

May 3, 2000

To: All News Editors

**PRESS STATEMENT FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

The National Union of Journalists Malaysia (NUJ) is faced with many challenges as it approaches the new millennium.

After experiencing difficult times during the economic crisis with a number of journalists losing their jobs from downsizing exercise by newspaper companies, we now face a new challenge from the open sky policy which has, to a certain extent made the profession more difficult to comprehend.

The several laws that prohibit a journalist from writing in the print or broadcast media on the other hand offers unlimited freedom on the Internet and as such many readers have subscribed to reading alternative sources.

Journalists in the mainstream newspapers are now facing the dilemma from its counterparts where credibility of sources are questionable and seems biased and partisan. The alternative information has in a way affected the credibility of the mainstream newspapers as a whole in the country.

Therefore, the NUJ is concerned with upholding Press freedom and credibility of information dissemination.

In commemorating World Press Freedom Day today, the NUJ reiterates its call to the Government to provide a more favourable and conducive environment for the Press to operate without fear or favour to encourage journalistic excellence of the highest calibre.

The NUJ therefore urges the Government to repeal the Official Secrets Act 1972, the printing Presses and Publications Act 1984 and the other relevant laws to help build an informed society in this era of information explosion.

On behalf of the Executive Council,

NORILA MOHD. DAUD  
President