

Anatoliy Lysenko

President of International Academy of Television and Radio,
Russia

Dear participants of the International Media Forum!

For the third year the hospitable land of Kazakhstan is hosting the people, who define the informational picture of the world. I would not exaggerate if I say that today it is information, which constitutes the power, capable both of accelerating global development and taking mankind back into the abyss of insoluble problems and social disasters.

The Almaty Media Forum creates a wonderful opportunity to discuss the basic developmental trends of the global informational process, and this determines its exclusive significance for the present and the future.

The International Academy of Television and Radio, which unites hundreds of professional journalists, electronic media outlets, highly appreciates the remarkable initiative of our Kazakhstani colleagues. We will be participating in the Forum with great interest. The Academy wishes the best of success to all Forum delegates.

Ashot Dzhazoyan

Secretary General of the International Confederation of Journalists' Unions
Russia

The Eurasian Media Forum has become an essential part of political and public life, not only among journalists in Central Asia, but also among the international media community. Today it's hard to imagine, that three years ago there were quite a number of skeptics, who considered this initiative to be inappropriate and not really timely.

Let's recall that the main idea of forum organizers was to assist in building dialogue between public leaders of East and West, finding a common language. But the tragedy of September 11, which happened in the middle of preparing for our first meeting, seemed have put an end to the possibility of any dialogue. Bloodshed caused more blood. American troops massively intruded into the countries of Central Asia. The entire world divided into followers and opponents of this crusade. Against the backdrop of the thunder of explosions and fire, appeals for peaceful dialogue were not heard. And the majority of people from both sides of the conflict did not see any sense in such dialogue at a time of war.

In such conditions it's amazing, that we managed to make the first Forum happen and to draw the attention of the world community to the issues on the agenda.

More dramatic conditions accompanied the preparations for the Second Forum: on the eve of its opening Anglo-American troops entered Iraq, and this war disturbed minds and divided the global community even more. Unfortunately, relatively quick and easy military victories in Afghanistan and Iraq considerably strengthened western public opinion that terrorism can be defeated by military means and that western cultural values can be implanted all over the world as global and universal ones. Unfortunately, these so-called "victorious" actions made redundant the prospect of dialogue on an equal footing.

But the Eurasian nations, unfortunately, have a bigger experience of conflicts and reconciliations. That's why initiators and regular participants of the Eurasian Media Forum had at that moment a clear understanding that the war against international terrorism will not only last for many years ahead, but will not bring success to those who started it, until all nations and states acknowledge terrorism to be their personal problem.

But for that to come about two things are needed.

Firstly, nobody should force anyone to take part in this war, nobody should command and instruct others however powerful they are.

Secondly, there should be another struggle parallel to the war against evil - the struggle for the consolidation of good, if you wish.

We would like to believe that understanding the necessity for global dialogue, the dialogue between cultures and civilizations will come to all, including the key players and ordinary participants in the present-day tragic events, who continue to rely only on power and a belief they are always right. We would like to believe that it will happen sooner than later, because every hour of delay is too expensive for humanity.

And we can say with confidence here that the organizers of the Forum have done a lot to make this happen faster. It is enough to look at the increasing interest in the Forum around the globe, despite all international tensions.

In connection with this, I would like to say the warmest words of support to Dariga Nazarbayeva, the author of the idea, prime mover behind the Forum and its main organizer. This tender, delicate woman turned out to have a very strong character. A true daughter of her nation, despite the problems with the freedom of speech, and constant criticism from many sides, she and her small team are very persistent in building this two-way road of communication between Europe - Asia. And I am honored to consider myself a part of this team.

I welcome all the participants of this year's Forum. If your first arrival in Almaty was considered to be just the start, it has now become a tradition. I would like to personally shake the hands of each of you and say: WE ARE TOGETHER.

Dmitriy Voskoboinikov

Executive director "Interfax" agency Russia

When I got down to compiling my greeting to the Third Eurasian Forum on 10th of April, the "liberation from liberators" in Iraq, which started after the closure of the local "Al-Khauza" newspaper, was in full swing. The newspaper did not call for violence; it merely criticized the policies of Washington carried out by governor Paul Bremer. The First Amendment to the US Constitution which guarantees freedom of speech at home, was declared anathema when applied to an Arab state - the state where democracy is to be introduced. The April issue of the American "Harper's Magazine" gives amusing though at the same time sad statistics, and quotes:

the number of articles in the most prominent US papers that brand as a lie at least one statement from the White House concerning Iraq - zero.

the number of questions posed to Mr. Bush about tax reforms during the "Meet the Press" show. The ratio of regular questions on taxes versus questions on Bush's unfair cut in Administration taxes is astounding. It is 5 to zero.

the average sum that members of Bush Administration will save this year as a result of the tax reform equals \$ 42,000.

the average income of the American household over the year 2002 amounted to \$ 42,409.

Are we still going to search for Weapons of Mass Destruction in Iraq and admire the freedom of speech enjoying itself somewhere in the "market liberalism"?!

In what way do American, Eurasian and other "Neoconservatives" or "Neoliberals", differ from the Bolsheviks?

I cannot say.

A Jordanian court has sentenced Akhmed Chalabi in his absence to a long term of imprisonment for illegal appropriation of millions of dollars in one of its banks.

Here is a quotation of the Pentagon's friend and leader of the so-called Iraqi National Congress in his interview to "The Daily Telegraph": "We are heroes by mistake... Our goal has been achieved... Everything said before does not matter". The latter sentence implies Iraq's "imagined" possession of weapons of mass destruction. Committed Leninists should be happy. In the 21st century their mantra that "the end justifies the means" is supported by their most irreconcilable opponents. It is Chalabi that Rumsfeld and his friends want to see at Iraq's helm.

Please think about it, participants of the 3rd Eurasian Forum!

Remember that, as scientists have proved, the impact of words makes up only seven percent of the total impression made by a speaker on his audience. Our perception of the speaker is unfortunately dominated by secondary elements - the gestures, the posture, the intonation, the clothes, his assurance while making a speech... Please be wise. Only then can the truth that we are seeking here for the third year running come to light.

Fred Cohen

Chairman of the International Academy of Television Arts and Sciences USA

As Chairman of the International Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, I am delighted and honoured to participate in the 2004 Conference. In a few short years, the Eurasian Media Forum has established itself as one of the premier international media events in the world. It is a venue where television and media professionals, government leaders, journalists, and academics can freely meet to discuss and consider important issues affecting not only the region but also the world. The organizers are to be congratulated for having the foresight and wisdom in presenting this important event. The International Television Academy is proud to be an active participant this year and in the future.

Hameed Haroon

CEO and Publisher, DAWN newspaper Pakistan

In the context of sharply growing polarizations in the Gulf, Central and South Asian regions, the demands made upon media with respect to objective, credible and fair reportage have sharply escalated. Unfortunately, freedoms associated with media - particularly the print media - in this region have not evolved sufficiently so as to be able to sustain the independence of media institutions in promoting an objective journalistic reportage. The historical legacy of a non-competitive and nepotistic electronic media evolving from controlled state monopolies has not been particularly helpful in this respect either. When the sensitivities and insecurities of national governments attempting to stride the ideological divide on the basis of policies advocating the use of force are added to this equation the resulting climate of intolerance in our part of the world can only be considered as explosive when viewed in the context of eroding press freedoms. A few rays of light in an otherwise grim scenario continue to provide some cause for hope in a region where an increasing globalization and the proliferation of satellite-based private television channels and the spread of Internet as a means of regional communication, have prevented this climate of intolerance from escalating into a further encroachment of press freedoms.

One such cause for hope is the heightened, but as yet not entirely well informed, engagement of international media in this region. We urge these international media conglomerates to initiate a continuing dialogue with mature and fledgling media institutions in this region, not only to effect a refinement in the processing of information with respect to the reporting occurrence of conflict in this region, but to reach out to engage with the sharply dividing ideologies that portend ill for the future of representative and responsible governance in our part of the world.

Ian Ritchie

Chief Executive Associated Press Television News United Kingdom

I am delighted that the Eurasia Media Forum continues to grow in stature and AP International are proud to be associated with an event such as this that takes a different perspective on media issues of importance on the current global news agenda. Rapid change is a constant feature of the news that AP reports worldwide and this Forum is a welcome opportunity to take stock of the implications of what is happening all around us each day. Well informed debate and objective discussion of influential media issues will benefit all who are both gathering news and commenting on it at a time when the media has a critical role in the reporting of ever less predictable world events.

Mikhail Gusman

First Deputy Director General ITAR-TASS Russia

The mass media - both electronic and print - are constantly transforming, responding to the changes in the society in a very acute way, and, while developing, they change society itself. In this situation it is becoming more and more important to explore the principles in the international media community.

We hope, that wide-ranging, open media forums of such scale, taking place in the heart of Eurasia, at the crossroads of East and West, will give the opportunity to transcend artificial borders, which divide us, and will also contribute to further developing the news industry and creating more tolerance in the world.

The dramatic events, which have taken place since the second Eurasian Media Forum in Almaty, leave no doubt that the idea of consolidating efforts to overcome fear, suspicion, alienation to protect freedom of speech and the rights of societies, is crucial and in demand as never before.

Better understanding between journalists leads to better understanding between nations. We hope that this is exactly how the huge potential for good of the Eurasian Media Forum is realized - that is the potential of an open platform for concerned, democratic discussions of media-community representatives on vital issues of today.

Mohammed A. R. Galadari

Chairman, Galadari Group of Companies Editor-in-Chief, Khaleej Times UAE

It gives me great pleasure to be joining the Eurasian Media Forum 2004 that would focus attention on a host of subjects that are highly relevant to the current scenario in Asia in particular and the world at large. I understand that the forum is an entity conceived by its organizers as being without political, economic or ideological allegiances, and that it strives to explore the concept of Eurasia, promote its media, and build a continuing dialogue between the East and the West. That enhances its prestige. I am proud to be associating with you in this noble endeavor.

Asia is where action is. It basically has two sides: one, the fast developing Asia; and the other, the poorly developed Asia. There is spectacular boom in business and commerce; and cities are growing at an unbelievable speed. To tap on these growing markets and resources, top industrial and commercial establishments from the West are increasingly shifting their attention to this continent. On offer are both quality performance and cheap labour. And, on the other side, there is the spectre of poverty, malnutrition and population explosion. Governments need to put their acts together and shape the destiny of their peoples in better ways.

There are lessons to learn from the growth momentum that China and Japan, or the emerging mega cities in the continent, have gained over the past few decades. That should guide others who are still groping in the dark. I hope forums like this will help promote the developmental aspirations of both the rulers and the ruled.

That this meeting of minds is taking place in Kazakhstan, a country dear to my heart, is a matter of added pleasure to me. This nation, barely 13 years old, is located at the cross-roads of two great civilizations. That gives it a distinct advantage. And I believe the need of our times is not a clash of civilizations, but a fusion of civilizations, that would see the good aspects from different sides coalesce into new concepts and practices. Kazakhstan, by its very location, can play a major role in this respect.
Pavel Gusev

Editor in-chief, "Moskovskiy komsomolets" newspaper, Chairman of the Moscow Union of Journalists Russia

The Eurasian Media Forum has occupied a significant place in the dialogue of politicians and journalists from many different countries. It's very important, that it takes place in Kazakhstan - the country, which gave birth to the idea of Eurasianship, the idea uniting cultures, historical values and modern political trends.

This idea was initially announced by the President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev and has come into life in many countries in the region.

At the Forum we can discuss in varying ways all vital problems faced by different countries. Therein lies its power.

The contemporary world is impossible without information. And the fact that the third conference of Eurasian Media Forum is once again taking place in the Asian part of the world emphasizes its constructive and consolidating role.

Riz Khan

Broadcaster, Riz Khan Productions USA

A big welcome to the Eurasian Media Forum - which is fast becoming established as a unique opportunity for journalists from all corners of the globe to meet and discuss issues important to us all.

The success of the first Forum in 2002 was highlighted by the number of people who eagerly returned the following year. To those old friends, the warm welcomes will be familiar. For those of you attending for the first time, get ready to experience an entertaining and informative combination of serious debate and seriously fun socializing. This gathering is networking at its best.

The Eurasian Media Forum has proved that media people are the same all over the world. The same issues, such as safety in the field, freedom of press, and the challenging economics of commercial broadcasting, are the centre of debate in every newsroom. How they are dealt with varies - so exchanging views, ideas and experiences is crucial if we are to move forward and upward.

The past two years have proved that those who come to the EAMF are willing to speak up and take part. That is at the centre of the Forum's success - the participation of people like you. Please make the most of the important discussions that take place during the sessions... and please make sure you fully experience the big-hearted effort of the people of Kazakhstan, as they invite you to be part of the Eurasian Media Forum in Almaty.

Shireen M Mazari

Director General Institute of Strategic Studies Pakistan

First of all I would like to extend my congratulations to the Kazakhstan National Khabar News Agency for organising the third Eurasian Media Forum. The forum comes at a crucial time of change and challenges that face the world today, and in which the role of media has become crucial in shaping the responses of the governments and leaders.

Unfortunately, however, the dominance of the superpower remains only too visible and all of us are affected by US policies in our regions. When Mr. Paul Bremer, the Bush Administration's proconsul in Iraq, sent American soldiers on March 28, 2004 to shut down and padlock a popular Baghdad newspaper - Al Hawza - for criticising the US occupation of Iraq, I was reminded of the autocratic regimes that the Americans have blamed for all the 'evil' in the world. One cannot have a one-sided view in this age of globalisation, and it is about time that all of us learn to live with dissenting views and news. I wish all the success to the participants of the Forum as they debate the role of media and how to confront the challenges and threats in the 21st century.

Valeriy Ruzin

Vice-President of the Eurasia Academy for Television and Radio Co-chairman of the Steering Committee for the Eurasia Teleforum Russia

The Eurasian Media Forum is the meeting place for representatives of the journalistic community, members of parliament, politicians and public figures who feel that the ethical principles of their profession, their responsibilities and their word as journalists are the most important part of their professional duty.

The Eurasian Media Forum in Almaty is the largest international professional meeting which offers, along with the Eurasia Teleforum in Moscow, a substantial tribune to independent and opposition journalists. Such is the special quality of the Eurasian Media Forum, representing an intrinsic value for public and professional media organisations - including the Eurasia Academy for Television and Radio itself, which belongs to the media industry and represents at present more than two hundred professionals from 17 countries of Eurasia.

The basic ideas of the Eurasian Media Forum include inter-confessional cooperation and international accord. A real dialogue for promoting these ideas in the practice of journalism is the common principle for both the Eurasian Media Forum and the traditional Eurasia Teleforum in Moscow. It is our overall mission to facilitate as much as possible the efficiency of such dialogue.

Valery Yakov

Editor-in-chief, "Novie Izvestia" newspaper Russia

Dear Colleagues!

Editorial team of "Novie Izvestia" is happy to greet all participants and guests of Eurasian Media Forum. Such an authoritative gathering is very significant under the circumstance we are facing today.

Today, a number of countries that claim democracy are overlooking the freedom of speech. The social, political and interethnic separateness has an increasing influence on our lives and finds its reflection in the press. Today, the humankind has encountered unprecedented forms of intercontinental violence which it is not ready to handle.

In such an emergency, the Forum's activity is gaining a particularly positive role and is relevant for a wider territory than it was designed to cover.

I would like to express my sincere gratit