

MEDIA SUSTAINABILITY INDEX

2006/2007

**The Development
of Sustainable
Independent Media
in the Middle East
and North Africa**



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The Development of Sustainable Independent Media in the Middle East and North Africa

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USAID

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is an independent agency that provides economic, development, and humanitarian assistance around the world in support of the foreign policy goals of the United States. The agency works to support long-term and sustainable economic growth and advances US foreign policy objectives by supporting economic growth, agriculture, and trade; global health; and democracy, conflict prevention, and humanitarian assistance.

USAID provides assistance in four regions of the world: Sub-Saharan Africa; Asia and the Near East; Latin America and the Caribbean; and Europe and Eurasia.

With headquarters in Washington, DC, USAID's strength is its field offices around the world. They work in close partnership with private voluntary organizations, indigenous organizations, universities, American businesses, international agencies, other governments, and other US government agencies. USAID has working relationships with more than 3,500 American companies and over 300 US-based private voluntary organizations.

MEPI

The United States Department of State's Middle East Partnership Initiative provides tangible support to reformers in the Middle East and North Africa so democracy can spread, education can thrive, economies can grow, and women can be empowered. In four years, this presidential initiative has devoted \$293 million to more than 350 programs in 15 countries and the Palestinian territories to support the aspirations of those working to build a more peaceful and prosperous Middle East. Examples of the initiative's work includes campaign schools, independent media training, civic education, entrepreneurship skill building, youth leadership development, trade transparency promotion, business hubs for women, and judicial and legal reform training.

UNESCO

UNESCO, the United Nations' Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, maintains a Communication and Information (CI) sector that is guided by the principles of freedom of expression and freedom of the press as basic human rights. Since 2003, the CI sector has supported the Iraqi people in their transition to democracy. Among other projects, UNESCO facilitated initiatives to develop a national media policy and provided practical guidance for journalists and civil society prior to the elections. Training and networking opportunities were made available to more than 550 media workers and professionals.

IREX

IREX is an international nonprofit organization providing leadership and innovative programs to improve the quality of education, strengthen independent media, and foster pluralistic civil society development.

Founded in 1968, IREX has an annual portfolio of \$50 million and a staff of over 500 professionals worldwide. IREX and its partner IREX Europe deliver cross-cutting programs and consulting expertise in more than 50 countries.

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رقيقاً بالعاملين يا شركة الخليج العربي للنفط

العاملون بالمركز الصحي «سلطانة» يطالبون بفتح تحقيق فوري في الملاك الوظيفي

رئيس التحرير
عز الدين عبد العاطي اللواج
مدير عام التحرير
الصديق ابريك بو دواره

16 صفحة
500 درهم
ليبية متنوعة شاملة
تصدر عن شركة الغد للخدمات الإعلامية
الخميس 16 من المحرم - 24 يناير 2008 م - السنة الثانية - العدد 0106

الدكتور محمد المفتي يكتب:
متي يصبح المتحف جزءاً من حياتنا؟

الرأي للجميع

عاجل... بنغازي تشهد حادثة اجتماعية بشعة

LIBYA

Limited, yet positive, progress characterized developments in the Libyan media sector over the past year. Panelists were optimistic that media discourse in Libya will improve in the near future. Radical changes have taken place towards objectivity, reasonability, and independence of opinion, which has not been allowed for years. Media awareness is increasing among the citizens, and they have begun to demand that newspapers highlight and pay attention to their concerns. Such a movement is promising and it confirms the building up of trust in the media after many years of mistrust.

In 2006, journalist Abdul-Raziq Al-Mansouri, a writer known for his critical articles on the Akhbar Libya web site, was released from prison. Since his release, Al-Mansouri has continued publishing articles on that web site that criticize the government, and he does not seem to have been subject to persecution because of this.

In mid-August 2007, a pilot broadcast was initiated for a new satellite television station, called Al-Libiyah, supervised by the Al-Ghad Media Institution, one of the institutions controlled by the Qadhafi Foundation for Development. It also started to broadcast programs on three radio stations, one of which is FM for Youth. In September 2007, the Al-Ghad Media Institution issued two newspapers, one in Tripoli called "Oiya" (after the ancient Phoenician name of Tripoli) and the other in Benghazi called "Cyrene" (after the name of the largest city of the ancient five Greek cities). This is the beginning of the establishment of media institutions independent of the government, which has controlled all media outlets for 38 years.

Freedom of expression is still restricted and writers or artists may face imprisonment if they produce what is seen by authorities as anti-revolutionary works of literature or art. However, many intellectual and literary works have begun to be distributed in Libya. In April 2007, a number of Libyan journalists and intellectuals from inside and outside of Libya presented a petition demanding the government accelerate the pace of legal reforms in order to enhance freedom of the press and reform the Libyan media, thereby strengthening dialogue on different issues facing the nation. The signers indicated that the most serious obstacle facing the press in Libya was the nature of the media discourse, which is based on propaganda. They demanded that the government allow licensing of independent, privately-owned newspapers. The 140 signers welcomed a resolution by the government to form a committee to study the conditions of the press. The Libyan Journalists Union and the Journalists Association have also been agitating to eliminate the Revolutionary Committee's oversight authority of the media.

Panelists considered these modest developments when scoring their questionnaires this year, and returned an overall average of 0.45, up slightly from last year's 0.31. The change was driven by notable improvements in Objective 1, Freedom of Speech, and Objective 5, Supporting Institutions. Objective 1 improved from an atrocious 0.16 to a still poor—yet better—0.40. Objective 5 experienced a similar shift from 0.23 to 0.51.

LIBYA AT A GLANCE

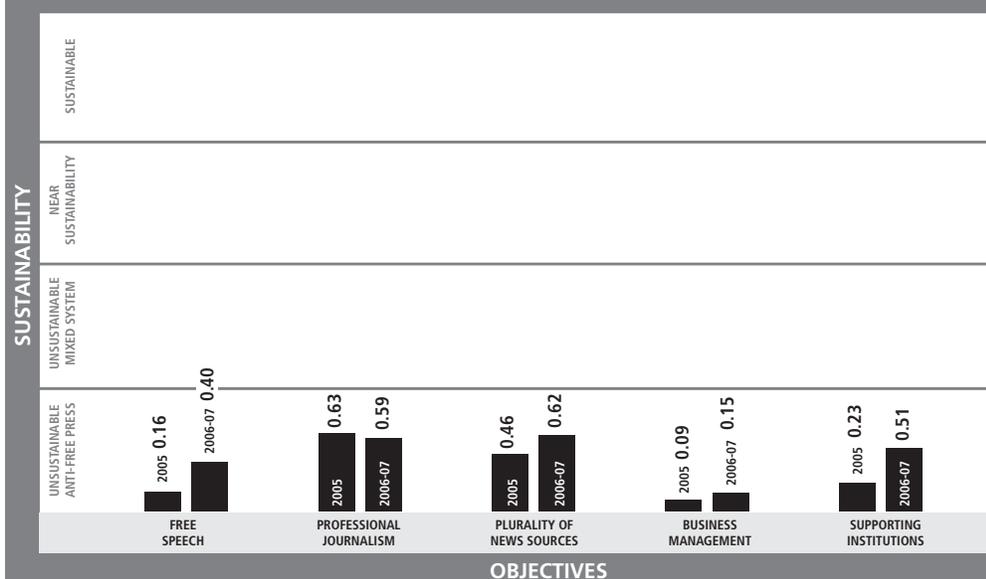
GENERAL

- > **Population:** 6,173,579 (July 2008 est., *CIA World Factbook*)
- > **Capital city:** Tripoli
- > **Ethnic groups (% of population):** Berber and Arab 97%, other 3% (*CIA World Factbook*)
- > **Religions (% of population):** Sunni Muslim 97%, other 3% (*CIA World Factbook*)
- > **Languages (% of population):** Arabic, Italian, English, all are widely understood in the major cities (*CIA World Factbook*)
- > **GNI (2006-Atlas):** \$44.01 billion (World Bank Development Indicators, 2007)
- > **GNI per capita (2006-PPP):** \$11,630 (World Bank Development Indicators, 2007)
- > **Literacy rate:** 82.6% (male 92.4%, female 72.0%) (2003 est., *CIA World Factbook*)
- > **President or top authority:** Revolutionary Leader Col. Muammar Abu Minyar al-Qadhafi (since September 1, 1969)

MEDIA-SPECIFIC

- > **Number of active print outlets, radio stations, television stations:**
Print: 8 daily newspapers and a number of weeklies and monthlies;
Radio: 24 stations; Television Stations: 12 (*pressreference.com*)
- > **Newspaper circulation statistics:** Total daily circulation is no more than 8,000 total for all papers
- > **Broadcast ratings:** N/A
- > **News agencies:** Jamahiriya News Agency (JANA)
- > **Annual advertising revenue in media sector:** N/A
- > **Internet usage:** 232,000 (2005 est., *CIA World Factbook*)

MEDIA SUSTAINABILITY INDEX: LIBYA



Unsustainable, Anti-Free Press (0-1):

Country does not meet or only minimally meets objectives. Government and laws actively hinder free media development, professionalism is low, and media-industry activity is minimal.

Unsustainable Mixed System (1-2):

Country minimally meets objectives, with segments of the legal system and government opposed to a free media system. Evident progress in free-press advocacy, increased professionalism, and new media businesses may be too recent to judge sustainability.

Near Sustainability (2-3):

Country has progressed in meeting multiple objectives, with legal norms, professionalism, and the business environment supportive of independent media. Advances have survived changes in government and have been codified in law and practice. However, more time may be needed to ensure that change is enduring and that increased professionalism and the media business environment are sustainable.

Sustainable (3-4):

Country has media that are considered generally professional, free, and sustainable, or to be approaching these objectives. Systems supporting independent media have survived multiple governments, economic fluctuations, and changes in public opinion or social conventions.

Objective 3, Plurality of News Sources, also showed minor improvement. The other two objectives remained more or less the same.

OBJECTIVE 1: FREEDOM OF SPEECH

Libya Objective Score: 0.40

Although there was improvement in this objective compared to last year, individual indicator scores still reveal dire problems in several areas. Scores for all but three indicators were below 0.50. Only Indicator 9, free entry into the journalism profession, scored noticeably higher than the overall objective average.

Article 13 of the 1969 Constitutional Proclamation emphasizes that, "Freedom of opinion is guaranteed within the limits of public interest and the principles of the Revolution." The Publications Act No. 76 of 1972 similarly stipulates freedom of expression to be ". . . within the limits of the public interest and the principles of the revolution." These were followed by the Declaration of the People's Authority (1977), the Green Charter for Human Rights (1988), and Law 20 on Enhancing Freedom (1991), which all similarly put freedom of expression firmly within the context of limitations for the good of the people or the revolution. For example, article 8 of Law 20 on Enhancing Freedom notes that, "Every citizen has the right to express and publicly proclaim his opinions and ideas to the people's congresses and the media of the Jamahiriya. No citizen shall be answerable for his exercise of this right unless he exploits it with a view to detracting from the people's authority or for personal ends."

Libya also signed the Universal Charter of Human Rights, which guarantees a person's freedom of thought and freedom of expression, and is a signatory to the African Charter of Human Rights, which stipulates that everyone is entitled to access information and that everyone is entitled to express and disseminate thoughts within the framework of statutes and regulations.

Despite all of these statutes and charters, the Libyan system does not accept dissenting opinions. It hinders freedom of expression and freedom of the press in the name of "the limits of the public interest and the principles of the Revolution." Some panelists expressed their opinions about freedom of the media in Libya. Ashour Al-Shames, editor of the Akhbar Libya web site said, "Freedom of opinion in Libya is programmed and under control." Writer Faraj Nejm said, "The Libyan authorities have created a tame media." Adel Sunallah, editor of the Libya Jeel web site, said, "The authorities do not have a clear perception about the free media. Under the pressures of the current conditions, they

allow only limited degrees of freedoms." Noman Benotman, a writer, described the authorities' approach to freedom of opinion by saying, "The security approach dominates their ways of thinking." Mahmoud Al-Nakoua, a writer, maintained, "The totalitarian system in Libya does not allow political or media freedoms. Under pressures from satellite channels and the Internet, the state allows a limited space of freedom of expression."

Media practitioners and others are not able to seek relief from the judicial system, according to panelists. Sunallah said, "In relation to the judicial system, it is influenced by political decisions."

Not all is negative however, and panelists did point out the positive developments. Mohamed Turneesh, a journalist with *Mal wa A'mal* newspaper, said, "Despite the Publications Act of 1972, which has not been changed or amended so far, journalism in Libya is witnessing development and growth for the first time in many years." Journalist and blogger Issa Abdul-Qaiyoum summed up the developments: "A few years ago, all newspapers were owned by the state. Their prevailing nature was ideological, and they exercised their activity within the limits of political propaganda and announcements. However, very recently, there started to appear some indications of progress in these conditions. For example, two independent newspapers have been issued for the first time in Libya in the last quarter of 2007. Web sites have started to talk about passing a new act for the press. The Internet press has been allowed a reasonable level of freedom. There are legal restrictions on media access of the local market in accordance with the law, while it is allowed to receive broadcast media and the Internet. At the same time, the press is not always available. There are contradictions between the legal procedures and reality."

All the broadcast media and print publications in Libya are owned by the state and its agencies. The semi-independent institutions are associated with the Qadhafi Foundation for Development, headed by Qadhafi's son Saif. The private sector is not allowed to own newspapers or television or radio broadcast stations, therefore there is no real licensing and market entry is severely limited.

The General Press Corporation supervises the state newspapers and magazines. Also, Libyan cities are allowed to issue their own local newspapers and broadcast their own radio programs on the local stations. Furthermore, professional trade unions are allowed to issue their publications. The Green Book Studies Center issues a number of weekly, monthly and quarterly publications in addition to many books. Its publications feature a greater degree of freedom of expression.

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Sunallah summed up the divide between the spirit of the law and its implementation in terms of licensing: "Although the legislation in Libya (theoretically) stipulates that the press and printing are free and that everyone has the right to freely express opinions and disseminate opinions and news by different means the Publications Act No. 76 of 1972, enacted in the name of the Revolution Command Council, stipulates that it is not allowable for anyone to initiate a newspaper or establish a press unless the individual believes in the Revolution and its goals. This prevents the issuance of any newspapers independent of the government." He added, "In the same year, this was followed by a law which stipulates the foundation of the General Press Corporation. This law limited the right to issue newspapers, periodicals, magazines, and bulletins to that institution, as well as for associations, unions, and professional syndicates, except for the *Az-Zahf Al-Akhdar* newspaper which belongs to the

LEGAL AND SOCIAL NORMS PROTECT AND PROMOTE FREE SPEECH AND ACCESS TO PUBLIC INFORMATION.

FREE-SPEECH INDICATORS:

- > Legal and social protections of free speech exist and are enforced.
- > Licensing of broadcast media is fair, competitive, and apolitical.
- > Market entry and tax structure for media are fair and comparable to other industries.
- > Crimes against journalists or media outlets are prosecuted vigorously, but occurrences of such crimes are rare.
- > State or public media do not receive preferential legal treatment, and law guarantees editorial independence.
- > Libel is a civil law issue; public officials are held to higher standards, and offended parties must prove falsity and malice.
- > Public information is easily accessible; right of access to information is equally enforced for all media and journalists.
- > Media outlets have unrestricted access to information; this is equally enforced for all media and journalists.
- > Entry into the journalism profession is free, and government imposes no licensing, restrictions, or special rights for journalists.

Revolutionary Committees Authority. Since then, Libyan citizens have been prohibited from exercising their right to issue private newspapers. Some legal provisions are not enforced, such as Article 2 of the Publications Act which prohibits censorship over newspapers." "Concerning the issuance of two newspapers in 2007, there is no justice in receiving licenses. It is only allowed to initiate newspapers belonging to the Qadhafi Foundation for Development, headed by the son of the Libyan President," he added.

Al-Senousi Besekeri, a journalist for Al Hiwar TV's web site, described the security conditions of journalists by saying, "The crimes committed against journalists are limited because the security sphere dominates the media realm." Nonetheless, crimes committed against journalists include assassination, such as the case of Daif Al-Ghazal (2005) for his writings about corruption on the Libya Jeel web site. Sunallah said, "The killers of Daif Al-Ghazal were prosecuted (in 2007) without implementing the sentence, to be decided by the court, up until now." Sunallah's sentiments are echoed by international human rights and media advocacy groups, such as the Committee to Protect Journalists, who express doubts that the real perpetrators have been brought to justice. According to reports by Reporters Without Borders, a witness said Al-Ghazal's abductors identified themselves as state security officials.

The government also uses criminal libel penalties and general prohibitions on "detracting from the people's authority," as indicated above, to jail and silence critics. In 2006, for example, journalist Abdul-Raziq Al-Mansouri was imprisoned after charges were filed against him for his writings on the Akhbar Libya web site.

Otherwise, libel suits are rarely filed by private citizens and businesses. These may also result in criminal penalties and are adjudicated by the General Committee of Journalists Responsibility.

The law does not provide a right for citizen or media access to public information, and in practice it is very difficult to obtain information from the government. Generally, the government releases information to media as it sees fit. Recently the government has made provisions for requests for information, but panelists noted that requests rarely results in success. Further, panelists said that most journalists are not accustomed to requesting information and simply wait for information to be given to them.

Media's access to foreign news sources is also limited, although journalists have expanded Internet and satellite access compared to the past. However, media outlets are not able to freely carry stories originally reported by foreign media if they are critical of the government.

The government overwhelmingly controls the media, and therefore controls who may be a journalist. Prospective journalists must be willing to work within the restrictive legal environment, and the state is careful to hire journalists who will do so.

OBJECTIVE 2: PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISM

Libya Objective Score: 0.59

This year's score of 0.59 shows essentially no change from last year, when the panel rated professional journalism a 0.63. All indicators scored similarly poorly, and none achieved a score of 1.00 or greater. In general, panelists felt that the state's stranglehold on the media rules out the practice of quality journalism, even if some individual journalists may have the skills to do so in theory.

Professionalism in reporting stories and issues is almost absent. First, panelists maintained that information availability and flow encounter administrative and political obstacles, and therefore multiple sources of information are simply not available. Further, the government treats media as a communications tool for promoting their own policies and viewpoints.

Ashour Al-Shames said, "There are good Libyan journalists at all levels, but they have developed due to their own efforts." For example, media interviews range between professionalism—showcasing that some journalists do understand proper techniques—and propaganda, depending on the interviewer and the subject. Turneesh noted that there is a severe shortage in the qualifications of journalists,

JOURNALISM MEETS PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS OF QUALITY.

PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISM INDICATORS:

- > Reporting is fair, objective, and well sourced.
- > Journalists follow recognized and accepted ethical standards.
- > Journalists and editors do not practice self-censorship.
- > Journalists cover key events and issues.
- > Pay levels for journalists and other media professionals are sufficiently high to discourage corruption.
- > Entertainment programming does not eclipse news and information programming.
- > Technical facilities and equipment for gathering, producing, and distributing news are modern and efficient.
- > Quality niche reporting and programming exists (investigative, economics/business, local, political).

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which means that many are unfamiliar with many modern media technologies and practices. Ezz Addin Al-Lowaj, editor-in-chief of *Qurina* newspaper, said that he had to borrow staff from the Egyptian *Al-Ahram* newspaper to make up for the shortage of Libyan journalists.

Until September 2007 all newspapers operated under the General Press Corporation, which did not establish ethical and professional standards. Nasser Al-Orfuli, an independent journalist, said, "The prevalence of corruption in the state is necessarily reflected in the personnel of the media sector, especially with the media institutions being under the control of the state."

Mohamed Turneesh said that in addition to an authority for censoring publications before printing, self-censorship is practiced by the journalists themselves. Journalists are subject to pressures by the state agencies when writing about critical issues, and political and security considerations dominate the approaches taken by reporters in their work. Therefore, journalists are forced to exercise self-censorship because of the certainty of losing their jobs or even endangering their safety if they were to step out of bounds. They do not cover many major events and issues of the nation (e.g., asking critical questions about the ideological and political philosophy of the state).

"Media workers are forced to keep away from tackling important issues, such as security, intelligence, defense, and national security," said Noman Benotman. Issa Abdul-Qaiyoum highlighted the impact editorial policy has on content by saying, "There is a distinction between the professionalism of the journalists and the professionalism and policies of their media institutions."

Most journalists are employees of the state, and their salary and benefits would not thwart corruption. However, the control over the media by the government means that corruption does not typically impact content in the media. Turneesh claimed that the low salaries for journalists results

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in high turnover. Another panelist said the new newspapers are trying to pay more to attract good personnel. However, panelists noted that the government does pay a lot to some of its most favored journalists who have been staunch supporters.

Most of the facilities and equipment used in news collection, production, and dissemination are outdated and ineffective. Furthermore, there is not enough of this equipment. These problems result in poor quality programming and print production and hurt the impact and reach of the media.

Although there is specialized reporting, it is well within the parameters of supporting the goals of the state. While there may be coverage of sports or art, there is no independent, in-depth investigative reporting.

OBJECTIVE 3: PLURALITY OF NEWS SOURCES

Libya Objective Score: 0.62

The indicator scores for this objective reveal a situation in Libya where citizens generally are not able to obtain a variety of viewpoints and adequate news and information. The state's general approach is to refuse any opinions and statements not completely agreeing with official policies, and the presence of opposing media institutions is not allowed. The first two indicators, which include the plurality of news sources and citizen access to media, were the only indicators to score higher than a 1.00, and even so barely did. Panelists showed some optimism in their scoring of these two indicators due to the recent development of the government allowing a few new print media outlets to open. The score for this objective therefore improved slightly compared to last year. The rest of the indicators scored poorly.

During the monarchy period (1952-1969), there were 85 newspapers and magazines issued in different languages

and representing different cultural and political viewpoints. They were all nationalized after Qadhafi assumed power in 1969. Until the issuance of Publications Act No. 76 of 1972, in the time between 1969 and 1972, about 51 newspapers, governmental and private, in Arabic, English and Italian were issued in the country. Now there are about a dozen daily and weekly newspapers, and all are issued under the supervision of state agencies or the Revolutionary Committee. As noted above, in 2007 the government allowed for the creation of two new newspapers operated by a foundation controlled by Qadhafi's son.

In 2007 many Libyan web sites were launched and they adopted critical outlooks that have not been seen in the Libyan media. They commenced campaigns against corruption and continually demanded that officials improve the service sector in general.

As a result of the oppressive conditions in Libya, many local media workers take advantage of external media dedicated to Libyan issues, which create some competition between the Libyan media outlets inside and outside the country. One positive development noted by panelists is that some expatriate writers have started to write for the local media outlets.

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MULTIPLE NEWS SOURCES PROVIDE CITIZENS WITH RELIABLE AND OBJECTIVE NEWS.

PLURALITY OF NEWS SOURCES INDICATORS:

- > A plurality of affordable public and private news sources (e.g., print, broadcast, Internet) exists.
- > Citizens' access to domestic or international media is not restricted.
- > State or public media reflect the views of the entire political spectrum, are nonpartisan, and serve the public interest.
- > Independent news agencies gather and distribute news for print and broadcast media.
- > Independent broadcast media produce their own news programs.
- > Transparency of media ownership allows consumers to judge objectivity of news; media ownership is not concentrated in a few conglomerates.
- > A broad spectrum of social interests are reflected and represented in the media, including minority-language information sources.

The Internet is available to access information and news. Sometimes the authorities block web sites that do not agree with state policies, and consequently those running them and writing for them may be oppressed. However, foreign web sites focused on Libyan issues are an important source of alternative news, and these, recently are rarely blocked. Likewise, satellite television services provide alternative points of view on regional and international news.

The distribution of foreign publications was banned in Libya until 2007. Recently, it was announced that the distribution of foreign newspapers and publications is now allowed. This decision came as a result of intervention by the Qadhafi Foundation for Development. Still, many obstacles prevent even Libyan newspapers and magazines from being available in all towns and villages. Foreign publications are hardly available in the major cities such as Tripoli and Benghazi, and it is unlikely that they are available elsewhere. Further, censorship agencies still ban the distribution of publications and books originating outside of Libya that focus on Libyan issues, such as *Arajeen* and *Libya Forum* magazines.

As stated above, state media (nearly all media) serve the interest of the state, which controls them. There is no room left for accommodating diverse political opinions in state media. In referring to some of the wording of Indicator 3, "State or public media reflect the views of the political spectrum," Issa Abdul-Qaiyoum said, "In Libya, there is no [political] party activity, so it is difficult to approach the questions posed here." Turneesh said: "In my personal experience, I wrote a number of articles but newspapers refused to publish them. When they were published on the Internet, they received the approval of many readers. This indicates that legal conventions may prohibit publishing while social conventions promote freedom of expression and demand the dissemination of information to all people."

As for news collection and distribution by news services, it is still controlled by the official Jamahiriya News Agency. Broadcast media outlets may produce their own programs in terms of news, art, culture, and literature, but these are not independently produced.

Although media ownership is generally transparent since it is overwhelmingly controlled by the state, panelists scored this indicator poorly because of the monopoly position the state enjoys. Adel Sunallah said, "All the media institutions are officially controlled by the General Press Corporation. Recently, there have emerged other institutions that belong to the son of Qadhafi. The ownership (administration and officials) of these institutions is ambiguous, since there are no statutes or regulations governing media ownership."

However, another participant remarked that until recently there has been no private investment in the media sector in

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Libya, but it is expected that the state will start to give private investors permission to work in the media field, especially with the establishment of the media belonging to Qadhafi's son.

The Libyan government does not recognize minority or religious groups, so minority-language news sources do not exist. In fact, Libyans are referred to in most media simply as "citizens," thereby avoiding any acknowledgement of social diversity.

OBJECTIVE 4: BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Libya Objective Score: 0.15

"It should be taken into consideration that there has been no independent or private media in Libya since 1969. Therefore, I have given the score of 0 for all the questions relating to the private media and its particulars since the process itself does not exist. Perhaps in future years we will be able to know about this, should the government keep its promises." These sentiments, from Issa Abdul-Qaiyoum, sum up the feeling of all panelists for this objective: there is no independent

INDEPENDENT MEDIA ARE WELL-MANAGED BUSINESSES, ALLOWING EDITORIAL INDEPENDENCE.

BUSINESS MANAGEMENT INDICATORS:

- > Media outlets and supporting firms operate as efficient, professional, and profit-generating businesses.
- > Media receive revenue from a multitude of sources.
- > Advertising agencies and related industries support an advertising market.
- > Advertising revenue as a percentage of total revenue is in line with accepted standards at commercial outlets.
- > Independent media do not receive government subsidies.
- > Market research is used to formulate strategic plans, enhance advertising revenue, and tailor products to the needs and interests of audiences.
- > Broadcast ratings and circulation figures are reliably and independently produced.

commercial media in Libya. Media simply are not intended to be run as businesses and therefore have not adopted the management practices that characterize a well-run media organization. As such, this objective received the lowest score again this year, and no indicator scored above 0.50.

Libyan media outlets are governmental corporations whose finances depend almost completely upon governmental support. There are no considerations of financial sustainability in decisions that are made. Media do not answer to owners for their bottom line, rather they answer to political masters regarding their content.

There recently has been some expansion in advertising activity, but it still lacks vigor, professionalism, and a competitive spirit. Participants agreed that the revenues from advertising are not sufficient to support media operations. Therefore, since available revenue does not meet the needs of the mass media, it relies on subsidies from the government.

Additionally, media lack research and measurement tools required to evaluate the impact of their work or the people's opinions about them. Given the near-monopoly position of the government and the low importance of advertising, the government and media managers are more interested in the message itself rather than tailoring the message or knowing demographics.

OBJECTIVE 5: SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONS

Libya Objective Score: 0.51

The government controls almost all of the civil society in Libya as well as other institutions that support the media, such as printing and distribution. Although mildly improving compared to last year's score of 0.23, panelists rated most of the objectives poorly. Only Indicator 3, the work of NGOs, scored noticeably better, but this was a reflection mostly of the work that international NGOs do rather than local NGOs. Local NGOs have little latitude to pursue advocacy work to improve the state of media.

There are no media-related trade associations, since the media is not an independent industry. There are no trade unions for media workers. A journalists association, the Libyan Journalists Union, sanctioned by the government, exists. However, it can not provide support to members beyond rare cases that go no further than showing sympathy to the plight of a member. The role of this association is confined to administrative matters and the organization of some activities, and they are neither entitled to discuss media legislation nor defend journalists who are subject to harassment from security agencies. For example, no

media support institution in Libya has ever highlighted the assassination of journalist Daif Al-Ghazal or the case of the arrest of the writer Abdul-Raziq Al-Mansouri.

State-sanctioned associations such as the Libyan Journalists Union require their members to agree with the political philosophy of the state, and they reject those who oppose it. Because of this the Libyan Journalists Union has lost many journalists and media workers. This also precludes activities to improve the state of the media and defend journalists.

Academic journalism programs are scarce and not well regarded. The departments of journalism and media studies in Libyan universities lack any opportunity to train with modern media technologies. They focus on the strict practice of media activity in order to acquire experience. Because of the lack of political and intellectual freedom, they do not address the greater role of the media or issues of media freedom, which would help to enrich the students' intellects. There is almost no opportunity for students to receive academic degrees specializing in journalism from abroad, or to be qualified by international organizations due to legal, administrative, and political obstacles.

Courses for current journalists sponsored by official media outlets or associations usually do not meet professional needs, and they are mostly ideological. Further, they address only one level regardless of the expertise of participants. Such efforts are not well planned and not taken seriously.

The state controls stocks of newsprint and owns all printing facilities. This is also the case with the channels of media distribution, including broadcast transmitters; the private sector is not allowed to own or run such facilities. Recently, newsstands have started to appear for the first time in many years.

SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONS FUNCTION IN THE PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS OF INDEPENDENT MEDIA.

SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONS INDICATORS:

- > Trade associations represent the interests of private media owners and provide member services.
- > Professional associations work to protect journalists' rights.
- > NGOs support free speech and independent media.
- > Quality journalism degree programs that provide substantial practical experience exist.
- > Short-term training and in-service training programs allow journalists to upgrade skills or acquire new skills.
- > Sources of newsprint and printing facilities are in private hands, apolitical, and unrestricted.
- > Channels of media distribution (kiosks, transmitters, Internet) are private, apolitical, and unrestricted.

List of Panel Participants

Due to the difficulty of operating within Libya and obtaining candid assessments of issues such as the state of media, the MSI questionnaire was answered by eight expatriate Libyans working in media outside the country and three media professionals from within the country. A panel discussion for the expatriate Libyans was held in London.

EXPATRIATE LIBYANS

Ashour Al-Shames, editor, Akhbar Libya website, London, UK

Adel Sunallah, editor, Libya Jeel website, London, UK

Issa Abdul-Qaiyom, independent journalist and blogger,
I am Libyan blog, Manchester, UK

Mahmoud Al-Nakoua, independent journalist, London, UK

Al-Senousi Besekeri, online journalist, Al Hiwar TV,
London, UK

Faraj Nejm, journalist, London, UK

Noman Benotman, writer and founder, Human and Political
Development Forum, London, UK

Nasser Al-Orfuli, independent journalist, London, UK

WITHIN LIBYA

Ezz Addin Al-Lowaj, editor-in-chief, *Qurina* newspaper,
Benghazi

Mohamed Turneesh, journalist, *Mal wa A'mal* newspaper,
head, Human Rights Committee, Tripoli

The remaining panelist from within Libya requested to remain anonymous.

Moderator

Aly Ramadan Abuzaakuk, director, Libya Forum for Human
Rights and Political Development, Washington, DC, USA

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