

Nai Supporting Open Media in Afghanistan



نای حمایت کننده رسانه های آزاد در افغانستان
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MEDIA WATCH REPORT

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Preamble:

The dependency of some media outlets on foreign countries is one of the challenges that the media suffers. It also undermines the credibility of the media. Such media outlets act against the country's national interests and through their programs, they carry out the interests of foreign countries. This is not the first time that some of the media are accused of working for foreign countries, particularly Iran and Pakistan. However such accusations are charged with the support of media agencies and foreign agencies.

The government reaction regarding the disclosure of the some of the dependent local media is understandable as long as it is for maintaining the national interests. But disclosure alone is not enough and the perpetrators should be brought to justice and their works should be banned.

It is necessary that such reactions of the government should be in coordination with supportive media organizations and the mass media commission. This will help prevent the unilateral decisions and accusations against innocent people.

The government of Afghanistan, particularly the Ministry of Information and Culture is responsible for the rule of law in media sector and should avoid political compromises. Indeed, the media who work for other countries and the media outlets who work for the national interests should be differentiated. The media outlets who work for national interests should not be sacrificed for such government acts. The Ministry of Information and Culture as a supporter of freedom of expression and media in the country should announce their support and always defend their rights.

Freedom of expression has not been achieved easily; thousands of activists have lost their lives to achieve this. Thus, it requires that the media themselves should be supporters of freedom of expression and should not do anything to compromise the principles of freedom of speech. We can never justify actions such as applying other countries policies, inviting Afghan citizens to riot, destroying the government, undermining the independence and sovereignty of the country as the freedom of expression. It is important to make the media lawful and accredited to prevent chaos in the country. National interests should be the basis for media and the media should always try to adjust their content based on national interests. They need to know that in political deals which are taking place in the country should never become a political plying tool of neighboring countries.

After getting rid of the black government of the Taliban, the media emerged as stars. The people of Afghanistan found the chance to talk and convey their thoughts and messages. Although the current

system is formed by the support of the people and international community, some problems still exist in the media sector and it seems that the government is not determined to solve and remove the challenges that the media are facing.

The cases of violence against journalists are still shelved and forgotten which itself gives the perpetrators more courage. As a result they will not stop from any kind of torture and violence.

The uncertainty and tough situation of Afghanistan has negative impacts on journalists and makes their work extremely difficult, to the point where some of them quit their jobs. Such situations are a victory for the enemies of freedom of expression.

Although the media law has been changed and amended four times in the current system, the changes have not changed the government's decision about defending the freedom of expression. Unfortunately, most of the violent actions against the journalists are done by the government staff including arresting, threatening, intimidating journalists through unwarranted charges.

Since the government itself sometimes acts against freedom of expression we cannot expect the government to defend the rights of journalists who are threatened, kidnapped, beaten and even killed and to bring the perpetrators to justice.

If the government really wants to defend the rights of the journalists in the country, they should stop expressing their support in words and show it in practice. The conditions for journalists is becoming increasingly challenging and their scope of work is becoming more limited due to security problems. If these challenges and problems are not solved then the biggest achievement of the government – freedom of expression – will be gone and nothing will be left for the government to be proud of.

Media Watch headlines:

- An assassination attempt on an employee of Nen radio in Nangarhar province
- Some media outlets accused of spying for foreigners
- Guards of a Member of Parliament accused of beating and threatening Daad Weekly staff
- Beating of a journalist in Herat province by traffic police
- Inauguration of Journalist Legacy Fund
- Nai recognizes seven outstanding media workers
- Celebrating 3rd May – World Press Freedom Day
- Selection of the Executive Board of Free Association of Afghan Journalists
- Establishment of the First Printing Publication in Aqcha District

- Afghan Photographer wins the Pulitzer prize
- Analysis of an Article of Afghanistan Media Law

An Employee of Nen Radio in Nangarhar Province survives an assassination attempt

Abidullah Hasrat, a volunteer broadcaster of a radio drama program of Nen radio in Sheenwar district of Nangarhar province was followed by unknown persons on Wednesday night, 4th April, 2012. When he left the office for home, he sensed he was being followed he went to one of his relatives house in another district.

He told Media Watch, "It was about 10 PM when I wanted to go home. I saw eight armed men in a car who were waiting for me and when they saw me, they prepared to shoot and if I had not hid myself behind the wall, they would have fired at me."

According to Abidullah Hasrat, he left all his equipment including his mobile phone and escaped to Achin district which is located nearby Sheenwar district.

Media Watch contacted the officials of the Ministry of Interior, National Directorate of Security(NDS) of Nangarhar province about the safety of Abidullah Hasrat.

Lutfullah Mashal, the spokesman for NDS assured Media Watch that they will protect Mr. Hasrat.

Mr. Mashal sent special forces to Achin district and took Abidullah Hasrat to Jalalabad city without any harm.

According to Hasrat he had been threatened by unknown persons several times.

The people who threatened wanted him to quit his job from radio.

The management of Nen radio say, after completing his program, Mr. Hasrat left office for home at about 10 PM, but until the next day his family and his colleagues were unaware of his fate.

Nasratullah Aman, the editor-in-chief of Nen radio told Media Watch, " After Mr. Hasrat left the office for home, at about 10 PM of that night, some men knocked the door of Nen radio and when guards opened the door they asked for Mr. Hasrat. The guards told him that he went home. They went to Mr. Hasrat's house and abused and assaulted his father, brother, and his family members and searched all the rooms. When the men could not find him, they again came to the office and searched all the rooms to find him."

Nasratullah Aman said that neither he nor his colleagues were threatened in the past. He adds that sometimes even employees left the office at 11 PM and they never faced any threats.

But Mr. Aman considers the recent threat somehow related to the following case and said, "Some hours before this incident, a man who called himself the spokesman of the Taliban in Nangarhar province contacted Nen radio management and asked them to report about the suicide attack which had taken place in one of the parts of that district. However, Nen radio refused his request as they did not recognize the spokesperson. As a result, the individual reminded the management of Nen radio that they should not complain about what we (the Taliban) do."

However, he denies any link between this threat and the assassination attempt on his colleague.

Media Watch discussed this issue with Nangarhar officials. Ahmad Zia Abdulzai, the spokesman for the Nangarhar Governor told Media Watch that they were aware of the incident and they have assigned the security official of Sheenwar district to seriously investigate the issue.

Jahandad Zaheer, police chief of Sheenwar district, considered Mr. Hasrat's case a personal matter and that is was the responsibility of the Achin governor.

Mr. Hasrat refuted claims it is of a personal nature.

Media Watch condemns the assassination attempt to the employees of Nen radio and requests officials of Nangarhar province to undertake a serious investigation and share its result with media outlets.

Media outlets in Afghanistan accused of working for foreigners

The National Departments of Security (NDS) recently disclosed the names of media outlets that they claim have links with Pakistan and Iran.

Lutfullah Mashal, the spokesman of NDS, in a press conference, *media consolidation in the path of the country's national interest*, on 10th April, 2012 stated that some of the television stations and publications are supported by Iran and Pakistan. He went further to suggest that some of their programs and stories come directly from those countries.

He specifically mentioned Insaaf publication, Noor and Tamadoon TV as being supported by Iran and Shamshad and Zhwandoon TV by Pakistan.

Mr. Mashal said, "The findings of the NDS shows that in Tamadoon TV, Iranians who are program makers and policy makers of this station come to Afghanistan and go back to Iran without informing the Ministry of Information and Culture and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs."

According to Mr. Mashal, this station mostly prepares its programs, including analysis, news and political programs based on the guidance of Iranian officials. They also invite people who are working for Iran as analysts and discuss issues which are against the national interests of Afghanistan and are based on Iranian policies.

Mr. Mashal mentioned the names of political programs of this station which are specially made to move the people of Afghanistan against the current government and to promote the policies of Iran.

But Mohammad Rahmati, a representative of Tamadoon TV, told Media Watch that what Mr. Mashal could not prove his assertions.

Also, Mashal said, “Noor TV gets guidance from Iran in preparing its news and political programs and they attempt to pit the Afghan people against the international forces and support Iran polices.”. These claims are strongly rejected by Noor TV management as well.

Mr. Mashal specifically named the news headlines and analysis of Insaaf Daily. According to the NDS they are completely false and they try to turn the minds of people against the current system.

In other claims made by the NDS: 12 Pakistanis, mostly policy makers, are employed by Shamshad TV, and one Pakistani who has close links with the Pakistan intelligence service, ISI, is employed by Zhouwandoon TV.

But, Khpelwak Safi, the director of Shamsahd TV strongly rejects the claims of Mr. Mashal, and found his claims baseless. He said such claims and opinions from a powerful source like this can weaken the popularity of Shamshad TV and Mr. Mashal should prove his assertions.

Mr.Safi, the director of Shamshad TV, said only 6 Pakistani workers are working in Shamshad TV, and they are all working in IT and studio operations.

Mr. Mashal added that the Pakistani national who is working in Zhouwandoon TV was editor-in-chief of one of the daily publications in Pakistan actively working against Afghanistan. Now he is an active member of ISI in Pakistan. Mr. Mashal went on to say that the presence of foreigners in Afghan national media is not acceptable under any circumstances, as some people try to carry out the plans and policies of their home countries through the Afghan media.

Mr. Mashal also noted that international media outlets Farsi news agency and Press TV have opened offices in Afghanistan without getting a proper working license from the Ministry of Information and Culture and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The participations in the press conference included spokespersons from the Ministries of Defense, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the NDS. Media representatives complained about lack of access to government officials and spokespersons. Similarly, government officials criticized the media for propaganda about violence and a lack of attention to the successes of security forces.

The assertions provided by the NDS was supported by some media outlets. The National Union of Afghan Journalists announced their support for NDS and asked them to provide evidence.

Fahim Dashti, the spokesman for the National Union of Journalists of Afghanistan asked the media in Afghanistan to cease propagating foreign countries' policies.

Media Watch is seriously worried about the issue that foreign countries, particularly our neighboring countries, have been trying to influence Afghan media. These countries are exploiting Afghanistan's freedom of speech to push their own agendas and policies.

The presence of media who work against the national interests of Afghanistan and work for the interests and policies of neighboring countries can have negative impact on the democratic process, freedom of speech and the security of Afghanistan and regional countries. Therefore, Media Watch calls on the NDS to take this issue seriously and bring the perpetrators to justice in a transparent manner.

Daad Weekly staff allegedly beaten and threatened by MP

Abdul Samad Hamed Poya, editor-in-chief of Daad Weekly, spoke to Media Watch claiming Fardeen Atayee, sub-editor, was beaten by the guards of Mrs. Freshta Amini, representative of Nimroz province in Parliament. He went on to claim that other employees, including himself, are often threatened by people associated by Mrs. Freshta.

Mr. Poya believes the reason behind these actions is that their Weekly published a document that shows that Mrs. Freshta is from Iran not Afghanistan.

The picture, published in the second edition of Daad Weekly on 18th March, 2012, shows an Iranian national identification card where we can see Mrs. Freshta's photo under the name of Freshta Sajahee.

Mr Poya told Media Watch that his colleagues, including Bahram Nekzad, the deputy editor-in-chief of the Weekly, Fardeen Atayee and himself have been threatened by security guards of Mrs. Freshta. The perpetrators demanded that they disclose the source of their information.

But Mrs. Freshta Amini rejects all the claims of the Daad Weekly and found them unrealistic. She also claimed that the photo which was published does not relate to her.

Mrs. Amini told Media Watch that when the photo was published in Daad Weekly she was out the country and none of the staff of this Weekly told her anything about publishing this.

Mrs. Amini claimed that none of the representative of this Weekly had contacted her, in contradiction to statements made by Daad Weekly.

Mrs. Amini told Media Watch that she is an Afghan and was born in Nimroz province and completed her higher education in Iran. She added, "Media should not publish untrue news and stories to gain fame and for selling their publications."

But Daad Weekly officials say that whatever they have published is true and they have documents that prove this.

Media Watch condemns the beating of journalists from anyone and considers it against the law.

In addition, Media Watch asks from all free media to pay great attention to what they publish and should avoid publishing news and stories which lacks evidence and documents.

Cameraman of Ariana TV beaten by policeman in Herat province

Mawladaad Yaqubi, cameraman of Ariana TV and Pajhwok news reporter was beaten by a traffic policeman in Herat province on Monday 26th of March, 2012.

Mr Yaqubi was beaten by the traffic policeman when he attempted to report on the new building of the directorate of Information and Culture which was to be inaugurated by local officials.

It has been said that the traffic police first insulted and cursed Mr. Yaqubi and then attacked him and broke his nose.

After the incident, journalists in Herat protested in front of the Directorate of Information and Culture and called on the government to punish the assailant of this case.

The journalists of Herat province demand that this case be investigated by a military attorney.

Daudshah Saba, the governor of Herat province requested officials to seriously investigate the issue and punish the traffic policeman.

Also, Ghulam Mohammad Rasikh, the chief of traffic department of Herat province told the journalists that he condemns this issue and he will follow the investigation.

The traffic director of Herat accused the beaten journalist of breaking traffic rules. He accepts that weaknesses exist in police and traffic, but he says that most of the low ranking police are illiterate and they need time to solve this problem.

A number of journalists in Herat condemn this act.

This is not the first time that the workers of media have been beaten in Herat province. It has been suggested that journalists are often beaten in Herat province by security forces and then the governors and police chiefs apologized. These apologies neither restored the dignity of the journalists, nor did it stop the continued actions of police.

The journalists and the supporting centers of journalists in Herat province warned that if this case is not properly investigated and the assailants are not punished then they will consider publishing the news of the local officials.

Media Watch condemns the beating of the cameraman in Herat and calls on the relevant authorities to seriously investigate this issue. The person who acted against the law should be punished.

If a driver violates the traffic laws, then he should be punished based on law. Neither police nor any other law enforcement agency can beat anyone for violating the laws.

Media Watch asks from the officials of Herat traffic department to investigate this issue as well as continue educating the traffic police.

Nai recognizes seven outstanding media workers

Nai-Supporting Open Media in Afghanistan recognized seven outstanding media workers and inaugurated the journalists' legacy fund on 3 May, 2012.

Abdul Mujeeb Khalvatgar, the executive director of Nai during the World Freedom of Press Day announced that Nai has started awarding outstanding media workers to encourage them more in the field.

Mr. Khalvatgar also announced the establishment of the Journalists Legacy Fund (JLF), "Nai would like to remember the journalists whose absence make us sad and who have lost their lives in the field."

The executive director of Nai said that the aim of the JLF is to let the families of the journalists who have lost their lives know that they are not alone. The journalists who



cannot continue their reporting works due to some reasons are also eligible to receive funding.

The JLF was officially inaugurated in presenting money to the family of Sadem Khan Bahadir Zoy.

Najeeb, the oldest son of Mr. Bahadir Zoy at just 9 years of age, was at the ceremony to receive the money on his family's behalf. He said, "I am happy and proud that my late father had a great number of friends and this encourages me to continue my father's path which is reporting."

Najeeb addressing the enemies of Afghanistan and freedom of expression said, "I would like to assure you that although you killed my father, me Najeeb son of Sadem Khan Bahadir Zoy along with my late fathers' friends will never quit the way of freedom."

Abdul Hamid Mubariz, the manager of Afghanistan national union of journalists said that the families of the killed journalists will not be forgotten and promised that until the end of his life, he will be trying to fulfill the wishes of the martyrs of this field until we defeat the enemies of the journalists.

Awards were also given to seven outstanding media workers:

- Shafiqa Habibi, head of the women's journalists union – best veteran;

- NajeebaFerooz and Feriba Zahir, BBC radio – best reporters;

- ShahpoorBakhtyar, Tolo News presenter and Jawid Jurhat, 1 TV presenter – best commentators on political issues;



- MubinaKhairandesh, director of Radio Balkhi from Balkh province - best media manger;

- Sayed Anwer, BBC radio, - best program provider; and,

- Qari Mujtaba, 1 TV cameraman, – best cameraman.

Shafiqa Habibi, the head of women journalists union said, "I am really grateful to Nai for their recognition and this is really good that there are people with vision who assess the cultural values and praise them."

Mrs.Habibi said valuing and encouraging journalists will have positive effect and will make them work harder.

Nai facilitated the selection of the journalists awards through a commission which consisted of various respected media representatives.

Last year Nai also recognized the great works of the best media workers.

World Press Freedom Day

3rd of May coincided with World Press Day which is celebrated every year in the world including Afghanistan. Nai held a magnificent celebration on this day.

On the day, Nai released the last 12 months of data relating to violence against journalists in Afghanistan. The Media Watch office shows that during the last year there were 77 instances of violence against journalists.



Sidequllah Tawhidi, the manager of Media Watch, said the killed journalists during the last year were, Ahmad Omid Khepulwak, BBC and Pajhwok news agency reporter, Farhad Taqadusi, cameraman of Press TV, Jahfar Wafa, Kala Ghosh radio reporter, and Sadim Khan Bahador Zoy, the manager of Melma Radio in Paktia province.

He said, Khepulwak was killed by the American forces in Oruzgan province, Taqadusi was killed by rocket attack of armed opposition group in Wazir Akbar Khan road (Kabul), Jahfar Wafa killed by a roadside bomb blast in Laghman province, and Mr. Bahadir Zoy was killed by unknown assailants in Paktia province.

Other violent actions include injuries to seven media workers, three reporters arrested, 24 persons beaten, verbal abuse of nineteen journalists and threats against 24 journalists. 48 instances of these violent actions were perpetrated by government officials/employees, 8 of them by anti-government insurgents, 4 of them by NATO forces, 10 instances by civilians, and 7 by unknown persons.

The manger of Media Watch said, during the last decade 31 journalists were killed, but 90 percent of the cases have not been investigated and the government has not paid attention to them.

Mr. Tawhidi stated, "If a reporter violates one of the principles of reporting a case will be put to the media violations commission, but when a journalist is killed, their cases will be forgotten."

But Deen Mohammad Mubariz Rashidi, the Deputy Minister of Publishing from the Ministry of Information and Culture said, some efforts are made to support the freedom of speech and government will continue its efforts.

Mr. Rashidi said that the media situation is better than before, but he added that still there are some challenges which prevents the expansion and development of media.

All the countries who believe in freedom of expression celebrate this day every year.

The freedom of press day (3rd of May) has been celebrated by different countries since 1991.

On May 3rd, 1991, African journalists formed a seminar to promote freedom of expression and published a release about the freedom of press.

UNESCO recommended to the United Nations General Assembly that 3rd of May be named as World Press Freedom Day.

The Executive Board of Free Association of Afghan Journalists selected

The new members of the Executive Board of free association of Afghan Journalists were selected through an election held on Monday, 26th March, 2012.

The four key positions selected in the election were: Ikpelwak Safi as the manager, Sharifa Zarmati Wardak as the first assistant manager, Ahmad Henaish as second assistant manager and Rahimullah Samandar as secretary general.

For the position of Chair, Ikpelwak Safi was elected unopposed.

But for the first and second assistant manager posts, there were 6 candidates and with 13 votes, Sharifa Zarmati Wardak was selected as the first assistant manager.

Ahamd Henaish, a representative of Parwan Association, got 28 votes and was selected as the second assistant manager.

Regarding the secretary general post, there were 3 candidates and Rahimullah Samander, with 38 votes, took over from Sharafuddin Stanekzai of Herat.

Ikpelwak Safi, the new manager of this association, stated in a press release that Afghan journalists have lots of problems including lack of work safety and lack of access to information. Mr. Safi emphasized their efforts in solving the journalists' problems and said, "We will try to perform all the responsibilities which are given to us through the association as long as there is coordination. We share similar problems but the issue is that we do not coordinate with each other."

Previously the association was led by Rahimullah Samandar, but due to workload issues resigned from his position.

Although most provincial representative participated in the Afghanistan Free Journalist Association, Kandahar Press Club did not accept the result of the election and considered it a fraud.

The authorities of Kandahar Press Club said they did not accept the result due to the absence of a Kandahar representative. They added that the reporter who called himself the representative of Kandahar province was invited based on a personal relationship, and they do not recognize him.

The first print publication launched in Aqcha District of Jawzjan Province

Aqcha Weekly is the first print publication in Aqcha district of Jawzjan province.

Noor Aaqa Sharifi, the manager and proprietor of this weekly says, the content focuses on social, political, and economic issues. A number of prominent journalists and reporters of Aqcha province took the initiative and started on 31th of March, 2012.

Mr. Sharifi stated that the aim of the weekly is to be a bridge between the residents of this province and government. He added, "My colleagues and I want to introduce an environment where the authorities understand the challenges and shortcoming of the district and inform residents of the government's performance."

The proprietor of Aqcha publication says that the weekly is not funded by any organization or institute. All the expenses of the weekly are paid by the youth who established it.

The management of the weekly believe that in future they might be able to pay the expenses through selling and marketing it.

Mr. Sharifi said that, once established, the publication had the potential to go beyond Aqcha district into the cities of Sheberghan, Faryab, and Mazar-e-Sharif.

In the past ten years many people have established publications, but due to a variety reasons, particularly lack of financial support, some of them have ceased.

The management of Aqcha Weekly are optimistic that their weekly will survive in the long-term.

Media Watch welcomed Aqcha Weekly to the media family of Afghanistan and view it as a positive step in institutionalizing democracy. Media Watch called on the management of this weekly to cover issues in pursuit of a better society.

Afghan photographer Massoud Hossaini receives Pulitzer Prize

Massoud Hossiani, photographer of French News in Kabul, was awarded a Pulitzer Prize on 16 April.

The award winning photo was taken in the wake of the suicide bombing during the Ashura, a Shia religious ceremony, in Kabul. The girl who is seen in the photo, Tarana, is crying because she lost her family members.

Massoud Hossaini told BBC, "Every time I see this photo it reminds me of the girl in green."

According to the BBC report, before the suicide bomb blast she was with her family and relatives. Immediately after the bomb blast Mr. Hossiani found Tarana in shouting and crying for loss of the loss of her brother, relatives and friends.

Massoud Hossaini says that he wanted to capture the misery and scale of the incident.

Massoud Hossaini told BBC, "I did not want to hurt anyone or impose on the girl. I took the pictures to remind others that when we say that we are all from one family and one body, then this is situation from one part of the body."

Mr. Massoud's left hand was injured in the bomb blast. He told BBC that his injury was small but lasted for a long time. "Although the injury to my hand was tiny, still I cannot hold things properly in my right hand."

The Pulitzer Prize is the third and the most important award that Massoud Hossaini has received for this photo, including running up in the World News Photo Competition, news section.

Media Watch congratulates Massoud and his colleagues.

Afghan Mass Media Law Analysis

Article 48:

Foreign citizens can make and produce documentaries and movies in Afghanistan as long as they are introduced by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and have permit of the Ministry of Information and Culture.

Analysis:

In general sense press/media does not only include spoken and written speech, but any action which has a lesson/message is part of it. Thus, the documentaries and movies are not excluded from this circle. In fact, the expression of speech is the ability to send out your inner thoughts/world to the world without any kind of fear. A documentary or movie has a purpose that by the help of their producers other people could know them.

In order to prove our claim that making films is part of freedom of expression, we should have legal documents; we can get this from the 19th article of covenant on civil and political rights as:

"1. We cannot disturb/make problem for anyone because of his/her belief. 2. Everyone has freedom of expression. This freedom includes rights of investigation, study, and disseminate information and ideas of any kind including print, written, spoken, or through movies. 3. The mentioned rights of the 2nd article has both responsibilities and rights and might be dependent to specific limitations which are mentioned in law as: a) respect others rights. b) keep security and public order or public health and morals.

In the mentioned article of the covenant on civil and political rights three points are worth mentioning to analyze the 48th article of mass media law.

Frist, "without considering the boundaries/borders": this means that the freedom of expression does not have any political border and as part of human natural rights, anyone can express his/her feeling and thoughts at anywhere.

Second, "by any other means at one's own discretion" regarding this we should mention that, freedom of expression is not only limited to media, book and tools, but any means that expresses feeling and thoughts are part of this article and are supported by this article. Thus, documentaries and movies are also included.

Third, "specific limitations": these limitations as long as clarified in the law are: respecting the rights and dignities of others; maintaining the security and public order; and public ethics.

Fortunately, Afghanistan has signed the covenant on civil and political rights and according to the constitution it is obliged to apply it through using its benefit in all legal documents.

By considering the 19th article of the covenant on civil and political rights, every foreign citizen can benefit from freedom of expression rights and can produce and make documentaries and movies.

The legislator, observing Article 2 (3) of this agreement, has given himself the right to allow a range of conditions

The legislative provision of the third clause of the 19th article of this covenant has given itself the right to allow a range of conditions to the foreign citizens to maintain national interests and public order. According to the 48th article of mass media law, foreign citizens have the rights to make and produce movies as long as they are introduced by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and have prior permit from the Ministry of the Information and Culture. It is worth mentioning that most of the countries set rules/conditions to endure their own national interests. Therefore, imposing these conditions to the foreign citizens seem legal and justifiable.

Finally, we should consider that imposing limitations should not be considered based on personal taste and we should not misuse it and deprive the foreign citizens from their legal rights. Also, for transparency and facilitation purposes, a special procedure should be made so that the citizens of the foreign countries by practicing the accepting our national interests and the conditions, make and produce movies easily. And the government should not only allow them, but should ensure their physical and mental security/safety so that they carry out their cinema works with ease. At the end it is important to remind that when foreign citizens make and produce a movie in Afghanistan, they have to follow and act based on the Afghan mass media law.

Attention!

All journalists and media organizations are hereby notified that Mr. Mohammad Qasem Rahmani works with the Media Watch in the capacity of Media Lawyer. Those journalists and/or media outlets that face legal issues in connection with their media related and journalistic activities, or need consultation on performing such activities, may contact him by phone at **0799 830 905** or via email at: m.qasim@nai.org.af .

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To obtain a soft copy of the report, please visit the following link: <http://www.nai.org.af/Mediawatch.htm>

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