

PRESS RELEASE**“21st Century Challenges for Freedom of the Press “****Christopher Walker of Freedom House opens Award Ceremony at the M100 Sanssouci Colloquium in Potsdam**

Potsdam, 1 September 2010. **Christopher Walker**, Director of Studies of the US-American NGO **Freedom House** opens the **M100 Media Prize Award Ceremony** on 8 September with a speech concerning the **State of Press Freedom in Europe**. The ceremony is part of the international Media Conference **M100 Sanssouci Colloquium** in Potsdam. **Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel** is going to hold the main speech of the award ceremony.

The report “Freedom in the World”, published annually by Freedom House, evaluates the state of democracy in the world, including studies about freedom of the press.

“It is a time of unprecedented challenges to news media in established democracies and developing states alike”, states Walker. “These challenges include a rapidly changing economic landscape as well as diverse political pressures that are forcing extraordinarily difficult choices for editors and publishers. And the capacity of news organisations to meet these 21st century challenges cannot be viewed solely as a press freedom issue; the maintenance of strong reporting standards is critical for ensuring accountable and transparent governance, and for the health of democracy in Europe.”

Since 2005, the M100 Sanssouci Colloquium has been inviting **international editors-in-chief and leading media professionals** to join the intensive dialogue in the scenery of Potsdam’s historical Palaces and Gardens. This year’s topic is “Freedom of the Press in Europe”.

Other Keynote-Speaker of the conference are:

Paul Steiger, Editor-in-Chief and Founder, ProPublica, USA

Agnieszka Romaszewska-Guzy, Editor-in-Chief, Belsat TV, Poland

Mathias Döpfner, CEO, Axel Springer AG

Daniel Schmitt, Spokesperson, Wikileaks

John Witherow, Editor-in-Chief, The Sunday Times, UK

Other high profile participants of the conference include **Stefan Aust** (Agenda-Media, Germany), **Wolfgang Blau** (Zeit Online, Germany), **Stephan Detjen** (Deutschlandfunk, Germany), **Kai Diekmann** (BILD, Germany), **Mikhail Fishman** (Newsweek, Russia), **Grzegorz Jankowski** (Fakt, Poland) **Hans-Ulrich Jörges** (Stern, Germany), **Maxim Kashulinsky** (Forbes, Russia), **Michal Kobosko** (Newsweek, Poland), **Berthold Kohler** (FAZ, Germany), **Roger Köppel** (Die Weltwoche, Switzerland), **Merit Kopli** (Postimees, Estonia), **Christoph Lanz** (DW-TV, Germany), **Matthias Müller von Blumencron** (Der Spiegel, Germany), **Jørn Mikkelsen** (Jyllands-Posten, Denmark), **Morgan Olofsson** (SVT, Sweden), **Jan-Eric Peters** (Welt-Gruppe, Germany), **Anita Rozentale** (Bauskas Dzive, Latvia), **Frank Schirrmacher** (FAZ, Germany), **Philipp Schindler**, (Google, Germany), **Tøger Seidenfaden** (Politiken, Denmark), **Mark Thompson** (Thomson Reuters, UK) and **Roland Tichy** (Wirtschaftswoche, Germany).

The Award Winner and Laudator will be announced on 3 September 2010

M100 is an initiative by **the state capital of Potsdam** and **Potsdam Media International e.V.** and takes place as part of **Medienwoche@IFA**.

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