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# Reporters without Borders

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freedom, and hence RWB works constantly to restore the right to be informed among these countries' citizens. Its Web site quotes statistics about crimes perpetrated around the world against media professionals, who often spend years in jail just for using the "wrong" word or photo. RWB conceives of such imprisonment or murder of a journalist as akin to eliminating a key witness and as a threat to everyone's right to information.

RWB, with its team of over 100 professionals, keeps constant watch and condemns any attack on press freedom worldwide by keeping the media and public opinion informed through press releases and public-awareness campaigns. It also defends journalists and other media contributors who have been imprisoned or persecuted for doing their job and protests against the abuse and torture being meted out to media professionals in nations around the world. It not only provides support to journalists threatened in their own countries but also provides financial and non-financial support to their families. RWB also wages a battle worldwide — to reduce the use of censorship, oppose laws restricting press freedom, and improve the safety of journalists around the world, especially those stationed in war zones. Among RWB's other objectives is its commitment to rebuild media groups and provide financial and material support to news staff facing different hardships in their jobs.

Damocles Network, RWB's judicial arm, created in January 2002, works to ensure that criminals murdering/ torturing journalists are brought to trial. It also provides legal services to victims representing them in competent national and international courts to ensure enforcement of proper judicial procedures.

RWB's Web site maintains a regularly updated tally of attacks being inflicted on press freedom worldwide, serving like a press-freedom news agency providing Internet users with opportunities to demand the release of jailed journalists by signing petitions online. To battle censorship, articles banned in their country of origin are also published online. Among RWB's other contributions are its two annual publications, the *Worldwide Report on Press Freedom* and the *Country Index of Press Freedom*, measuring the extent of freedom that journalists and media possess—being published on World Press Freedom Day every year.

RWB, however, has not escaped critics' scrutiny. One major criticism raised against it is that it receives 19% of its funding from the Western world, raising questions about the extent of possible bias in its

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## REPORTERS WITHOUT BORDERS

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Reporters Without Borders (RWB), also called *Reporters sans frontières* in French and *Reporteros sin fronteras* in Spanish, is a world organization officially recognized as serving public interest. The official Web site [www.rsf.org](http://www.rsf.org) lists the slogan "Defending press freedom... every day," capturing the basic essence of RWB.

The RWB Web site reports that more than a third of the world's population lives in countries with no press

reporting. The methodology used by RWB to rank press freedom has also been criticized in the past.

RWB's operations are spread out over five continents through its national branches. The organization also has close cooperation with local and regional press freedom organizations around the world.

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*See also* Censorship, Political; Press Freedom

### **Further Readings**

Reporters Without Borders. (2003). *The Internet under surveillance—Obstacles to the free flow of information online*. Retrieved August 1, 2006, from <http://freebies.weburb.org/newsservice/link/3053/http://www.rsf.org/IMG/pdf/doc-2236.pdf>