



'Work harder to preserve free expression' - New ACM President

St. George's Grenada, December 12 (ACM) - The newly re-elected president of the Association of Caribbean Media Workers (ACM) Saturday called on committed Caribbean people to "work harder" to preserve freedom of expression.

The regional journalist Wesley Gibbings was speaking after his election to a second two-year term as president of the regional network of media associations and professionals, at its fifth biennial general assembly here.

"I admonish people who are committed to freedom of expression to work harder for the preservation of this right. Free expression is an essential prerequisite to development and true independence of our people," Gibbings said.

The ACM is a regional network of media associations, journalists, and media professionals spanning the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the Dutch, Spanish and French-speaking Caribbean. The ACM's aims including promoting public access to government information, media freedom, and the independence of journalists.

Senior journalist with the Caribbean Media Corporation (CMC), Peter Richards, has been returned as vice-president for finance. Surinamesephotojournalist Edward Troon was elected second vice-president.

Dominican communications consultant, Thalia Remy, the head of the Media Workers Association of Dominica (MWAD), is the ACM's new general secretary. Associated Press Guyana correspondent Bert Wilkinson is the assistant secretary/treasurer.

The veteran business and financial writer, Canute James, who heads the Caribbean Institute of Media and Communication (CARIMAC), the regional media school at the University of the West Indies at Mona, was elected a floor member of the executive. He is joined by Julius Gittens, a Barbadian broadcaster and journalist.

In his annual report, Gibbings said the past two years saw the association growing in prestige and stature at an unprecedented pace.

"The work is before us to meet the expectations of our people to operate in a free, independent and more professional manner," he added.

The ACM head also highlighted the publication of a new handbook on election reporting and training of journalists on the new guidelines throughout the region as a major achievement of the last year.

The association is collaborating with CARIMAC on broadening journalism training and developing a three-month training programme for Trinidadian journalists with support from the Knight Center for Journalism in the Americas and the Media Association of Trinidad and Tobago, Gibbings said.