

# THE MEDIA IN DEEPLY DIVIDED SOCIETIES: SPEAKERS

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## **Mohamed Nanabhay**

Mohamed Nanabhay is the Deputy CEO of the Media Development Investment Fund (MDIF), which invests in independent media around the world providing the news, information and debate that people need to build free, thriving societies. He joined MDIF in 2015 bringing more than 15 years' experience as a digital media practitioner, entrepreneur, angel investor, and strategist. Previously, Mohamed was the Head of Online at Al Jazeera English where he led the team that produced the award-winning coverage of the Arab revolutions in 2011. He started Al Jazeera's New Media department, and served as an advisor to the Director-General. Mohamed is a member of the Board of the Mozilla Foundation. He previously served as the Board Chair of Global Voices Online, the Advisory Board of Creative Commons, and was a member of the World Economic Forum's Global Agenda Council on Social Media. He received his undergraduate degree in Computer Science at the University of the Witwatersrand and a master's degree in International Relations from the University of Cambridge. He is @mohamed on Twitter.



## **Vikki Cook**

Vikki Cook has over 20 years' broadcasting industry experience. She began her career at the BBC, working in both radio and TV. Vikki moved to Sky in 2001 and held a number of senior executive roles, including Head of Planning, and Head of Home News when Sky News was named RTS News Channel of the Year. Vikki was Deputy Editor of 5News, before joining ESI media in 2013 to take up the role of launch Director of local TV station, London Live. She joined Ofcom in 2017 as Director of Standards and Audience Protection, before moving to become a Director in Content & Media Policy in 2019. Vikki is also Ofcom's lead on all diversity and inclusion work across the UK's broadcast industry. Vikki is an active member of BAFTA and the RTS. Learn more about Vikki's work on Twitter: @Ofcom

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## Charlie Bird

Charlie Bird is one of Ireland's most well known journalists and has had a long and distinguished career in Irish public service broadcasting. In 1974 he joined RTÉ as a current affairs researcher. In 1980 he joined the newsroom as a reporter. In a career which spanned almost four decades he held a number of positions: Chief News Reporter, Special Correspondent, Chief News Correspondent and Washington Correspondent. Over those years he was involved in many foreign assignments including the two Gulf Wars, the attack on the Twin Towers and its aftermath. He also reported extensively on humanitarian stories around the world including the genocide in Rwanda, the boxing day Tsunami and the earthquake in Haiti. Charlie also covered the Troubles in Northern Ireland and the peace process. For over ten years he was RTÉ's designated link to the IRA. He presented a number of major television documentaries travelling to both the North and the South Pole and dealing with issues of climate change. In November 2004 he was awarded an honorary doctorate of laws by University College Dublin for his outstanding services to Irish journalism. In April 2015, he chaired the launch of the historic 'Yes Equality' marriage campaign. On Twitter Charlie is @charliebird49



## Juanita León

Juanita Leon is the founder and director of La Silla Vacía, a pioneering digital political news site in Colombia. She has a masters degree in Journalism from Columbia University in New York and was a Harvard Nieman Fellow in 2006. She has covered the past two peace negotiations with FARC guerrillas, and the one with the paramilitary groups in 2005. She won the Gabo Award for Best Coverage in 2016, the most important journalism award in Iberoamerica, for her coverage of the peace negotiations with FARC in Havana. She has written several books, including Country of Bullets, about the war in Colombia from 2000 to 2005. She's currently an Academic Visitor at Oxford University's Latin American Center, where she is writing a book about journalism and politics in the age of social media in Colombia.

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## **Pawan Bali**

Pawan Bali is a former Indian journalist, who currently works as a conflict resolution and communication consultant in Washington D.C. She works with organisations like the World Bank, United States Institute of Peace (USIP) and non-profits including the UK based Conciliation Resources. Bali works to integrate communication techniques for social and positive behavior change, and continues to explore various ways media can help in peacebuilding. Bali was the bureau chief for an Indian news channel CNN IBN - the Indian affiliate of CNN - in the conflict state of Jammu and Kashmir. With Conciliation Resources, she started the project Dialogue Through Film, where journalists from both the Indian and Pakistani sides of Kashmir collaborated to produce short documentary films and developed a shared narrative. The project was an attempt to challenge the mainstream media polarization, and explore commonalities between conflicting sides. One of the films also won the Bond International Development Positive Collaboration award. See Pawan on Twitter at @bali23



## **Trevor Birney**

Trevor Birney is an Emmy-nominated producer, director, journalist and founder of Fine Point Films.

His production slate includes award-winning Gaza which premiered at Sundance, WGA nominated No Stone Unturned directed by Academy Award-winning Alex Gibney, Emmy nominated Elián for CNN Films, Bobby Sands: 66 Days directed by Brendan J. Byrne and Mercury 13 for Netflix Originals. He is also the co-founder of the television production company Below the Radar and the multi-award-winning investigative journalism website The Detail. On Twitter Trevor is @trevorbirney

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## Nic Dawes

Nic Dawes is the Deputy Executive Director at Human Rights Watch, overseeing the organisation's day-to-day operations and programme. Nic works alongside Executive Director Ken Roth to guide the organisation's strategies and policies. Since joining HRW in 2016, he has overseen the organization's digital, multimedia, and external communications work, as well as strategic planning and the development, implementation, and oversight of policies and standards across the entire organisation. Prior to HRW, Nic served as the Chief Content Officer at India's Hindustan Times, and Editor-in-Chief at South Africa's Mail & Guardian newspaper. As chairperson of the South African National Editor's Forum, Nic has been an activist for press freedom and freedom of information, working to forestall regulatory and legislative efforts to curtail media independence. He serves on the boards of amaBhungane, Coda Story, and Bhekisisa Center for Health Journalism. Nic is the recipient of Sikuvile, Mondi, Taco Kuiper and National Press Club awards. Twitter: @NicDawes



## Milica Pesic

Milica Pesic is the Executive Director of Media Diversity Institute (MDI). She has been working in the Diversity and Media field for more than 20 years designing and supervising multi-national, multi-annual programmes in Europe, NIS, MENA, South Asia, the Sahel, Sub-Saharan, West Africa, China and Cuba. She has co-designed an MA Course in Diversity and the Media where Reporting Religion is one of the main modules. The course is jointly run by the MDI and University of Westminster. A Journalist by profession, she has reported for the BBC, Radio Free Europe, the Times HES, TV Serbia and other media. She holds an MA in International Journalism from City University, London with a thesis on media and propaganda. Prior to MDI, she had worked for New York University, the IFJ (Brussels) and the Alternative Information Network (Paris). MDI has branches in the US, Western Balkans, Belgium and South Caucasus. On Twitter you will find Milica on: @milicapetic

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## Yin Yadanar Thein

Yin Yadanar Thein is the co-founder and director of the national human rights organisation, Free Expression Myanmar (FEM). Prior to co-founding FEM, Yin was the country manager for the free expression INGO, Article 19, and before that a women's rights activist. Yin has worked in Myanmar, on a range of human rights issues, especially on media law reform, right to information, protest, hate speech, gender rights, and digital rights. Yin specialized in gender-based censorship in all its forms, and has since 2012 also advocated with the Myanmar government, national and international stakeholders on the importance of adopting international standards for the country's news media laws, Assembly Law, Telecommunications Law and bills on public service media, right to information and hate speech. Yin has spent time working in Myanmar's IDP camps in Rakhine state, and working with the UN special mechanisms in Geneva. Yin previously worked as a magazine editor, at a time when pre-publication censorship was still in place.



## Anup Kaphle

Anup Kaphle is the editor-in-chief of The Kathmandu Post. Before returning to Nepal last year, Kaphle spent a decade working in US newsrooms, focusing primarily on international reporting and foreign affairs. He was most recently the executive editor at Roads & Kingdoms, producing stories at the intersection of food, travel and foreign reporting. He previously worked as the deputy foreign editor for BuzzFeed News in London, and prior to that, as the digital foreign editor for The Washington Post and a digital fellow for The Atlantic. Kaphle has an M.S degree from Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism. Find Anup on Twitter: @AnupKaphle

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## Jonathan Cohen

Jonathan Cohen was appointed Executive Director of Conciliation Resources (CR) in May 2016. He joined CR in 1997 and developed the Caucasus programme focusing on dialogue and confidence building initiatives to promote peacebuilding in the Caucasus. In September 2008 he became Director of Programmes overseeing peacebuilding and mediation support initiatives in the Caucasus, Colombia, West Africa, East Central Africa, the Horn of Africa, the Philippines, Fiji and India/Pakistan in relation to Kashmir. Previously he served as Deputy Director of the Foundation on Inter-Ethnic Relations in The Hague, working with the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities. In 2007 he was awarded an OBE by the British Government for services to conflict prevention and conflict resolution in the Caucasus. In 2018 Jonathan became Chair of the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO) and an Associate of the Imperial War Museum's Institute for the Public Understanding of War and Conflict. Twitter: @JCohen\_CR



## Adam Smyth

Adam Smyth is the Head of News at BBC Northern Ireland. He leads a team of around 160 journalists producing news stories for radio, television, online and digital platforms. He is a multiple Sony, PPI and IMRO award winner for radio reporting and production. He started at the BBC as a Regional News Trainee in 1995 and spent a decade as a television and radio presenter and reporter for local and network news before making the switch to programme making. During his career he has covered numerous important stories for the BBC including; the murders of Holly Wells and Jessica Chapman, the 9/11 Twin Towers attacks, the visits of Presidents Clinton and Obama to Northern Ireland, and the Holy Cross Girls' School protests in Belfast. His day-to-day role now involves providing strategic and editorial direction to teams producing some of the most popular and appreciated news programmes in these islands. Find Adam on Twitter: @adamcsmyth

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## **Amanda Ferguson**

Amanda Ferguson is a freelance journalist from north Belfast.

She works as a Northern Correspondent and Ireland stringer for a range of clients including Thomson Reuters, The Irish Times and The Washington Post.

She is a broadcaster and regular commentator on radio and TV across British, Irish and international media outlets.

Her other work involves a variety of media projects including fixer/producer, media trainer, panellist, speaker and event chair.

Find Amanda on Twitter: [@AmandaFBelfast](#)



## **Fred Muvunyi**

Fred Muvunyi is a freelance editor at Deutsche Welle's Africa service and an opinion contributor for the Washington Post. Before this, he was Chairman of the Rwandan Media Commission, the Media Self Regulatory Body. Since 2018, he joined a team of analysts for the Freedom House; a US-based independent human rights organization. For the Washington Post and DW, Muvunyi often writes on the decline of democracy in Africa, particularly in the Great Lakes Region. In October 2018, he traveled to Cameroon's Southwest Region where he investigated and reported on the ongoing conflict between the armed separatists and the government of Cameroon. Find him on Twitter: [@MuvunyiF](#)

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## Denis Bradley

Denis Bradley was educated at St Columb's College, Derry and later studied in Rome. He served as a priest in the Bogside and was a 26-year-old curate on Bloody Sunday but left the priesthood later in the 1970s.

He lives in Derry and was a founding member of Northlands alcohol and drugs residential counselling centre in 1973. He served as chairman at the charity for a number of years and he remains involved with the work of the centre, as a consultant.

He was Vice Chairman of the Northern Ireland Policing Board from its formation on 4th November 2001 until his resignation in 2006. A well known political commentator, Denis also writes a monthly column for the Irish News and received an Honorary Doctorate of Law from Ulster University for his contributions to the community and the peace process. In 2007 he was appointed co-chairman, along with Rev. Robin Eames, of the Consultative Group on the Past in Northern Ireland.



## Gian Volpicelli

Gian M. Volpicelli is a senior editor at WIRED UK, where he runs the politics section online, and co-edits the magazine's front-of-the-book section Start.

Gian edits and writes stories about the intersection of technology and politics, covering topics including Big Tech regulation, online harms, disinformation and misinformation, political campaigning technologies, and cryptocurrencies

His work has appeared in The Observer, VICE Motherboard, New Scientist, Ars Technica and New Statesman. On Twitter see @Gmvolpi

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## **Freya McClements**

Journalist and author Freya McClements is Northern Correspondent with The Irish Times and co-author (with Joe Duffy) of the highly acclaimed new book Children of the Troubles.

She is a former reporter and producer with BBC Radio Foyle/Ulster, as well as a documentary producer and presenter for BBC Radio 4 and BBC Radio Ulster, and represents Northern Ireland on the BBC Radio 4 panel show Round Britain Quiz. Find Freya on Twitter: @freyamcc



## **Ivy Goddard**

Ivy Goddard MBE is the Project Director of Inter Ethnic Forum (Mid and East Antrim) which works with ethnic minority communities and the wider community to promote cultural diversity and also supports the BME needs within Mid and East Antrim Borough. Under her leadership the Inter Ethnic Forum continues to be a recognised model of good practice regionally. Ivy represents BME communities on the Regional Race Equality Sub-Group of The Executive Office, the Strategic Cohesion Forum of Northern Ireland Housing Executive the Regional Minority Ethnic and Migrant Steering Group of the Public Health Agency to name a few. She is also the Vice Chair of the Strategic Alliance of Mid and East Antrim Borough Council. She was appointed Deputy Lord-Lieutenant for County Antrim in 2017.

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## Anna Nolan

Anna Nolan uses storytelling and creative campaigning to help activists and non-profit organisations working on a range of social justice issues. Anna was a co-founder and Director at The Syria Campaign where she helped elevate Syria's heroic civil society.

Prior to this she was Strategy Director at Purpose.

Anna is on the Board of Directors of the Karam Foundation, Badael Foundation and The Syria Campaign. Find Anna on Twitter: @annacnolan



## Alan McBride

Alan McBride's life changed forever when the IRA murdered his wife and father-in-law in the bomb attack at Frizzells Fish Shop on the Shankill Road in Belfast in 1993. His response to the bomb was initially one of anger but as the years have passed he has come to view the 'Troubles' as a great tragedy which could have been prevented if only people would agree to live and let live.

Today Alan is an avid peace activist and victims campaigner. He manages the WAVE Trauma Centre in Belfast. Previously his career was in Youth Work, having worked at Lisburn YMCA, National Council of YMCA and the 174 Trust. He was a founding member of Healing Through Remembering and a columnist with the Sunday Life Newspaper. He also served as a Commissioner for Human Rights between 2012 and 2018. Follow Alan's work on Twitter: @WAVETrauma

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## **Christine Bell**

Christine Bell is Professor of Constitutional Law at Edinburgh University, Assistant Principal (Global Justice), and a founder and co-director of the Global Justice Academy, UoE. She is a Fellow of the British Academy. Previously she was Professor of Public International Law, and a founder and Director of the Transitional Justice Institute at the University of Ulster. From 1997-99 she was Director of the Centre for International and Comparative Human Rights Law at Queen's University of Belfast. She has been active in non-governmental organisations, and was chairperson of the Belfast-based Committee on the Administration of Justice from 1995-7, and a founding member of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission established under the Belfast Agreement. In 1999 she was a member of the European Commission's Committee of Experts on Fundamental Rights. She has authored two books on peace agreements and has taken part in various peace negotiations discussions, giving constitutional law and human rights law advice, and also providing training for diplomats, mediators and lawyers working on a variety of international conflicts. Christine is on Twitter: @christinebelled



## **Mike Posner**

Michael Posner is the co-director of the NYU Center for Business and Human Rights and the Jerome Kohlberg Professor of Ethics and Finance at NYU Stern. From September 2009 until March 2013, he served in the Obama Administration as Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor at the US State Department. From 1978 to 2009, he was the Executive Director and the President of Human Rights First, a U.S.-based human rights advocacy organization. Mike is recognised internationally as a leader and expert in advancing a rights-based approach to national security, challenging the practice of torture, combating discrimination, and refugee protection. Mike is on Twitter: @mikehposner

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## **Tim Epple**

Tim Epple is a Research Associate with the Political Settlements Research Programme (PSRP) at the University of Edinburgh Law School. Tim's research interests include local peacebuilding, stabilisation, and peacekeeping. He is also exploring the role of media in peace processes and ways in which researchers can promote the use of evidence in peacebuilding programming. Geographically, Tim's work focuses on West Africa. He has conducted fieldwork on local peace committees in Liberia and has previously gained work experience with the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the University of Oxford's Centre for Socio-Legal Studies.

Tim is keen to connect with journalists and peacebuilders from the 'Global South' and to decolonise media coverage and academic knowledge production on violent conflicts. On Twitter see: @EppleTim



## **Nadine Hack**

Nadine B Hack, CEO beCause Global Consulting. Ethical Corporation shortlisted her Responsible CEO of Year.

Nadine was Board Chair of Desmond Tutu Peace Foundation and served as non-executive director on other for- and not-for profit boards. She's had articles written about or published by her including in The Financial Times, Forbes, The New York Times, Huffington Post, and UN Chronicle. With Master's degrees from Harvard University and The New School, she's a Fellow at New Westminster College, created and taught graduate courses at NYU and SNHU and guest lectured at universities internationally. Find Nadine on Twitter: @NadineHack

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## **Monica McWilliams**

Emeritus Professor at Ulster University, Monica McWilliams is a former chair of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission and currently sits on the government appointed Panel on Disbanding Paramilitary Groups in Northern Ireland.

Monica co-led the Northern Ireland Women's Coalition at the multi-party negotiations that brokered the 1998 Good Friday peace agreement. Find Monica on Twitter: @MonicaBelfast



## **Maggie Beirne**

Maggie Beirne has spent her working life as a human rights practitioner. For some 17 years, she worked with Amnesty International's International Secretariat. She served for several years as a member of the organisation's senior management team as Head of Campaigns and Membership. In that function, she had extensive opportunities to travel and work alongside AI's campaigning membership in different parts of the globe. Maggie also worked for 10 years with the Committee on the Administration of Justice (CAJ), the leading human rights group in Northern Ireland. She was involved in countering human rights abuses and in securing strong human rights protections in Belfast Peace Agreement (1998). She has done occasional projects alongside this work -for example with a UN Mission in Haiti (1993) and serving on a policing commission of inquiry in Guyana (2003), as well as chairing or serving in a voluntary capacity on the board of different local Human Rights initiatives. She is based in London.

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## **Nurcan Baysal**

Nurcan Baysal is a Kurdish writer and human rights defender. She is also an op-ed columnist in Ahvalnews. She was born and grew up in Diyarbakır. For many years, she has worked for the rights of the forced migrated Kurdish population, evacuated villages, the rights of returnees, reconciliation and rural development. She is the author of *O Gün (That Day)*, *Kürdistan'da Sivil Toplum (Civil Society in Kurdistan, co-author)*, *Ezidiler: 73. Ferman (Ezidis: 73rd Verdict)* and *O Sesler (Those Voices)*. She is one of the very few reporting from the inside of the Turkish-Kurdish conflict. Nurcan was awarded the Brave Women Journalists Award presented by the Italian Women Journalists Association in November 2017. She is Global Laureate for Human Rights Defenders at Risk for 2018 of the Front Line Defenders Award. There are several court cases and threats against her because of her articles about human rights and war crimes in Kurdistan. Nurcan is on Twitter: @baysal\_nurcan



## **Dessie Donnelly**

Dessie Donnelly is Director at the Belfast-based Participation and the Practice of Rights (PPR) and has been with the organisation since its inception in 2006. PPR organises across a range of social and economic rights issues and jurisdictions, building power with marginalised communities to force accountability and transparency from the state, expand democratic participation and affect real change. Prior to PPR, Dessie was an organiser in both the Irish and north American labour union movements. Dessie is also a software developer interested in leveraging the power of technology to strengthen social justice movements. @Deasun\_OD

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## **Zaina Erhaim**

Zaina Erhaim is an award winning Syrian journalist and feminist. She was named journalist of the year by Reporters Without Borders in 2015, and the Unsung Heroes in 2016 by Reuters Thomson. She has been working with the IWPR (Institute for War and Peace Reporting) for the last 7 years, trained over 100 media activists on journalism basics in Syria and made a series of short films entitled Syria Rebellious Women. She is now the communication manager for Iraq and Syria programs. Zaina contributed to three books related to journalism and women. Before IWPR, Zaina worked for the BBC. She writes for a variety of outlets including The Guardian, The Economist, Middle East Eye, Alhayat, Al Quds Al Arabi. On Twitter see @ZainaErhaim



## **Sandy Barron**

Sandy Barron is an independent editor who has worked with newspapers, magazines and international development organisations in Belfast, Thailand and Myanmar.

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## **Susan McKay**

Susan McKay is a writer, broadcaster and journalist from Derry. Her work appears in the New Yorker, the New York Times, the Guardian/ObsERVER the London Review of Books and the Irish Times. She also works on projects with community development and human rights groups in Northern Ireland, including WAVE Trauma Centre and the Committee for the Administration of Justice. She recently wrote guidelines for journalists on working with victims and survivors of conflict. These have been adopted by the NUJ and the Commission for Victims and Survivors. She is currently writing a book about borders. On Twitter see: @SusanMcKay15



## **Noel Doran**

Noel Doran has been editor of The Irish News since April, 1999, and is the longest serving editor of a daily title in Ireland, north or south.

He was previously the paper's deputy editor for six years, and earlier in his career was duty news editor with Downtown Radio/Cool FM, local government correspondent with The Belfast Telegraph, and a reporter with both the Ballymena Observer and the Antrim Guardian. On twitter via @irish\_news

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## Stephen Grimason

Stephen Grimason is a former BBC NI Political Editor who led the corporation's coverage through the momentous events of the Good Friday Agreement negotiations and exclusively revealed the deal's contents.

He went on to become Director of Communications for the Northern Ireland Executive set up under the terms of the GFA, a post he held until 2016. He is now a political commentator and communications consultant. On Twitter: @StephenGrimason



## Jeremy Adams

Jeremy Adams is BBC Northern Ireland's Head of Television Current Affairs and the long-standing editor of its multi-award winning Spotlight programme. A BBC trainee he worked for BBC Radio Four and Newsnight before moving to BBC Northern Ireland in 1991 initially as a reporter. During his over twenty years editing Spotlight the programme has broken major stories. Designated a BBC centre of excellence the current affairs department has grown under his leadership to make a quarter of all the BBC's Panorama programmes as well a number of successful BBC Three projects including Stacey Dooley on punishment attacks. Spotlight however will always be his priority. The programme's recent eight part series: Spotlight on the Troubles - A Secret History, which was shown on BBC1 Northern Ireland and BBC 4 network, has been a popular and critical success, variously described as seminal and watershed television.

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## **Cathal McNaughton**

Cathal McNaughton is an Irish photojournalist who until recently was the Chief Photographer for Reuters News Agency in India. In 2018 he was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for his coverage of the Rohingya refugee crisis. His recent coverage of the ongoing conflict in Kashmir led to his expulsion from India. Growing up in a divided society gives a unique perspective and influences his choice to travel extensively covering conflict and highlighting socioeconomic problems. See Cathal on Twitter [@Cathal1978](#)