

NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER

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JOURNALISTS FROM AFGHANISTAN TO SPEAK ABOUT EXECUTIVE POWER ABROAD DURING THE 2009 PETER JENNINGS PROJECT FOR JOURNALISTS AND THE CONSTITUTION

Philadelphia, PA (February 13, 2009) – Two Afghan journalists, **Nasim Fekrat** and **Masuma Ibrahimi**, will speak at the culminating program of the 2009 **Peter Jennings Project for Journalists and the Constitution** at the National Constitution Center on Sunday, March 1, 2009. Fekrat and Ibrahimi, who are among seven international journalists selected as 2009 Peter Jennings Project Fellows, will discuss issues pertaining to the U.S. Constitution and theirs, including human rights and civil liberties, as well as Afghanistan's impending national elections. PLEASE NOTE: This program is not open to the public. **To schedule interviews with Nasim Fekrat and Masuma Ibrahimi, please contact Ashley Berke at aberke@constitutioncenter.org.**

Nasim Fekrat serves as the director of the Association of Afghan Blog Writers (afghanpenlog.com, afghanpenlog-en.blogspot.com). He is also the founder and director of several news reporting and training organizations that work to bring Afghan journalism into the Internet age. As the leader of a group of young journalists advocating for free press in Afghanistan, Fekrat has had his website hacked, been threatened, been forced to write under a pseudonym, and been driven into exile. Last year, Fekrat was placed in charge of the communications and information committee for the Human Rights and Democracy Center in Kabul, Afghanistan. He also directs Afghan Press (afghanpress.org, afghanpress.af), an online newspaper dedicated to bringing scholars together to discuss and distribute news in Afghanistan's more remote villages, which are rarely represented in the international media.

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ADD ONE/AFGHAN JOURNALISTS

Fekrat is the recipient of the 2005 Freedom of Expression award from Reporters Without Borders and the 2008 Freedom of Expression award from Information Safety and Freedom for his courageous reporting and free press advocacy. A freelance journalist and photographer, his work has appeared on kabuli.org, BBC Persian, Radio Free Europe, and publications run by NATO and the United Nations.

Masuma Ibrahimi is the co-founder and co-director of the Association of Afghan Blog Writers. She is known for her candid and courageous reporting on her Farsi blog, which focuses on the rights of women in Afghanistan. Ibrahimi is one of an extremely limited number of Afghan women to use any mode of public expression, and she is perhaps the only one to blog without the protection of a pseudonym, which she foregoes as an example to others. She invites comments on her blog, but she never removes feedback – no matter how critical – as long as it is not violent or inappropriate. Ibrahimi previously served as the Student Finances Co-Coordinator in the Finance Department of the American University of Afghanistan. She received much of her schooling, including her university degree, in Iran, where she and her family fled during the war in Afghanistan. She is currently a Masters student studying theater directing at Tarbiat Modares University in Tehran, Iran.

Thirty-six journalists from across the country and around the world have been selected to participate in the 2009 Peter Jennings Project for Journalists and the Constitution at the National Constitution Center from February 27 through March 1, 2009. Named in honor of the late, award-winning news anchor and friend of the National Constitution Center, this annual conference gives journalists the opportunity to explore the constitutional dimension in the news today and acquire a deeper understanding of the Constitution and its important role in the lives of all Americans.

The Peter Jennings Project for Journalists and the Constitution is made possible through the generosity of The Annenberg Foundation.

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ADD TWO/AFGHAN JOURNALISTS

The National Constitution Center, located at 525 Arch St. on Philadelphia's Independence Mall, is an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to increasing public understanding of the U.S. Constitution and the ideas and values it represents. The Center serves as a museum, an education center, and a forum for debate on constitutional issues. The museum dramatically tells the story of the Constitution from Revolutionary times to the present through more than 100 interactive, multimedia exhibits, film, photographs, text, sculpture and artifacts, and features a powerful, award-winning theatrical performance, "Freedom Rising". The Center also houses the Annenberg Center for Education and Outreach, which serves as the hub for national constitutional education. Also, as a nonpartisan forum for constitutional discourse, the Center presents – without endorsement – programs that contain diverse viewpoints on a broad range of issues. For more information, call 215.409.6700 or visit www.constitutioncenter.org.

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