

# Setting the Standard:

**A Commitment to Frontline Journalism;  
An Obligation to Frontline Journalism**



The Freedom Forum European Centre,  
September 20, 2000

SETTING THE STANDARD



The news that Miguel Gil Moreno of Associated Press Television News (APTN) and Kurt Schork of Reuters had been gunned down, on 24th May in Sierra Leone sent a shockwave through the news industry. Few journalists were as universally respected as Gil Moreno and Schork. They had risked their lives countless times covering

dangerous ethnic conflicts and civil wars because they genuinely believed that their pictures and reportage might make a difference and help rally the world to intervene to end the bloodshed.

Many fellow journalists were so numbed by Gil Moreno and Schork's deaths that they asked themselves whether it was

time to abandon the kind of frontline journalism that put them all at risk in trying to report on chaotic countries such as Sierra Leone. After all, they were told repeatedly that "no story was worth the life of a journalist."

When his friends and colleagues began discussing how best to honour Miguel's memory, it was his family that asked for an event that would go beyond paying tribute to him and his work. With the support of Lizzie Christie, formerly of APTN and Christiane Amanpour of CNN, Miguel's brother, Alvaro asked our European Centre to organise a gathering of leading international journalists and senior editors and news executives to focus on what practical things could be done, to help prepare journalists for assignments to dangerous conflict areas.

This open letter was sent to all of those invited to The Freedom Forum European Centre on 20th, September 2000

*John Owen Director, European Centre*

*Miguel Gil Moreno was an exceptional journalist and human being. From Bosnia to Kosovo, Zaire to Chechnya, Miguel covered conflict and its innocent victims with compassion and courage. His achievements were rewarded with the Rory Peck Award (1998) and the Royal Television Society Award (2000), both for best cameraman. He was killed on assignment for APTN in Sierra Leone, on May 24, 2000. Miguel was 32.*

*Our family wishes to ensure his death was not simply a tragedy, another statistic in the sad history of journalists who have died while covering the stories they believed in.*

*Specifically, we wish to see a constructive and effective debate focusing on the issues raised by Miguel's death. We urge that the debate address in detail the obligations of news organisations to the journalists who are risking their lives to cover international news stories. These obligations must include protection, insurance, safety training, equipment and support, and counselling.*

*We call on news organisations to honour Miguel's memory by reaffirming their commitment to frontline newsgathering and the vital role it plays in serving the world's conscience.*

*There currently exist no common or universal standards governing news organisations' policies and procedures for*

*such areas as insurance, training, hazardous duty, and terms of employment and benefits for freelancers, fixed stringers and local staff.*

*We urge the industry to embrace the following universal standards:*

- **Insurance:** appropriate and sufficient life and injury insurance coverage.
- **Training:** mandatory safety training for all staff undertaking assignments in areas of conflict or other hazard, or locally employed in such areas.
- **Protection:** ensuring frontline staff has access to appropriate resources to ensure their safety.
- **Post-assignment Assistance:** recognition that the dangers of frontline assignments are not just physical.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** a commitment to monitoring and, where necessary, modifying policies and procedures on an on-going basis.

*It is our hope that "Setting the Standard" will serve as a forum for addressing these issues.*

*Sincerely,  
Gil Moreno de Mora Family.*

The words that were spoken the night of the Gil tribute did not fall on deaf ears. The news executives who were present for the discussion did decide to meet among themselves to see if they could fashion a code of practice that would embrace a new commitment to provide the training and protection that the Gil family had sought.

Then last November in Miguel Gil Moreno's native Spain at the News World international Conference in Barcelona, a new code of practice supported by BBC, CNN, Reuters, APTN, and ITN was made public. It committed the news organisations to do the following:

## Safety Guidelines

Three major news broadcasters and the two major TV news agencies have joined together to establish common guidelines for their journalists working in war zones.

CNN, BBC, ITN, Reuters and APTN will publish their joint code of practice at the News World Conference in Barcelona. (Fira Palace Hotel, 16th November, Frontline Session and Journalists in Peril)

As well as agreeing a code of practice to protect journalists in the field they have also agreed to regularly share safety information and to work with other organisations, including international agencies, to safeguard journalists in war zones and other dangerous environments.

Speaking on behalf of the group, Richard Sambrook, Deputy Director of BBC News said: "This agreement represents unprecedented co-operation between competitors in the broadcast news industry to try to protect all journalists, staff and freelance, working in dangerous conditions. It's a starting point, not a final position. Our aim is to limit risk and to take responsibility for anyone working on our behalf in war zones or hostile environments. We have all signed up to these principles and agreed that safety can never be a competitive issue. We'd be delighted to talk to any other broadcast news organisations about further ways of safeguarding our teams."

The guidelines are:

(1)

- The preservation of human life and safety is paramount. Staff and freelances should be made aware that unwarranted risks in pursuit of a story are unacceptable and must be strongly discouraged. Assignments to war zones or hostile environments must be voluntary and should only involve experienced newsgatherers and those under their direct supervision.

- All staff and freelances asked to work in hostile environments must have access to appropriate safety training and retraining. Employers are encouraged to make this mandatory.
- Employers must provide efficient safety equipment to all staff and freelances assigned to hazardous locations, including personal issue kevlar vest/jackets, protective headgear and properly protected vehicles if necessary.
- All staff and freelances should be afforded personal insurance while working in hostile areas including cover against death and personal injury.
- Employers to provide and encourage the use of voluntary and confidential counselling for staff and freelances returning from hostile areas or after the coverage of distressing events. (This is likely to require some training of managers in the recognition of the symptoms of post traumatic stress disorder)
- Media companies and their representatives are neutral observers. No member of the media should carry a firearm in the course of their work.

(2)

- We will work together to establish a databank of safety information, including the exchange of up to date safety assessments of hostile and dangerous areas.
- We will work with other broadcasters and other organisations to safeguard journalists in the field.

*CNN, BBC, ITN, Reuters and APTN*

# Setting the standard:

## A commitment to frontline journalism; An obligation to frontline journalism

Introduced by:

John Owen, director,  
*The Freedom Forum European Center*

Moderated by:

Christiane Amanpour,  
*Chief International Correspondent CNN*

Panelists

Vaughan Smith  
*Director-Frontline Television LTD*

Jeremy Bowen  
*TV Presenter-BBC*

Roy Gutman  
*Diplomatic Editor-Newsweek Magazine  
and Director of War Crimes Project*

Rodney Pinder  
*Head of News-Reuters*

Nigel Baker  
*Head of News-APTN*

Chris Cramer  
*President of CNN International Networks*



**C Amanpour:** Thank you to Miguel's family they are the reason we are here, I would like to begin this evening by showing you some of his work.

(Shows some of Gil-Moreno's work for audience)

**CA:** It's hard to watch that without feeling sad all over again, the pictures that Miguel took. The work that all of us do and the work all of you send us to do is often people's only window on the World...the most desperate people. The first pictures shown were of Kosovar Albanians being herded into boxcars....some of the most important pictures of the last 10yrs because when the world was wavering wondering whether intervention was the right thing to do those pictures galvanised world opinion. They reminded people of just what was going on in Kosovo and also that something like that had happened 50 yrs ago. Today 2m Albanians are free and we shouldn't forget that, the pictures and the words that a journalist like Miguel does can change the world and make it a better place.

We're here not just to mourn them and we still do, the deaths of Miguel & Kurt hurt us personally and professionally but we're here for Miguel's family who didn't want his death to be just another sad statistic but to set standards for our industry, standards that unbelievably don't exist. It is tribute to Miguel's family that they have tried to make something decent and good out of it. They want to ensure that his death will live as a lasting memorial so that we can address the obligations of news organisations to journalists who risk their lives to cover this kind of crisis — obligations that that



VAUGHAN SMITH, JEREMY BOWEN, ROY GUTMAN

include protection insurance, safety training, equipment, support and counselling. These are the basic issues that should be set in stone and are not.

This evening is simply called 'setting the standard a commitment to frontline journalism an obligation to frontline journalists'. Many of us here put our lives on the line and many here send us out to do that. We're going to hear from 2 panels tonight; from frontline journalists and from management who send us out to do this work and have their own fears when they do that.

**"We're here not just to mourn them and we still do, the deaths of Miguel & Kurt hurt us personally and professionally but we're here for Miguel's family who didn't want his death to be just another sad statistic but to set standards for our industry, standards that unbelievably don't exist."**

It is no coincidence that we're having this discussion at a time when our business is in crisis there is a full scale retreat from the kind of pictures, words and information that Miguel died getting and that's unacceptable.

We're first going to hear from **Chris Cramer** (head of all CNN International news networks) who knows about the risks first hand — he was one of the hostages in the Iranian Embassy in London — and was one of the first executives to understand the obligation of training, protecting and supporting his people in the field.



**C. Cramer:** Thanks. It's of very little comfort to Miguel's family and also to that of Kurt Schork of Reuters that the last time I was here when we launched the Rory Peck safety bursary we talked about the

same topics that we'll be talking about this evening, and we will continue to talk about them. The business we're in is inherently dangerous. Some of us do it, some of us did it, some of us didn't like it and others stopped doing it. People like Christiane and many others here go to crazy parts of the world and do a crazy job because they believe in it. And it's

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their choice. And the organisations they work for believe in it but it's they who have the biggest responsibility of all. They have to ensure that they take every conceivable measure to protect the staff or the freelancers that work for them. Employers have to set the standards for the people that work for them — the journalists and the technical staff — not somehow fob it off as something that can be worked out on the ground by the people that understand it not the grey suits back at base. I don't know whether all the training in the world, all the industry standards in the world, all the equipment in the world, all the money in the world, all the luck in the world would have spared the lives of our two colleagues in Sierra Leone or our BBC colleague in Southern Lebanon just a few months ago or Rory Peck and the list is getting longer or anybody else who might end up in this situation in the future. All we can do is to set those industry standards that the Freedom Forum, The Rory Peck Trust, The BBC and CNN and many others have trying to set for a good few years now.

**“We call it doing your head laundry when you come back from an assignment in the same way that you do your real laundry. Professional detachment doesn't work like a flak jacket.”**

The standards are obvious but let's just shout them out one more time.

- No story is worth getting killed for
- No piece of video, no slice of audio is worth getting seriously injured for

And we can debate that if we don't accept it- that's my position. We should set a standard for the basic safety training for the media before they go on dangerous assignments — I say mandatory. Some orgs have stepped up recently to invest in correct hostile environment training and that's to be applauded. Employers need to provide adequate safety equipment the very best and the most expensive. They need to provide more than adequate personal insurance and compensation for all staff in the field

- no distinction between staff and freelancers
- no distinction if they're working on commission or first refusal

Proper counselling after the assignment for those who want it and many do and many especially in this country have been taking it for a good few years now. We call it doing your head laundry when you come back from an assignment in the same way that you do your real laundry. Professional detachment doesn't work like a flak jacket. In a few months we will see the results of an industry wide study on the effects of PTSD on media and media practitioners. We're pushing at an open door in this issue it's ok to talk about PTSD now the industry is talking about it here and in the States and it's ok to talk about it. The results of the survey, which will be revealed in Newsworld in Barcelona, are going to surprise us. If we get anywhere this evening I think we have to debate some or all of the above points and it would be really good to have some light as well as heat generated by this debate. And it would be nice to leave here with a better idea of the industry standards that we need to set so let's start debating it. Thank you

**CA:** Those were really powerful words Chris, thank you. And we need to hear them from people in suits. And we'll hold you all to it.

Let me introduce you to our first panel as I said we have field reporters and camera people up here first and afterwards we'll talk to the executives. Here on my right is **Roy Gutman (RG)** diplomatic correspondent for Newsday who has worked through all the conflicts of the last 10 yrs most especially in Bosnia his reports revealed the concentration camps.

**Jeremy Bowen (JB)** Middle East correspondent for BBC News, his Bosnian reporting really brought the issue home to British audiences at a time when people thought that it was just another dirty little conflict somewhere out there because the European leaders and the American leader at that time simply didn't want to deal with it and wouldn't listen to the reports that were being sent back. **Vaughan Smith** who did a fantastic documentary from Kosovo called The Valley is director, producer and cameraman for Frontline Television.

We're going to ask them to talk about the issues that we've been asked to discuss and that are important to us and then we'll go to some questions before we go to the next panel.

I'm going to ask Vaughan first because he's a cameraman and closest to what Miguel was doing. Tell us a little about what freelancers should be expecting and should get and some of the training and protection they need and that you have experience with.

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**V Smith:** We've moved a long way in terms of training and insurance for freelancers but I think that what freelancers need in the industry at the moment is something quite different. I see the

industry, as you said, somewhat in retreat in terms of foreign coverage. I think freelancers will provide a replacement for people like you Christiane when they won't pay you to go there. I think we need to invest in freelancers if that's going to happen. At the moment I work for a company called Frontline TV so I know prices of freelance material when we sell it and I can tell you that we now get 30% less for footage that we sell, in real terms that's a huge reduction and allows us far less money to actually go on trips so I think we need to pay freelancers for the footage they provide because if we don't invest in freelancers we're going to find they're not there to cover the gaps when we fail to do the full coverage that we would like to but can't.

**CA:** And in terms of training and protection do you think it's adequate right now?

**VS:** No it's not adequate of course but I think the problem is there's two types of freelancer. There's the freelance cameraman you employ on a freelance contract, now 5 or 10 yrs ago he might have been employed by a network. They can purchase training and get bursaries to help them get it and they can then get insurance and charge their employers that amount. But there are still some surviving freelancers out there who actually fund their own trips. There now are some bursaries for those people, but whether training and insurance should be mandatory — that wouldn't be possible. These people are still going to be out there. We need to offer it to them and if we can do that we've met our responsibility.

**CA:** Jeremy you've come very close to serious situations and escaped with your life and driver was killed recently in Southern Lebanon. Give us a little of what it's like to go through that and what you think is missing.



**J Bowen:** What happened to us and what happened to our driver Abed Taboush was, I personally think a war crime because the Israelis killed him quite wilfully, thinking he was just another

Lebanese civilian — but that in a sense is a bit of a different issue to what we're talking about. But, what was it like to go through? It was a nightmare it was the worst day of my life, seeing a guy I'd worked with in Lebanon for 5 yrs and who'd worked for the BBC in Lebanon for 25 yrs, leaving him in the car in a quiet area talking to his son on the telephone and then 2 mins later a huge explosion, I spin round and I see the car exploding, on fire and his body, he's managing to lurch out of the window on fire and then not being able to go and help him because of the machine gun fire and then being stuck there for about 3 hrs watching the car burn. It was not a pleasant day it was a very bad day.

**“So the bottom line that they should say at the beginning of safety courses is that you have to remember that you can get killed — you can die. You can be the best trained person, the most experienced but anybody that's been in a war zone knows that if you're in the wrong place at the wrong time then you're dead.”**

I have to say the BBC's been magnificent since then to his family. They've done very well in terms of compensating them and in terms of pressing for some kind of redress from the Israelis. They've been good to me as well. I had some counselling after and I'm going to get a bit more because I don't feel quite right about the whole thing in myself. So that was good, a text-book response to a terrible event. The one thing that I would take away from it, and I always felt this myself but it never really clicked until that day, and the next day I heard that Miguel and Kurt had been killed in Sierra Leone. So 3

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guys I knew very well dying in 2 days. So the bottom line that they should say at the beginning of safety courses is that you have to remember that you can get killed — you can die. You can be the best trained person, the most experienced but anybody that's been in a war zone knows that if you're in the wrong place at the wrong time then you're dead.

**CA:** That's a very important point because there are more and more people going out their who really aren't qualified to be doing the job and who've had no experience whatsoever, do you see that?

**"The point is that it is dangerous work. People said to me 'I can't believe it Miguel and Kurt are dead' but anyone can die. But it shouldn't take this to make you realise that. It's very important for networks to give proper training and equipment but it doesn't make the job foolproof."**

**JB:** Well yes, there's an easier access to these things, TV equipment is much cheaper and easier to use than it was. International travel is a lot cheaper if you're a wannabe journalist or reporter and I don't know how you can stop people doing that sort of thing but training didn't help us that day in Lebanon. The thing that would have helped us would have been to stay at home. If we hadn't stopped there it would have been fine. The point is that it is dangerous work. People said to me 'I can't believe it Miguel and Kurt are dead' but anyone can die. But it shouldn't take this to make you realise that. It's very important for networks to give proper training and equipment but it doesn't make the job foolproof.

**CA:** Roy I know, because you told me that you are stunned that we are even having this discussion because it's unbelievable that these standards aren't set in stone yet.



**R Gutman:** In some ways it's not so surprising when you think about it, the role of journalists since the end of the cold war has changed. To a much greater degree we're out there, especially cameramen

charting changes in history and they're so far ahead of public opinion, far ahead of governors they really are the explorers of this era — people that define the world and discover the world. It's a far expanded role and I don't think that our own editors and establishments, and maybe there are some major exceptions — Chris Cramer's going to be one of them, have caught up. I think this really is the time because we are 10 yrs in and we really ought to be drawing lessons, and obviously Kurt and Miguel's deaths force us to. I thought looking through the list that the Miguel's family put together of what the standards ought to be, it's a shocking list, not because of the contents but because the list should need to be put together at all, it's so obvious. It seems to me that it puts a challenge to the media organisations represented here tonight, namely can you accept these standards? If not why not? If not now when? I think that standards are right at the heart of it. It's not just media executives that should be put on the spot. I think that journalistic organisations should be put on the spot, be it Reporters Without Borders, The Committee to Protect Journalists whoever it is they ought to have a role in thinking through standards and debating with the industry what the standards ought to be. This is far more than just staff reporters for major organisations, we're talking about a whole world, a whole milieu of people who just appear on the scene and turn out to be first class journalists and offer something, yet do not have the training, do not have the protection do not have the background even to do the next story or even to realise how lucky they were to do the first one. And that's one thing that needs to be on the table today and I'm sure that the executives will want to react to that.

The other thing I wanted to mention was that there was a carefully written article in the magazine Brill's Content, by a reporter called Peter Maass and Peter talked to a lot of Miguel's former colleagues and I thought he brought up some questions.

The first question comes to the whole issue of pressures, competitive pressures on a reporter in a frontline situation. There's an account from many of Miguel's colleagues that there had been a call-back from the editors and in the Peter



Maass the matter is not settled whether or not there was a call-back. Whether or not there was a callback it seems to me that we ought to asking the question is there a standard for dealing with competitive pressures in a frontline, highly risky situation and if there isn't one, and I know that this is going to be one of the toughest ones to come up with because every situation and reporter is different and every competitive situation is different. But still the idea of getting a callback, that's to say 'the competition is ahead of you', according to Peter Maass that was a factor here and the reason we don't need those calls in the field is that we can generate our own competitive pressures and we do already with each other, we damn well know what our colleagues are doing. If you have your frontline people, your best people out there they know pretty well what is going on with their colleagues.

**“It seems to me that it puts a challenge to the media organisations represented here tonight, namely can you accept these standards? If not why not? If not now when?”**

The second point that I thought came out of Peter Maass's article was on the issue of footage that is purchased by major news-gathering organisations that doesn't come from journalists. Sometimes it comes from journalists, and sometimes it comes from people that have never been journalists. Such footage was being purchased, this is showing things 'bang-bang' at the essence, blood, killing, deaths footage that obviously can be aired but it raises a real question in mind because first of all everybody knows that if it's not from a journalist, somebody who really knows you're not really sure that it happened in the way its being described. Secondly the bigger worry that I have is that once the flood gates have opened and this process goes on a fair bit you almost generate and create a kind of demand which a lot of people will come along, because there's money in it, to supply. And the real danger is that in the process of supplying individuals may also generate stories, may also affect the stories and then we get into the whole area of journalistic integrity, the credibility of what we're doing. It may make great footage, it'll definitely surprise people and get noticed but the question is 'did it really happen?' 'Can we really stand behind it?'

So I just hope that in the course of the discussion we can add those points to it.

**CA:** I'd like to, on that note, throw it open because competition is at the heart of all the risks that are taken because as one photographer said, 'If the picture isn't good enough it's because I wasn't close enough.' Which is all well and good but when these extra pressures of who knows who coming up with video out from God knows where is put is put on field reporters, camera people, producers it gets into a whole another zone. I and all of us here know that video has been purchased and broadcast which frankly turns out to be nothing but wrong, fake video. Not a lot but it happens enough times for it be a concern. In addition I'd like to mention that it was Martin Bell of the BBC who realised the inherent danger of what we were all doing in Bosnia at the beginning and who on his own gathered us all into a very sensible system which was to create a pool on the ground. Now, if anybody back at home thought that we were being non-competitive, slouching out of our responsibilities it was exactly the opposite. What it did ensure was that we all shared the duties and took acceptable risks as opposed to unacceptable risks if there can be that distinction. Then we were all free to do whatever we wanted in terms of enterprise features and other stories those were not pooled. Anything that constituted daily news was pooled and it was a brilliant system. I thank Martin for that because not only did it get all the aspects covered it also it saved a lot of people from foolishly getting hurt. When one person was hurt or killed there could have been a lot of other people there at the same time. I think that's really important to think about and consider. Obviously the key issues that we need to be talking about are training and protection. I regret that I have not taken a training course and I've read recently people who have taken them and said how incredibly useful they are. Mark Chisholm and Yanis Behrakis who escaped the ambush in which Miguel and Kurt died who said that it was that training that gave them the guts instinct and the know-how to get out of there. When I think about what we do and we go into these situations and we really don't know how to react other than our own common sense or own basic instincts but there are ways that we can be trained to look for certain things, react in certain ways and perhaps save our lives or the lives of our colleagues in that way. I really think that its necessary and as Chris said it has not been mandatory but I think that it should be.

So with that I'd like to open the floor. Who would like to take the first shot of a question to the panel.

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Hi I'm **Anthony Massey** from BBC News and I was the BBC producer in Sierra Leone at the time when Kurt and Miguel were killed as well having worked in the Balkans. Taking up the point the panel makes about competition, I've always felt at the BBC that if a story, if in my judgement as a producer on the ground and obviously talking to the correspondent, the camera crew if I felt that we could not cover a story because it was too dangerous, that it was stupid to go there I could say to the BBC 'we will not cover that' and there were occasions especially in Sarajevo when we did that and the BBC never said 'Sky got it or ITN got it or CNN got therefore you have failed. I have been with the BBC 18yrs and I know that you can have that sort of conversation with them, certainly with the present management and certainly with Chris Cramer when he was head of news gathering at the BBC. I wonder how much my younger colleagues are aware that they can and should do that and I particularly wonder about the agencies Reuters and APTN Kurt and Miguel's employers. Roy mentioned call-back, if by that you mean was there pressure from London to go somewhere they might not have gone to, that's an interesting question. Certainly that is an issue that Reuters and APTN need to address there was no equivalent of the Sarajevo agency pool in Sierra Leone while I was there and perhaps there should have been.

**CA:** Yes, why not?

Certainly the BBC and ITN would have been happy to take part in that but OK I failed along with everybody else for not even thinking of it.

**CA:** It's a really relevant point and we should all think about it .

**JB:** I agree entirely with what Anthony's saying there especially, it's a difficult thing if you're a young reporter on the make and its most unlikely that people would say 'I can't do that' they would say 'I'll have a shot at it' I certainly would have 10yrs ago, now I'm quite OK about saying to my employers 'look I don't think we can do that today' I don't give a damn frankly if we come back without a story if its been too dangerous to get hold of the thing but it is a difficult issue for people at the entry level.

**RG:** Also Jeremy we're talking about your staff, contract people and stringers, people signed on for a limited amount of time they have much less clout than a staff person does. In my own paper my own bosses say 'don't take any chances no story is worth stupid risks or hurting yourself. A stringer's whole survival is in producing that picture that nobody else can get and so these are the people that really need to be protected somehow.

**CA:** I agree and that's why we're here today.

**WS:** You can't pool freelancers. I had an experience in Sarajevo with this wonderful pool you described. I got some wonderful footage it went out on the bird and everybody thought it was theirs. You can't take the competitiveness out of it, you cannot have a pool without accommodating the fact that freelancers will always compete.

**CA:** True

**Gill Tudor (Reuters):** As a follow up to what was being said about Reuters and APTN I don't know the circumstances so I don't know where the callback is supposed to have come from.

**Nik Gowing (BBC World):** One of the judgements that needs to be made is about risk assessment. And building on the standards that others have been talking about I do think one of the changes that has happened in recent years building on what JB has said raising the issue of a war crime of what happened to him is that the fighters are now different. Whether you're the West Side Boys or the Russians in Chechnya there is less regard for us and I'd like to pick up a point that Richard Tait made a month before Miguel and Kurt were killed standing there. About the need to take very firm action against those who target us, I don't want to speak for JB but I suspect that when you were there in Southern Lebanon and you saw that Israeli tank you didn't think an Israeli tank was going to fire at you. In the same way that the British major didn't expect to be picked up by the West Side Boys and held hostage for many days. So we've now moved into a different era where the threat is very different, the fighters are very different whether they come from small militias or extremely large well resourced and extremely determined authoritarian military organisations like the Russians. Witness what happened to Andrei Babitsky. Therefore I think we must build on what Richard Tait said 5months ago in this room and move very concertedly the issue of taking action against those who target us.

**CA:** I agree with you because if there's ever a CNN factor it has had the effect of increasing the numbers of the enemies of the press, if we can call them that. Because of the satellite age everybody's' video is now visible everywhere even in the countries and living rooms of the people we're talking about not necessarily in a very complimentary manner so that has had that effect and its true that there are many more people who think that it is

OK to target journalists and that they won't pay a heavy price for it and that's a very difficult situation to resolve. But taking firm action has to happen but many times it doesn't.

**Peter Hunter (Risk Control Manager BBC News):**

I've worked for the BBC for 28 yrs and for 10 of those I've been the Safety Manager and RCM for the BBC. The most important thing we should be considering is how we protect our colleagues so that they can go in get the story and get it back. The most incredible difficulty that I have and in fact CK has had is that when trying to convince not only management but also journalists that safety is important. 10 yrs ago I was providing training courses for the BBC and it was then that Ian Hargreaves then Director of the BBC and I said that there was 2 risks, newsgathering and RSI. A few years later I was so pissed off with my colleagues who I was trying to train that I felt like resigning and it was only really that CC persuaded me to stay. Because the culture is not safety it's trying to get the story at all costs and I just cannot understand why people want to kill themselves to get a story. It's morally indefensible. I started my working life as a photo-journalist, I've never gone to war zones I was just a local journalist but I just cannot understand why people don't want to do training, when people are proud that they won't wear body armour or flak jackets, when they're proud that they've got a story against their colleagues. We should be pooling our resources, we should have a common culture of protecting and helping each other everyone should go on basic safety training courses, it's common sense! Many years ago I was doing a training course and there was just this cynicism and I said to my colleagues 'you would be the most critical of journalists if in fact the fire brigade or the military said 'we don't bother to train people we accept the casualty level.' It is incredible that people are not prepared to be trained do battlefield first aid, understand the most fundamental common-sense rules of risk assessment.

**CA:** Thank you for those comments but I think that I do have to say on behalf of those people that do put their lives at risk that it is not a question of wanting to get killed. It's a question of doing the kind of work that we believe in. It's not a question of not wanting to be trained, it's a question of we haven't been told 'you will be trained before you go out or else you won't go out. We will offer you that training.' I'm out there I haven't been trained, so it's an onus on both of us and more on the reporters now that we understand the risk more and that its becoming much more dangerous but also its on the companies to understand that they need to guide us to the training.

**JB:** I think it's a very good point because there isn't a safety culture in that sense of the field I would say, I think its very important to get the training. I mean how many of us, Vaughan when you're in these places what does it come down to you look at each other and say 'shall we go down the road?' and you think 'come on then let's give it a whirl'. That's sometimes what it comes down to, we'd be lying and hypocritical if we didn't actually admit that. I guess the important thing is get the training before you go so that if things really do go badly you have some chance of emerging and also of course not taking any stupid risks.

**VS:** There's no substitute for training except experience and probably experience isn't a substitute for training, you need both to be any good.

**Lise Ducette (BBC World):** I'd be interested to hear more about this pooling arrangement that Christiane mentioned which not surprisingly came from the gentleman of the field Martin Bell. If it worked in Bosnia could it work anywhere else? Why did it work in Bosnia? Was it a question, as I suspect that it was a question of individuals not a question of the environment or any of the demands of the place. We come here to talk about safety but Christiane you mentioned that one of the objectives is to tell the world what is happening and if that is the objective it doesn't matter who takes the pictures as long as someone does. But of course the sub-theme to this is competition and whether in fact, and I'd be very interested to hear from somebody from Reuters or AP or Vaughan Smith, that would actually work in the field under very dangerous situations where as we know no matter whether you've had training there's a very high likelihood you're going to get killed whether the industry could say we want to tell the world but we don't want to risk lives. I'd be interested in hearing about this because if we are to move forward this seems like an eminently sensible solution.

**CA:** Who would like to answer that?

**Rodney Pinder (Reuters TV News):** We do operate pools and there has to be a balance between the competitive nature of covering the news and I think the question is when does the pool kick in. It's all very well to say there should have been a pool before hand but how the hell does anybody know that at the time. Now after it happened APTN and Reuters agreed, after a similar incident in Fiji which up until then had been a relatively peaceful story to cover there was an outbreak of shooting and APTN and Reuters

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immediately instituted a pool so that we'd take the competitive element out of it. There was a pool in the Balkans at what stage, when it first began? Right on day one?

**CA:** Really near the beginning.

Unidentified: December '92

**CA:** Yeah which is pretty close to the beginning.

**“When we're in the field our competitive juices are running, we want to get the story, we want to beat the opposition, we want to go on. I think there are some real occasions when the head office has to say get out, go, no question we're ordering you to leave.”**

**RP:** So it worked in Bosnia, pools do work and pools can work and pools should be instituted in some arrangements but we can't escape the competitive nature of what we do and as Jeremy says you can go out and cover a story or you can go out and cover a punch up in the street in London and someone puts a brick through your head. There's always that inherent danger. There is sometimes a more important issue than journalists in the field telling head office and being trusted to go away from a story and to walk away. I've been a journalist with Reuters for 20yrs and I've been in several dodgy areas I have never once been told to go to an area that I thought was too risky and if I went back to head office and said no they'd accept it. But I think we should take it a further step from that because when we're in the field our competitive juices are running, we want to get the story, we want to beat the opposition, we want to go on. I think there are some real occasions when the head office has to say get out, go, no question we're ordering you to leave.

**JB:** Sarajevo agency pool worked well because it was the agencies who worked together and allowed the networks to compete on the level that they wanted to compete on when getting into the dangerous parts of the city as you wanted to. People still got their diets of pictures of the war that day. There'd been other attempts at pools which to my mind were

reprehensible, one in Chechnya in 94/95 when the war started there it was extremely dangerous, the most dangerous place I've ever been to. The way it worked was that the networks had a pool between themselves and their staffers and then they had freelancers who were frankly Kamikazes going in, getting paid not very much and competing. It felt like the fat cat staffers were protected and putting all the risks onto freelancers many of whom were Chechens, who were getting some incredible material and not getting paid very much for it. Putting their lives on the line in a big way whereas some reporters who will remain nameless could go and do an artful piece to camera on the edge of town ducking and bobbing and weaving, you really had to be in the business to tell where the freelance pictures started and the staff pictures started. I could tell but I'm sure the viewers couldn't.

**Tony Borden (IWPR):** I keep thinking about this phrase call-back because obviously local journalists can't be called back because they live there. From our immediate experience the frontline may not be a war zone but the frontline of political change that the journalist is taking part in. We're involved in a particular case Mr Filipovic whose been arrested for reporting on war crimes after the fact but within the society. Our dilemma was do we run this story and do run this story with his name on it and we still debate those moments. I think we should be open somewhat professional competition also pride and also from our particular perspective as a media development organisation in the business of helping local journalists come to the edge of what can be expressed within their society but of course after the fact of Mr Filipovic being jailed and convicted for 7yrs for espionage within Serbia I can only hope to follow JB's phrase that we are using a text book example of after the fact how you deal with a journalist who's been imprisoned, jailed how you support his family how you lobby for political pressure, how you get media coverage, human rights groups on board and so on. But that doesn't help the fact that his life is in many ways shattered and this conundrum of what do we do? I think its not only organisations like IWPR who are in the business of supporting and working directly with local journalists but obviously international journalists use local journalists as the life blood of local connections and contacts and it puts them in difficult circumstances in all events so it's a really particular problem and it doesn't only relate to the war zone and the conflict danger zone but to where they live in the society and where they must remain after they have done that explosive expose on the government or whatever else it may be.



RON MCCULLAGH, RODNEY PINDER, NIGEL BAKER, RICHARD SANBROOK,

**CA:** Can we now change the panel as we need to give our executives a chance to respond and they have a lot to say.

OK we have to my right **Richard Sanbrook**, Deputy Director of BBC News, **Nigel Baker**, Head of News AP, **Rodney Pinder**, Head of Reuters TV News and **Ron McCullagh**, Head of Insight TV News which works with a lot of freelancers. Nigel can I ask you to speak first as Miguel worked for your company.



**N Baker:** Basically I subscribe 100% to CC's philosophy that no story is worth a life or personal injury I think I'd go a step further and say that there's been talk about levels of experience in the

field, the most important thing is that if people go into a difficult area that they do so because that is the job they wish to pursue. As far as we're concerned there's never any pressure to do that, the judgements are theirs, and it's important most of all that you send the people with the right level of experience. I heard somebody describe how they were a rookie reporter in a combat zone, I think that is lamentable you need to have a situation where

people have the skills to cope. I think that training is an important issue and that the industry need to move forward with that and is doing so. The feedback we've had from people who undertake that training is that it's very beneficial. They learned things they didn't know before even though they might have been doing the job for several years.

**CA:** I'm going to put a couple of questions to you before we move on. Firstly, did Miguel have the training if not why not? And is the training mandatory at AP?

**NB:** Miguel had done a battlefield 1st Aid Course, he'd had several yrs in the field and joined us in Bosnia in 1995. He had not undertaken the Centurion course, ironically he would have done so AP in an initiative predating Miguel's death is putting 80 people through that course and 80 people next year. But the priority was to get people who had experience of working in war zones but that didn't have the experience that Miguel had.

**CA:** Let's go to you Richard. At what level do you really owe it to the journalist to insist that they take the training to ensure that they know what kind of insurance they have, how their families will be taken care of, I mean simply to tell them and lay it on the line and what kind of obligation do you have to guiding them through the process.

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**R Sambrook:** I think that all major news organisations have a duty to do that and the BBC, it was CC's initiative, but we've certainly carried it on, we categorise areas of the world by

how dangerous they are and people are not allowed to go unless they have had hostile environment training and unless they've got full support in terms of support and backup. We have within our operation full time safety operation reviewing safety on the ground and looking at how we can fine tune it, debriefing people when they come back but we're not complacent about that I'm sure things slip through again we say the freelancers that we commission should also have training and I'm sure that on occasion we've used material from people that haven't. We have turned down material, we've said 'even if you go and get this we're not going to take it because we don't think you should do it'. We've done that on a number of occasions and will continue to do so but I'm sure there are people out there taking risks that we would not want them to take.

**“What keeps me awake at night is firstly insurance, we’ve moved a long way in the last couple of years especially in terms insurance for freelancers but we’ve still got a long way to go and I’d certainly welcome a debate on how we try and do that”**

I'm not complacent about the BBC I'm aware that we're a large and well funded organisation that's been able to put in place a lot of these measures already. What keeps me awake at night is firstly insurance, we've moved a long way in the last couple of years especially in terms insurance for freelancers but we've still got a long way to go and I'd certainly welcome a debate on how we try and do that. Also we've talked about the competitive elements I agree with what's been said about inexperienced people not

being able to stand up to management and say 'I'm not going to go' partly because they may be worried what's said to them but also because they want to prove themselves we're trying to encourage a culture of saying 'it's alright to say no and we don't want you to go'. I can remember long conversations with JB over Kosovo when he was on the border and whether he should try to go in or not we debated it at length over a number of days and in the end the judgement has to be from the people on the ground but you have to have a culture that allows them to make that judgement.

**“I think we should reconsider how we reward risk taking through the awards business and whether we shouldn't try collectively to say 'getting bang-bang is not how you win an award', , if nothing else the most dramatic pictures aren't always synonymous with the best journalism and I think we should wean ourselves off that culture that the most dramatic pictures win awards”**

Also it is a competitive business but we do reward risk taking if we're honest with ourselves, we give the awards to the people who shown the greatest courage, taken the biggest risks and got the most dramatic pictures. And as an industry we shouldn't be too proud of that really and I think we should reconsider how we reward risk taking through the awards business and whether we shouldn't try collectively to say 'getting bang-bang is not how you win an award', if nothing else the most dramatic pictures aren't always synonymous with the best journalism and I think we should wean ourselves off that culture that the most dramatic pictures win awards. And that would go a long way to taking pressure off the people in the field.

**CA:** Ron the floor is yours especially about the issue of freelancers and whether you think they're protected enough in terms of insurance and knowing their rights.



**R McCullagh:** I think that most freelancers that work for either Insight News or Frontline have training. We independent sector are just as much aware, as the broadcasters are, of our

responsibilities and we try to make sure that everybody that goes into a war zone have been trained. We're aware of those responsibilities, and the broadcasters are too. I had a recent experience, with a news team, who were imprisoned in Liberia, it was a very difficult situation albeit a lot less of a crisis than for the families of Miguel and Kurt, but I have been amazed and changed about some of my cynicism because of my colleagues and what's taken place. An amazing collection of broadcasters, some of whom weren't even involved with our production, who came together as this family does in a strange way as when it happened in Sierra Leone with Miguel and Kurt. It was a family thing, every one was ringing each other talking about what had happened — trying, asking some of the questions we've been asking today, so my opinion has changed since our experience. But I don't think we're pushing against much of a door here because there's been a lot of agreement about movement forward and the pool issue is critical. I run a company that lives off the work of freelancers and I'm out there myself sometimes and there is an issue there as to how freelancers fit into the pool system and it needs to be dealt with. But the most important issue is that we cannot compete when it gets as dangerous as it sometimes does and if we're here today to try and move things forward and ask ourselves the question 'what could we have done so that Miguel and Kurt could not have died?' Then one answer might be that we had set up in advance of this situation a way in which journalists could have said, 'look this is now really bad, potentially now very serious, this is the point at which we must have a pool'. There's a number of ways of doing it, airline pilots report in a special confidential report when incidents have taken place where they don't want to be personally identified but it's a security measure to allow the industry to know what might happen. For instance we're all connected even in the field now by satellite phones perhaps a special internet site certificated to the people in the field who could almost vote and say 'this situation is now beyond a point' it needs work but there are ways we can do this. And it takes it out of the hands of the broadcasters into the hands of the people who have to assess on a day to day basis how dangerous this place is. We don't have that mechanism now, it's almost arbitrary but if that was in place

in Sierra Leone and people had the option of taking it up I'm pretty sure that I'm safe in saying Miguel and Kurt would be with us today.

**CA:** You deploy freelancers, presumably for networks or people that call you up and need people. What do you ask them and what guarantees do you get from them about how they're going to protect your people financially for instance what is the insurance and whose responsibility is that.

**RM:** Insight from the beginning has insured its people. It's part of our business pricing and planning it's a difficult thing to and costs quite a lot of money but Insight has taken a position on this which is that we will insure our people. Having said that we're very fortunate in being lucky and so much of what JB was saying is about luck. We have not got into a situation, until very recently where we actually needed the help of broadcasters at a very serious level and when we did they were there for us.

**"I'm troubled by the implication that there is pressure on people to stay when they feel it's dangerous I don't think we would ever put somebody in a situation where if they said from the field it is dangerous we would say 'no you have to stay'."**

**NB:** I'm troubled by the implication that there is pressure on people to stay when they feel it's dangerous I don't think we would ever put somebody in a situation where if they said from the field it is dangerous we would say 'no you have to stay'. And that's the implication of what is being said. All journalists are competitive and that's a difficult situation to resolve that you get away from the basic competitiveness. The only other point that I would make is that although there was no formal pool operating in Sierra Leone, the essential point is that Miguel, Kurt and Mark Chisholm of Reuters TV were actually working together at the time. They weren't competing against each other. They went out to cover a story, but they were mindful that there were dangers and that they were working together in that situation.

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**RM:** They were also going down a road that had been photographed many times, the situation hadn't changed, why?

**NB:** Obviously we'll never know the full detail but the understanding is that they felt there was a story down there to be told.

**RM:** Your previous point about people ringing up and saying I want out of here. Suppose, I remember it, I'm 24 yrs old I'm in the middle of a story I'm surrounded by my colleagues I'm going to ring you up, my boss and say I want out of here. I'm going to do that? I'd have to be a very mature 24 year old to do that.

**“Since Sierra Leone, Reuters has taken the decision that nobody goes into a combat zone unless they've been on a hostile environment course. We've put 100 people through, we've got another 70 waiting to go through it.”**

**NB:** I would have a person in place who had the maturity to make that decision but I don't think anybody as far as I'm concerned should ever be penalised for making that call. I have made it myself in a war zone, I have said 'I think this is dangerous I do not wish to stay' and that was a difficult thing to do I acknowledge. I'm not against your suggestion of doing it anonymously if that is the view of the industry but I think the step before that is to ensure that the people with the breadth of experience and maturity to be able to make that call are the people that go out to the field.

**CA:** Rodney, the question is how much training and protection with all the will in the world can really stop some of the worst instances. And again I'll ask you what was your obligation to those who were not staff, I believe that Kurt was not staff, in terms of training and insurance and taking care of his survivors.



**RP:** The training can help, the training saved Mark Chisholm's life. Mark told me after that when Kurt was shot, and his vehicle veered into the verge, he was on the roadside of the car, his

instincts would have been to run across the road, he would have got mowed down. His training told him to go behind the vehicle and into the same verge where the firing was coming from, he didn't even think about it, he did it because he'd been on the training course. Our policy on insurance is fairly good we think anybody working for Reuters in the field is insured whether their staff or freelance. We've instituted, again since Sierra Leone a global risk assessment log, where Reuters offices around the World log areas of risk and the degree of risk associated with them. These are concrete things we as companies can do, equipment is also important but I share some of the concerns of the BBC safety guy because I had an experience in the field when I was bureau chief in South Africa. I actually had to force people to wear flak jackets, 'oh it's too hot', 'ah Joe Bloggs was hit on the head and a flak jacket wouldn't have protected him'. It's the smokers argument 'this guy's smoking at 90 and he's alright and you're telling me to give up at 30'. You've got to be tough. I instituted a rule in South Africa 'OK you don't cover the story'. We've got to be tough as organisations to do that. A close friend of mine regrets that we wouldn't allow him to stay in Phnom Pen when Cambodia fell we ordered him out, he had no choice he had to leave. I'm concerned about why the ratio and I think that JB's remark really brought it home to me. We're all journalists, writer, broadcasters whatever. Where was the global howl of outrage against Israel when that man was shot, deliberately by artillery fire? Have we pursued it, have we done anything about it....I don't know? There's been another worrying development in Luxembourg when police dressed up as a TV crew to storm some hostage takers. I'm sorry: that's not on. And if we don't do anything else we have to protest and get some sort of promise or some UN action that governments and security forces will not do this. And we've got to get a global commitment on that because every time its done it's a gun at the head of an honest journalist. And just as a side issue to that I'm concerned by a recent development that a company has started up that will specialise in getting ex special forces operatives in the field to get video that our people cannot get. Well



I'm not going to buy that footage because I don't want anybody going around with a TV camera as a special forces operative because if one of them is caught in the field with all his cammies on and blackened face he endangers every honest journalist there. I would appeal to this company to reconsider what they're doing here.

**“But I also hope that focusing on the dangers and measures that we need to take won't make us too scared to go out and cover the news because we still believe in covering the news, we still believe in going out to tell these stories because there are stories that simply cannot not be told there are some places that are dangerous but we still have to go.”**

**CC:** Rory Peck's widow left about 15 minutes ago but she said that she was really quite depressed that we were having a debate that started many years ago and her question was what progress are we making? I think we're making quite a lot, Peter Hunter, God bless him, is entitled to show us the battle scars he's got over the last 10 yrs trying to impress on the industry some pretty basic principles. I'm disappointed Christianne that you haven't been on one of these courses. I refuse to be blamed for the sins of my father so I think you should go on one.

**CA:** I will.

**CK:** I think it would send out a fantastic signal to the industry if you did.

RS has got something when he talks about pooling, guidelines and standards we should start now. Let's just suspend the debate and move towards practical guidelines concerning safety, equipment concerning PTSD. All those wimpy subjects we wouldn't talk about 5 yrs ago — let's move to phase 2 and 3.

**CA:** You're absolutely right and you're the one to lead it. We need a leader to take this debate which started with Rory Peck and now here we are because of Miguel and Kurt, we're somewhat further but we need to enshrine this somehow in stone. It seems to me that it can't be that difficult for us all to have a code of practice. These are concrete things we're talking about and it would be a fitting result of this debate and hopefully we won't need to keep having this kind of debate. But I also hope that focusing on the dangers and measures that we need to take won't make us too scared to go out and cover the news because we still believe in covering the news, we still believe in going out to tell these stories because there are stories that simply cannot not be told there are some places that are dangerous but we still have to go. The question is how do we balance what we do and whether we can go with the piece of mind knowing that our families will be taken care of if something happens to us. Whether we go equipped with the kind of mental and physical training that we need to go and do this. So I understand your poor correspondent who was anguished at being pulled out of Phnom Penh, you did the right thing to protect him but it's a real dilemma. It's a real dilemma, when people asked us to come out of Sarajevo at any given time we refused and we were right to refuse but we didn't do it in a gung-ho, cowboy fashion we did it because we'd calculated the risks and judged that we had to be there to tell the story. So I think CC that we really should take up your proposal and start action now.

**Susan Greenberg:** I'm not in the foreign news business anymore but in the early 90s I was based in Prague for the Guardian and a lot of my colleagues were going into Yugoslavia to cover the war there. This discussion has been about broadcasting there's been nothing about Fleet St, a lot of the gung-ho reporting is probably strongest there. There is also a stronger reliance on freelancers. I remember a colleague of mine was being told to take risks that he didn't want take and was then mocked for being a coward when he didn't want to do it. I would just say in all this discussion, include the newspapers and editors.

Unidentified: I just wanted to ask the question, what do you do when you are offered news footage by non-journalists or people of dubious origins?

**RP:** What you do is carry out as many checks as you possibly can and if you are convinced its genuine then you use it. You can never be entirely sure especially with digital technology. I think one of the problems facing the

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TV industry is that there is going to be a plethora of amateur video from all sorts of sources as cameras scatter all over the World and there's going to be huge temptation to use it. But I don't see the problem as being any different to those that affect journalists in their day to day lives. We check stories out if they check out then we use them.

**Pete Henderson (tvnewsweb.com):** Frankly this is like an old boys club and I get the feeling that it's talk, talk, talk and not enough do. I'm very pleased CC got up and said let's do something about it. This situation has been brought about by broadcasters sending crews into dangerous situations. When RP sits there and says 'dammit AP won cameraman of the year, we better get it next year because the guys won't take our pictures otherwise.

**RP:** Sorry Ian did I say that?

**PH:** Your organisation

**RP:** That's not true

**PH:** Alright let me re .

**RP:** Well come on let's be factual can we?

**PH:** Agencies are very competitive and they're putting people into dumb situations. The one thing I suggest is pull out not just pool leave it to intelligent journalists who've been in war zones themselves.

**Gaby Rado (Channel 4 News):** The opposite end to that is that sometimes we stay in places too long and there are pressures when a story is a week old and you've got to come up with something and that's when the real risks are taken. I hope the managers take note of that.

**Colin Bickler (City University):** I question whether we have moved on when I look around this room and see that every picture in this room was taken by a photographer who died taking pictures in the Vietnam War. But I think we have moved on because when we first started doing this we could hardly fill this room to get anybody to talk about it and above all you could not get any body from the industry to come.

**Richard Tait (Editor in Chief ITN):** ITN already follows the universal standards and I share with CC and RS that everybody should join in establishing this as an industry

standard that would be a very good first step and an appropriate tribute to 2 fine journalists. However I would say that neither of those men nor many other fine journalists were killed by a lack of training, they were experienced, brave and careful operators. They were killed by men who murdered them because they believed that you can kill journalists with impunity. One of my other roles is that I'm chairman of the International Press Institute and it is my melancholy job to send letters all round the world to regimes that are killing and imprisoning journalists. It's right that we focus on what we can do now in our industry. Where is the political pressure to find the killers of journalists around the world, without that pressure training will help but it won't protect you from a man from an army or fighting force who says 'I can kill you and I'll probably get away with it.'

**"It's right that we focus on what we can do now in our industry. Where is the political pressure to find the killers of journalists around the world, without that pressure training will help but it won't protect you from a man from an army or fighting force who says 'I can kill you and I'll probably get away with it.'"**

**CA:** It's not just killing and wounding journalists with impunity its banning them when they don't feel like having them in their countries and frankly I haven't seen any commitment from the management to insist that the country either accepts the journalist that they send or accepts no journalists from CNN, BBC or ITN or whatever and I can speak from experience. I also want to ask a touchy question. Four journalists were imprisoned by the Liberians a few weeks ago it was reported that they were only freed after the parent company wrote a letter apologising.

**RT:** Channel 4 did send a letter on advice apologising for what they were doing that was their decision, ITNs role was because 2 of the crew were our staff more or less full time as far as we concerned we were concerned for all 4 but because we had a locus as C4's news supplier my

colleague Angela Fryer went out to help Ron and others try and spring them and we used all our contacts along with C4's contacts, South African politicians and African newspaper editors and all of us together with Insight had a co-ordinated effort to get them released. The fact that that worked shows that pressure pays I can't answer for C4's letter I'm very glad to see them all back. The moral of the story is that you do not accept journalists being locked up for doing an honest job.

**CA:** I know, but the public domain and old Charles Taylor who's sitting there making his money of blood diamonds and the people who killed our journalists in Sierra Leone, he has been publicly exonerated because a news network wrote a letter of apology.

**RT:** Let's get this clear it wasn't a news network. This was not an ITN operation.

**CA:** I'm not saying it was

**RT:** I think that whatever C4 did was an extremely sensible thing

**RM:** 7 days in a Liberian prison and Charles Taylor wants an apology, frankly Charles Taylor can have what the hell he likes, we wanted our people out of there and that's the bottom line. We apologised for a particular document that shouldn't have been in that country it was a proposal and it was misinterpreted as a script and that was the apology and I'm quite happy with that.

**Tim Sparks (Mercury Media):** If broadcasters want to see change than they must make it a contractual obligation of the people that supply them with news footage that their journalists must have had training. This is the way to get any organisation to comply but the broadcasters must take some responsibility and exert pressure on the firms that supply them with material.

**VS:** No video is worth getting killed for but I wonder what Kurt and Miguel would have thought, they risked their lives to get video. That doesn't make sense we've got to think that again they're better men than me and if they thought it was worth risking a life then perhaps it is worth risking a life. Is a story worth getting killed that needs a little more thought. I feel a bit patronised here today as a freelancer being told I'm an amateur frankly I think some of you lot are amateurs the way you cover wars. Here's a few tips on how you can do it better. How about

psychology, we talked about psychiatry, giving counselling to people after they come back, what about before they go? Why don't you choose some people who are up to the job before they go. I have seen journalists destroy the safety equipment you give them before they go. Why are you sending people that continually wreck their vehicles? Dedicated logistic support. If we are going to do this better then we are going to have to look at other people who go to these e places like the military who have dedicated logistic support. The support journalists get is not up to the job. The real tragedy is that every time somebody gets killed doing the job they believe in we analyse it to death. This is unfair to them and unfair because what we end up doing is taking the wrong lessons. Why can't we analyse events as they happen.

**“The real tragedy is that every time somebody gets killed doing the job they believe in we analyse it to death. This is unfair to them and unfair because what we end up doing is taking the wrong lessons. Why can't we analyse events as they happen.”**

**CA:** We leave this debate tonight having heard a call from one of the industry leaders CK and from all of us in this room recognising that now is the time to do something. So the question is what are going to do? I think we're going to put in stone the kind of guidelines that we spoke about, the kind of things that Miguel's family and all of us want to see enshrined simply as common sense. And a way to do our job slightly better and slightly safer than we have been able to do it in the past. There is a great deal we have to do and we are all individuals so hopefully we can all work together.

I would like to end by reading a letter from Dr Joaquin Navarro Vals, the Director of the Vatican Press Office has sent to the Freedom Forum and especially Miguel's family.

SETTING THE STANDARD

*I received the news of the memorial in memory of Miguel Gil Moreno; I would like to add the following letter of sincere support to this homage. The figure of Miguel although dramatically known for his death surpasses by far the circumstance in which he died. Miguel has a human, ethical and professional stature unanimously recognised by his colleagues which had already qualified him despite his young age as a person of enormous dignity and value in the field of international journalism. I believe that Miguel is an example of one whose life will continue on forever, a life that we would have wished to have continued much longer.*

*My thoughts at this moment go to his family to whom I wish to say my most sincere sentiment of admiration and at the same time to his colleagues and friends who without doubt felt enriched by the human and professional company of Miguel.*

*With my prayers for his eternal rest.*

*Cordially*

*Joaquin Navarro Vals*

*Vatican*

There is a memorial Mass for Miguel at St James' Church which is at 22 George St tomorrow evening at 7.

We will hear the last word from Alvaro Gil de Moreno who has really carried this torch.



**AGM:** I am Miguel's brother I am not a journalist so I don't know if I can really talk about this round table. When this happened and we decided to make this memorial for Miguel we thought that one of the

best ways was a round table to discuss what we were finding after he was killed. All the problems that he had before and he had after and we thought in that moment that this is the only way that the family can help to modify the policies in this industry. I can't explain what are own experiences were like. It was not my idea to talk about our own problems but now I think I have something to say. The first point is regarding the competition somebody said, talking about the pool when Miguel was with mark and Kurt and Yanis going to the ambush and they were working together. I talked to Mark at the funeral and he told us what happened. Miguel wasn't there to cover the story that Kurt was covering, he was there to cover the story of 6 UN soldiers the week before. Kurt asked them to go with him and they said yes, that is what happened. I learned that Miguel was one of the top cameramen working for a good company and he was happy with that but there is something that all of you talking about the big companies have to consider is that they have somebody waiting. I am saying that after 3 months I have to fight for something, I am not a journalist I am a human being and I can say all of you have to start from something I thought Miguel's death was the point to start. I don't want this round table to be another one, I don't want Miguel's death to be another one the 8th one with APTN. You have to change stop talking just do things.

Thank you.

What Price National Security was edited by Kelly Haggart, with photographs by Matthew Issep.  
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