

## THE SARAJEVO COMMITMENT

At the beginning of the 21st Century men and women of the media register their commitment to integrity and public service.

*This document was launched at a World Media Assembly, SARAJEVO 2000, and signed by participants on 30 September 2000.*

We, men and women of the media – professionals at all levels, from publishers and producers to cub reporters and students of journalism; from the print and digital media, television and radio, book publishing, cinema and theatre, advertising and public relations, music and the performing and creative arts – met here in the bruised, historic and beautiful city of Sarajevo, pay our homage and respect to the millions of humanity whom we inform, entertain and educate.

We look back on a century of brilliance and bloodshed, of amazing technological advance and distressing human misery, of mobility and isolation and of healing and hatred. A century in which two world wars emanated from the so-called advanced and civilised continent of Europe. A century in which we split the atom, but left families, communities and nations divided. A century which ended with some 30 unresolved major conflict situations.

We accept that we in the media, whilst talent and technology enabled us to reach the lives of almost every last person in the world, were not able to create the climate in which problems were solved, conflicting groups and interests reconciled, and peace and justice established.

Now that we confront a new century, many of us, hoping that we interpret the views and feelings of the vast majority of our colleagues, would like to establish a commitment, an undertaking, a pledge, to all those who will live and love and work in these coming hundred years.

We shall inform you to the best of our ability, with clarity and honesty, with independence of mind, of what is truly happening in the world at the level of the individual, the family, the community, the nation and the region. We shall present the facts and explain the facts, and some of us will aim with modesty to interpret them. As we succeed in doing this, we believe that you, the people, will be enabled to make the right decisions, to elect and appoint the best leaders and to build a fair, just and compassionate society.

We seek a world in which everyone cares enough and everyone shares enough so that everyone will have enough; a world in which the work and wealth of the world are available to all at the exploitation of none.

We shall provide the art and entertainment which will inspire, arouse and give hope and a sense of direction to all humanity.

We shall be working to raise up and not to drag down. We shall challenge our politicians to work for the next generation and not the next election, encourage our governments to make agreements which are effective in people's hearts as well as on paper; and stimulate our business, industrial and labour leaders to meet the material needs of humankind with fairness and equity.

We shall work to educate, through all the means of communication, generations who will be able to confront the challenges of their age with competence and vision.

We shall combine freedom with responsibility, talent with humility, privilege with service, comfort with sacrifice and concern with courage. We realise that change in society begins with change in ourselves.

We undertake to apply and demonstrate in our own lives the values that we hope for, and often demand, in others. We shall confront hypocrisy, oppression, exploitation and evil, firstly by our own clarity and straightness and then through the means by which we reach our audiences. We are unlikely to be perfect, but we shall aim to be truthful and free of guile, selfish ambition, perverted behaviour and deception.

We shall not cease to strive until every gun is silent, every injustice righted and every human being enabled to live a life of satisfaction and purpose.

To all these intentions and obligations, we commit ourselves at this time of beginning. May the higher aspirations within us all, be they spiritual, moral or humanistic, enable us to fulfil this commitment.

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