

07.24.2012

PRESS RELEASE

AFP FOUNDATION BOARD STRENGTHENED WITH FOUR NEW MEMBERS

THE AFP FOUNDATION – THE NON-PROFIT MEDIA DEVELOPMENT ARM OF AFP NEWS AGENCY – WELCOMES FOUR NEW MEMBERS AND A NEW, EXPANDED ROLE AS THE AGENCY RENEWS ITS MANDATE FOR ACTION FOR THE NEXT FIVE YEARS.

- **Expansion of the AFP Foundation board**

Sylvie Kauffmann, commentator at Le Monde, Florence Biedermann, AFP Director for Europe and Africa, Jérôme Clément, writer and former chairman of ARTE, and Axel Ganz, founder of Prisma Press, have joined the now eight member board.

They join the existing members of the board who are: Emmanuel Hoog, CEO of AFP, Philippe Massonnet, Global News Director of AFP, Annie Thomas, journalist at AFP and Edward Mortimer, vice president of the Salzburg Global Seminar.

The new members will bring to the Foundation board a wide range of European and international experience.

- **Foundation's role to expand to include France**

Set up in July 2007, the AFP Foundation's primary mission remains the defence of freedom of expression through the training of journalists in developing countries. Since it was set up, more than 1,300 reporters and photographers have received training from the Foundation, aimed at improving their professional skills. Most training courses are provided by AFP journalists and financed by international organisations. The majority have taken place in Africa, the Middle East and Eastern Europe and the Balkans.

Following a modification of its statutes, the Foundation will now be able to contribute to improving social cohesion in France through activities promoting equal opportunities, the re-entry into society of former prisoners, and support for the disabled. Previously, the Foundation focused solely on endeavours in developing countries.

- **Three major new projects**

1) In April 2011, the organisation launched a two-year "media for development" programme in Lebanon to build bridges between media houses which traditionally serve different communities in the country. Carried out in partnership with Canal France International, and with support from the Chirac Foundation, the project is part of a peace-building exercise.

2) The Foundation is also member of a consortium led by BBC Media Action, which aims to train more than 1,000 journalists in 16 countries neighbouring the European Union between now and the end of 2014.

3) In September 2012, the Africa Check project, devised and run by the Foundation, will be launched in South Africa, with the creation of a new, non-partisan fact-checking website based in the journalism department of the University of the Witwatersrand, using crowd-sourced information to scrutinise the claims made by leading South African public figures in order to give accurate information on questions such as health, science, the environment, politics or even justice. The project was one of 14 winners of funding from the IPI News Innovation Contest, provided by Google, in 2012.