

## Conference

### “Radio & Television Broadcasting: Policies, Transformations, Challenges”

Amman – Jordan

5 – 6 of May 2015

#### Background

The political and communication technology environment in the Arab world witnessed major transformations during the past decade, with the radio and television broadcasting sector being the most affected.

The growth in broadcast media was remarkable. The number of satellite channels grew from 400 in 2009 to 1400 in the first quarter of 2014, of which around 1000 channels were free to air. Arab broadcasting grew three fold in five years.

Jordan was the second Arab country to liberalize the radio and television sector under the 2002 Audiovisual Media Law, Number 71 which made it possible for the private sector and civil society to set up radio and television stations. There are now 36 licensed radio stations, three retransmission stations and 44 satellite channels.

The main factors that contributed to changes in the media landscape in the Arab world in general and Jordan in particular include:

- **Political and democratic upheavals:** mainly the Arab revolutions which erupted in 2011 and highlighted the role of television images in the events, thus driving its growth and people’s dependency on the sector and prompting the authorities and social and political forces to compete for its ownership and control. The rise of extremism and violence in Arab societies after 2011 also led to an increase in the number of those competing for control of this sector; religious channels constitute 28% of satellite channels that broadcast in Arabic.
- **Changes in legislation and ownership:** legislative reforms in a number of Arab countries broke state monopoly over broadcast media, paving the way for private sector investment, thus leading to changes in ownership patterns.



- **Technology transfer:** private sector capital was key to the introduction of advanced technology and the establishment of media cities in countries such as Jordan, Egypt and Bahrain. The new technology costs also dropped, making it easier to acquire.
- **Competition:** the Arab region was the scene of fierce competition between satellite channels, especially news channels, for their role in the political events. This prompted international news channels to target the region by broadcasting in Arabic. However, the sector remains hostage to profits and political dominance at the expense of professionalism. It has fragile legislative and institutional frameworks and is unable to serve the democratic transformation, modernization and development. In Jordan, the sector grew and investment increased.

Local radio stations flourished in governorates, but traditional challenges persist, as the broadcast sector remains unable to compete regionally or to become an economically viable model, amid expectations that it play a bigger role in the democratic transformation and development as well as positive social and cultural change. There are also restrictions that prevent the official media from becoming a public service broadcaster.

## Conference Objectives

1. Provide a platform for broadcast media academics, experts and professionals to exchange views and expertise.
2. Discuss professional and ethical challenges facing the broadcast industry in addition to changes in ownership patterns.
3. Discuss transformation policies into public service broadcasting as well as regulatory and self-regulatory policies.
4. Explore technological developments and capacity building in the field of radio and television broadcasting.
5. Build a scientific research data base of the current status and the future of radio and television broadcasting in Jordan which can serve future plans for the sector.



## Conference Themes

### First theme:

- Map of radio and television broadcasting in Jordan.
- Investment and broadcasting.
- Modern technology in broadcasting.

### Second theme: Laws and Regulations

- Relevant legislation and their application.
- Policies and challenges facing regulation of broadcasting in Jordan.
- Self-regulation.
- World models and best practices.
- Other issues.

### Third theme: Public Service Broadcasting in Jordan

- The state of official radio and television services in Jordan.
- Opportunities and challenges of transformation into public service.
- Examples of other transformations into public service.

### Fourth theme: Ethical and Professional Challenges

- The state of professional practices in the radio and television sector in Jordan.
- Training and capacity building.
- Ethical and professional challenges.
- Multimedia and digital newsrooms.
- Gender and human rights.
- International best practices.

### Fifth theme: Radio and Television Broadcasting and Democracy and Development

- Radio and television broadcasting and democratic transformation.
- Radio and television broadcasting and development.
- Radio and television broadcasting and extremism.
- International best practices.



## Preparatory Committee

- Dr. Basim Tweissi.
- Bayan Tal.
- Yasar Durra.
- Mirna Janbek.
- Mohammed Abdel Hadi.
- Abdallah Mbaideen.
- Sahar Abuelhaija.

## Instructions for Participants

- Deadline for accepting abstracts and bios: **10 of April 2015.**
- Deadline for accepting participations: **20 of April 2015.**

For any inquiries, please contact Ms. Sahar Abuelhaija

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