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Response to Draft Broadcast Code of Trinidad and Tobago

April 19, 2005 - This Draft Code has to be the most shameless attempt to impose a regime of censorship on the media since the infamous Green Paper on the reform of media law in 1997. It must be vigorously opposed by everyone with an interest in preserving free speech and a free press.

Clearly, its architects are oblivious to the spirit of some of our basic constitutional guarantees and this country's specific obligations under Article 19 of the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights.

It is also clearly in conflict with the Chapultepec Declaration, recently endorsed by the current administration, and the concerns of regional, hemispheric and international organisations interested in the preservation of basic human rights including free expression and the reinforcement this right enjoys under the guarantee of a free press.

The Code also appears to ignore the fact that there already exist guidelines for media houses which are currently administered by the Media Complaints Committee, within the framework of self-regulation.

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