PRESS RELEASE

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Expressions Syriennes: the Syrian media report in French about the day-to-day lives of the Syrian people

Ever since the start of the uprising led by a section of the Syrian population in March 2011, citizen-journalists and bloggers across the entire country have joined forces in a bid to provide accurate reports of the situation.

With the international press no longer being able to access Syria and 'official' reports being doctored by the various parties involved in the conflict, these civilians are the only eyewitnesses to what is actually going on in the country, and the media outlets that they have formed have been ferociously repressed.

In order to support them in their struggle for a free and professional press, one year ago CFI, aided by the European Union, set up a reception and training centre designed specifically for them – the Syrian Media Incubator.

Previously unpublished news reports originating directly from Syria, and translated into French

The French-language blog Expressions Syriennes (Syrian Expressions) will be fed with a selection of contributions and documents produced by these media outlets and translated into French, which will help us gain a better understanding of the difficulties being encountered each day by the Syrian people still living in the country.

Each week, one or two feature articles, together with photo reports, musical clips and videos, will be published on the blog, which is hosted by Francetvinfo, one of the partners in the project.

The Syrian Media Incubator – A meeting point for journalists and Syrian publications

Expressions Syriennes is one of the direct results of the Syrian Media Incubator, which was opened in September 2014 by CFI, the French media cooperation agency, thanks to funding from the European Union and the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development.

Based in the Turkish city of Gaziantep and lying close to the Syrian border, the centre provides technical facilities (studios, editing rooms, etc.) to those working in the Syrian media, and also delivers a number of training courses (in Arabic) to almost 200 journalists. The overall aim is to make Syria's citizen media better equipped to produce and broadcast reliable, well-balanced news reports, and thus spark the emergence of a new generation of journalists.

Many reports and eyewitness accounts are still being produced in the country today, with the vast majority of them being distributed in paper format in several towns and cities, and sometimes even delivered hand to hand.

These reports show how citizens’ daily lives have changed as a result of the conflict, with one telling how a group once rallied together to restore electricity to a town despite only having scant resources. They also report on happier events such as marriages. They may be accessed from 9 July onwards via the blog (currently only available in French).

http://blog.francetvinfo.fr/expressions-syriennes
About CFI
CFI is the media cooperation agency of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development, and is responsible for coordinating and implementing French aid policy for promoting and enhancing the media in developing countries. CFI works alongside players operating in the media industry (TV, radio, written press, social media), whether state-owned or privately owned, in order to strengthen the modernisation and democratisation procedures that France so avidly supports. CFI is currently involved in around thirty projects that fall within four major programmes: media and pluralism, media and enterprise, media and development, and media and human resources. www.cfi.fr

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