Coverage

Section 2 Election Education and Information Programme

Section 3 Party Political Broadcasts (Direct/Free Access)

Section 4 Opinion Polls

Section 5 Monitoring of Coverage

Section 6 Complaints Procedure

1 News and Current Affairs Coverage

1.1

Publicly-owned media (this currently refers exclusively to the Malawi Broadcasting Corporation) are required to provide fair and balanced reporting of the campaigns, policies, meetings, rallies and press conferences of all registered political Parties during the period of campaigning and thereafter to provide news of the electoral process up to the close of poll.

1.2

This duty also requires the broadcasters to devise, by arrangement with the Parties, a range of special election programmes - public debates, interviews with Party leaders and phone-in debates in which all registered political Parties are given equitable treatment and in which the same editorial balance and fair dealing apply as in news bulletins and news reports.

1.3

The debates will be organised in the following way:

The Election Commission and the Malawi Broadcasting Corporation will arrange a series of six debates with the registered political Parties; two in Mzuzu, two

in Lilongwe and two in Blantyre with all eight Parties represented in one or other of the programmes in each city. Each debate will have a moderator, two journalists and four of the eight political parties. The party participants for each debate will be determined by a rotational method.

Dates are to be arranged.

The debates will be a ticketed event in each of the cities, and the venue will hold 200 people. Community organisations, Church and Mosques will be given 100 tickets. The four political parties participating in the debate will each be given 25 tickets.

The debate questions will be determined by the six journalist-panellists. The questions will differ for each debate, but each question will have equal weight and importance on a major issue facing Malawi.

Each party will be given 1'30" to respond to each question from the journalists. At the moderator's discretion, a party can be given 30 seconds to respond to a direct challenge by an opposing party.*

The debate will not be edited for content unless there is a violation of the Code of Conduct by any of the participants. The approximate debate format will be:

Introduction	Moderator	3 Minutes
Question 1	Journalist 1	1 Minute
Answer 1	Four Parties	6 Minutes
Question 2	Journalist 2	1 Minute
Answer 2	Four Parties	6 Minutes
Question 3	Journalist 1	1 Minute
Answer 3	Four Parties	6 Minutes
Question 4	Journalist 2	1 Minute
Answer 4	Four Parties	6 Minutes
Question 5	Journalist 1	1 Minute
Answer 5	Four Parties	6 Minutes
Closing	Four Parties	8 Minutes
Closing	Moderator	1 Minute
		Total: 47 minutes

Each programme will be given two transmissions at the weekend following each recording.

* NDI does not endorse any specific debate format. Appropriate formats vary, depending to a reasonable degree on national conditions. For instance, one minute and 30 seconds for responses, as used here, may be sufficient where citizens are already familiar with parties and their positions and where party spokespeople are experienced and well-trained. In other circumstances, a longer time may be required. In addition, there is a variety of acceptable ways to structure question presentation and response formats.

1.4

The editorial responsibility for the maintenance of balance and equitable coverage by the Malawi Broadcasting Corporation rests with the Head of News. In this respect he is responsible to the Electoral Commission. (See complaints procedure section 6 below).

1.5

Party Press Conferences will be reported on by MBC in their normal news programmes. The continuous recordings currently broadcast will be replaced by the range of special election programmes,

- a. Debates (see 1.3)
- b. Phone-ins
- c. A series of Meet Your Candidate face to face interviews in which Party leaders will be invited to explain their political philosophy and plans in a 30 minute conversation each.
- d. Party Political Broadcast (see 3.1 - 3.10 and Schedule).

1.6

MBC must scrutinise all material for broadcast during the period up to the close of poll to ensure that no Party uses general programmes (other than recognised direct access Party Political Broadcasts, specific election news coverage or special election programmes) to promote its electoral interests.

1.7

MBC staff, as public service broadcasters, may not broadcast their own political opinions. Any commentaries or assessments must be clearly identified as such and carefully balanced to avoid bias.

1.8

In this context, newspapers are also required to identify editorial comment to separate it from news.

2 Election Education and Information

2.1

Publicly-owned media are required, throughout the election campaign and up to the close of poll, to provide education and information on the electoral process designed to ensure a maximum poll by a well-informed electorate.

2.2

This duty also requires newspapers to take positive steps to inform their readers about their electoral rights and to make a vigorous contribution to the public education programme.

2.3

Such informational and educational programmes and material, whether broadcast or published in a newspaper, may not contain any material intended to further the electoral prospects of any Party contesting the election.

2.4

The number, duration and frequency of such broadcasts may be negotiated between the production agencies and the MBC, always providing that the resulting service meets the goals envisaged by the Electoral Commission.

3 Party Political Broadcasts (Direct/Free Access)

3.1

The broadcasters are required to provide each registered political Party with a series of broadcast time-slots of an equal number, frequency, maximum duration and equitable time placement (see schedule below.) At these times each political Party may broadcast pre-recorded programmes, in a language of their choice, free of MBC or any other outside editorial control (subject to the conditions and monitoring mechanisms set out in section 5 below).

3.2

The decisions about duration, time placement and frequency of Party Political Broadcasts rests with the Electoral Commission. Time placements will include an equal variety of time-slots in the broadcasting day including prime time.

3.3

Such programmes must be recorded to professional standards. Equal free studio production and editing time will be provided each week at MBC for those Parties wishing to take advantage of it. The programmes will be recorded under the editorial control of the Party representatives delegated to produce the programme. Programmes may be made at professional studios outside MBC if any Party so wishes. This would be at the expense of that Party. MBC will reserve the right to assess the technical standard of any material recorded elsewhere and brought to the studio by the Party concerned. If any such material fails to meet the MBC's required technical standard it may not be included in the programme.

3.4

A member or members of the Electoral Commission will attend the recording of all those Party Political Broadcasts which are recorded at MBC to ensure that the producing Party has been given equal treatment and resources. The Commission member's role is to ensure that the programme to be broadcast conforms to these procedures and that there is no legal objection to its broadcast. If material or a complete programme submitted by a Party for transmission does not meet the technical standards, it will not be accepted for broadcast.

3.5

Such programmes may not exceed the agreed maximum duration. MBC is not permitted to broadcast any programme which exceeds the limit set. MBC must

give the Party concerned the opportunity within the production period allocated to edit any such programme down to the maximum duration allowed. MBC may not take upon itself the decision to make any cut in a Party Political Broadcast for any reason. Any such decision can only be made by the Party concerned or on the specific instruction of the Electoral Commission. The Commission will take no such decision unless it decides that the programme is in breach of either the Law or these procedures.

3.6

Such programmes, being free of editorial control or censorship, other than by the individual Parties making them, must nevertheless avoid incitement to public disorder, violence or war and meet the CODE OF CONDUCT. This restriction applies equally to broadcasting and newspapers.

3.7

Party Political Broadcasts, set out in the schedule below, may be used at each Party's discretion as Presidential Candidate Broadcasts. Only in the case of independent Presidential Candidates being registered will there be an allocation of specific broadcast time for those independent Presidential candidates. That allocation will be decided by the Electoral Commission following the close of Presidential candidate nominations.

3.8

No Party is allowed to buy air-time on MBC during the period up to the close of the poll.

3.9

Completed programmes ready for transmission must be handed over to MBC at the end of the scheduled production time in each case. No programme may be released until after its final transmission. If however a Party wishes to withdraw their programme in the course of a week, it may do so but will not be allowed to replace it until the following week's scheduled transmission. Programmes made outside MBC must be handed in at MBC at the production time allotted to that Party so that the Electoral Commission representative on duty at that time can listen to it with the Party's representative to confirm that it falls within the Electoral Law. An MBC Engineer will be present to confirm that the programme meets the necessary technical standard.

3.10

No Party Political Broadcast, related to the Elections taking place on 17th May, may be transmitted after 6am on Sunday 15th May 1994.

Party Political Broadcasts must take account of the limitations on the use of OPINION POLLS set out in section 4.1 below.

SCHEDULE OF PARTY POLITICAL BROADCASTS

The number of such broadcasts available to each Party over an eight week will be 12.* These will be recorded at weekly production sessions and transmitted at the frequency set out below in the course of the following week.

Each Party will be offered the following in the eight-week period Sunday March 20th 1994 - Saturday May 14th 1994

Week 1.	1 programme / 2 minutes / 5 times per day / 7 days per week
Week 2.	1 programme / 2 minutes / 5 times per day / 7 days per week
Week 3.	1 programme / 2 minutes / 5 times per day / 7 days per week
Week 4.	1 programme / 2 minutes / 5 times per day / 7 days per week
Week 5.	1 programme / 3 minutes / 3 times per day / 7 days per week
	1 programme / 1 minute / 3 times per day / 7 days per week
Week 6.	1 programme / 3 minutes / 3 times per day / 7 days per week
	1 programme / 1 minute / 3 times per day / 7 days per week
Week 7.	1 programme / 4 minutes/ 2 times per day / 7 days per week
	1 programme / 1 minute / 4 times per day / 7 days per week
Week 8.	1 programme / 4 minutes/ 2 times per day / 7 days per week
	1 programme / 1 minute / 4 times per day / 7 days per week
Totals	12 programmes per Party Combined total of 26 minutes recorded material per Party. 10 hours 16 minutes transmission time per Party. 308 transmissions per Party.

4 *Opinion Polls*

4.1

The result of Opinion Polls must be used by all media with great care. The results should only be broadcast or published if there is reason to believe that they are statistically sound. In any case, all relevant information must be broadcast/published including identification of the organisation that conducted the poll, the Party or other organisation that commissioned and paid for the Poll, the methodology, the sample size and location of the survey, its date and margin of error. This care must be exercised by Newspapers too.

4.2

Opinion Polls may not be published or broadcast after the period of campaigning i.e. during the 48 hours from that point until the close of poll.

5 *Monitoring of Election Coverage*

5.1

MBC must maintain full records of all news bulletins and recordings of all other programmes related to the election, including Party Political Broadcasts. They

* NDI does not endorse any specific format for direct messages, unpaid or paid, for direct party or candidate access to deliver direct messages to the public.

must institute a close and meticulous monitoring system to ensure balance throughout the campaign and up to the close of poll.

5.2

MBC must be prepared to provide the Electoral Commission at any reasonable time with all such records, information and recordings as the Commission may require to fulfil its monitoring role. Newspapers may be required to provide the possibility for the Commission to inspect back copies in the event of a complaint.

6 Complaints Procedure

6.1

Any candidate or Party making a reasoned complaint of unfair treatment or coverage in the course of the election campaign, should send it in writing to the Commission. Any complainant asking the Head of News at MBC or the Editor of a newspaper to correct a mistake should send a copy to the Electoral Commission. These professional journalists, working to these procedures, will respond to those complaints appropriately, but will in any case report all such complaints to the Electoral Commission.

6.2

Where, in the case of either MBC or a newspaper, a right of reply is necessary, a retraction or the correction of a matter of significance, such a response will be placed in a position of equal prominence and given comparable space or time.

6.3

In the event of an unresolved dispute over a complaint of unfair media coverage, the Electoral Commission will be the final arbiter.

Justice Mrs Msosa, Chair

**MALAWI ELECTORAL COMMISSION
8TH MARCH 1994**