

## WORLD'S PRESS CONDEMNS MURDER OF RUSSIAN JOURNALIST

The World Association of Newspapers today condemned the 'shocking murder' of Anna Politkovskaya, the Russian journalist.

Ms Politkovskaya, a reporter for the Novaya Gazeta newspaper, was found dead Saturday afternoon from a bullet wound in the elevator of the building where she lived in Moscow.

"This is tragic and deeply shocking news", said Timothy Balding, CEO of WAN. "We condemn this as an outrageous attack not only on a journalist but on freedom of the press and democracy in Russia. We call on the Russian authorities to pursue mercilessly the killer or killers and those behind this cowardly act".

Mr Balding added: "There had been many skeptics in Russia, including other journalists, when Ms Politkovskaya said she was the victim of attempted poisoning by security forces on her way to cover the Beslan massacre two years ago. This assassination is terrible confirmation, if any were needed, that she was not inventing her claims that she was constantly under physical threat".

Ms Politkovskaya was celebrated internationally for her critical coverage of the war in Chechnya.

She was the 76th journalists killed worldwide in 2006, the most deadly year since WAN began keeping records of journalist murders in 1997.

**Source: WAN**

## THE INTERNATIONAL PRESS IS WELL REPRESENTED IN THE UAE

The UAE has an open economy with a high per capita income and a sizable annual trade surplus. Its wealth is based on oil and gas output (about 30% of GDP), and the fortunes of the economy fluctuate with the prices of those commodities. Recently UAE experienced a 6.7% growth in GDP, with Dubai registering a growth of almost 16% placing it among the fastest growing cities in the world.



Since the discovery of oil in the UAE more than 30 years ago, the UAE has undergone a profound transformation from an impoverished region of small desert principalities to a modern state with a high standard of living. At present levels of production, oil and gas reserves should last for more than 100 years. The government has increased spending on job creation and infrastructure expansion and is opening up its utilities to greater private sector involvement. Higher oil revenue, strong liquidity, and cheap credit in 2005 led to a surge in asset prices (shares and real estate) and consumer inflation.

Any sharp correction to the UAE's equity markets could damage investor and consumer sentiment and affect bank asset quality. In April 2004, the UAE signed a Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) with Washington and in November 2004 agreed to undertake negotiations toward a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with the US.

Historically the market share of domestically published English language daily newspapers has been split between Gulf News (Al-Nisr Publishing, founded in 1971, estimated circulation 99,856 and Khaleej Times (Galadari Printing, 66,787). 2005 saw the high-profile launch of Emirates Today and its Arabic counterpart Al Emarat Al Youm by Arab Media Group both are tabloid format dailies. Three Arabic language dailies, Al Khaleej, Al Bayan and the state-owned Al Ittihad claim a circulation in excess of 90,000. A total of 13 newspapers are published daily.



In the year 2000 Dubai Media City, a free-zone that allows 100% foreign ownership (previously limited to 49%) of media related businesses, including publishing, opened its doors. What had prior to this been a fairly sedate domestic publishing industry suddenly witnessed a dramatic increase in the number of publishers and publications. Presently, over 75 publishers put out in excess of 250 consumer and trade publications mainly in English and Arabic, but there are burgeoning sectors in Russian, Persian and Malayalam language titles. The market is dominated by two major publishers, Motivate and ITP both of whom have a portfolio that contains home-grown titles and those published under license from international publishers.

The international press is well represented in the UAE, with the majority being English language titles imported from the UK and USA that feeds not only the traditional base of British expatriates, but a growing number of South Africans and Australians. French title also enjoys a strong readership, followed by German and Russian. Italian and Spanish titles also have a presence.

**Source:** DISTRIPRESS GAZETTE, Author: Mr. Narain Jashanmal

**Middle East Publishers' Association (MEPA).**

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