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PRESS RELEASE

Celebration of World Press Freedom Day in Afghanistan

New frontiers, New Barriers for the Most Significant Achievement of Afghanistan

08 May 2011 Kabul – The World Press Freedom Day, was celebrated today in Kabul in International Press Center of Ministry of Information and Culture, to highlight and recognize the most important achievement of the post-Taliban democracy—the media development and freedom.

Mr. Sayed Makhdom Raheen, Minister of Information and Culture, termed the ‘press freedom and expansion of media’ as the outstanding achievement of post-Taliban era, “The number of media increased from 0 to 200 within one month after the Taliban regime collapsed”, said Mr. Raheen, “now over 1000 media outlet, print, radio and television, operate across the country”.

UNESCO Kabul Director, Mr. Shigeru Aoyagi, stated UNESCO’s mandate to promote freedom of expression and flow of transparent information in the country. “I am pleased to witness the great achievements of the media in Afghanistan; however, we need to do more to sustain the achievements and to invest in the new aspects of media, such as online journalism”, said Mr. Aoyagi.

The recent report by Nai Supporting Open Media in Afghanistan shows a considerable drop down to the insecurity incidents against Afghan Journalist in 2010, compared to 2009. However, the report warns that insecurity continue to remain the main challenge for the media outlets in the country.

The organizers of the event, provided certificate of appreciation to the family members of journalists, who lost their lives during past years. Also, outstanding media professionals received awards and appreciation letters.

UNESCO Kabul has been working in Afghanistan since 2003 and besides to the mainstream programs on culture and education sectors, has assisted Ministry of Information and Culture to promote freedom of speech and access to the accurate and transparent information as a basis for pluralistic and democratic society.

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