

## Conference

### **In Focus: Media – Conflict – Migration.**

### **The conflict potential of the media coverage regarding migration from the countries of the Arab Spring to Europe.**

- Time:** 4 December 2012, 10 a.m. – 5.00 p.m.
- Venue:** Deutsche Welle, Kurt-Schumacher-Str. 3, Bonn
- Organisation:** Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen (Institute for Foreign Cultural Relations – ifa), Deutsche Welle (DW) and Bonn International Center for Conversion (BICC)

In Europe, the Arab Revolutions have not only raised great hope of a political and social “spring” in the region, but also elicited fears and conflicts regarding the migratory movements from the respective countries to the European continent.

In this process, the media coverage is playing a crucial role. By informing about events, the media stands in a field of tension between policy interests and its societal duty to secure reliable, well-researched and preferably „conflict-sensitive” journalism. Beyond the scope of the media and political actors, academia also has an important role to play when it comes to the delicate and complex issue of migration. Academia is supposed to act as a corrective of biased or distorted societal and political narratives and discourses and thereby ensure an accurate representation of migration issues.

The conference takes a close look at the media coverage of migratory movements to Europe from the countries of the Arab Spring during the revolts. The pictures, articles und reports have created a certain image that is to be analyzed. Drawing together representatives from the media, politics and science, discussions will address the discrepancies between public perceptions and real events. Experts will unfold the reasons for and the consequences of that gap and identify possible solutions to the prevailing problems that are connected with the specific migratory movements in question.

## Conference Programme

### 10.00 am Welcome Address

- **Sebastian Körber**, ifa; **Susanne Heinke**, BICC and **Adelheid Feilcke**, DW

### 10.15 am Introduction

- **Daniele Saracino**, ifa

### 10.25 am Keynote

- **Dr. Lale Akgün**, State Chancellery North Rhine-Westphalia, Former MP

### 11.00 am Panel 1: Under scrutiny: The media coverage on the migratory movements from the countries of the Arab Spring to Europe.

The movements that took place during the revolts from the Arab Spring countries to Europe are a complex phenomenon with manifold causes. It is the media's duty to characterize and analyze those processes in order to make the realm of migration understandable and comprehensible for the public. How do the media meet this task? Does a discrepancy between the image conveyed via the media and the real events exist – and if so, why? Which specific characteristics of migration are represented in the media coverage? To what extent do politics have an influence on the public perception and which interests do they pursue? What role do scholars play in this respect?

#### Panelists:

- **Salah Methnani** (Journalist, COPEAM)
- **Loay Mudhoon** (Scholar and Journalist, Qantara)
- **Ruth Vollmer** (Researcher, BICC)
- **Fabian Pianka** (Moderator, DW)

### 12.30 pm Lunch Break

### 1.30 pm Panel 2: National perspectives, political narratives, public discourses and media coverage: How big is the conflict potential regarding migration amongst the countries in Europe and who is responsible?

The different agendas of the EU member-states regarding migration are a consistent political explosive. Does the national media coverage add fuel to this conflict potential? How do representatives of single member-states (Italy, France, Germany) assess the migratory movements from the countries of the Arab Spring? How is the media's examination shaped by the respective political agendas? What impact do national public and political reactions to migration from the countries of the Arab Spring have on the relations amongst the EU member-states? Is it possible that migration is instrumentally used via the media coverage?

#### Panelists:

- **Dr. Lale Akgün** (State Chancellery North Rhine-Westphalia, Former MP)
- **Prof. Dr. Kai Hafez** (University of Erfurt)
- **John Maguire** (Journalist, Radio France Internationale)
- **Jerry Sommer** (Moderator, Freelance Journalist)

**3.00 pm Coffee Break**

**3.15 pm Panel 3: The role of conflict-sensitive journalism in producing a well-balanced perspective on migration from the countries of the Arab Spring and its impact on Europe.**

Conflict-sensitivity should be self-evident in professional journalism. However, are its principles adhered to adequately in the coverage of migration from the Arab Spring countries to Europe? How can journalism mitigate conflict potential between the different actors? Are the people represented by the statistics considered adequately in the public, medial and political debate? Do the media cover migrants' grievances in a well-balanced way? Do they spotlight the positive aspects of migration adequately? For instance, regarding the demographic change in Europe or the possibility of a renewed and closer cooperation amongst the EU member-states as well as with the countries of the Arab Spring?

**Panelists:**

- **Dr. Andreas Schwarz** (Ilmenau University of Technology)
- **Prof. Dr. Gernot Wolfram** (MHMK Macromedia University for Media and Communication)
- **Martin Zint** (Journalist, Weltfriedensdienst e.V.)
- **Karin Schädler** (Moderator, Freelance Journalist)

**4.45 pm Conclusions and Future Outlook**

- **Dr. Odila Triebel** (ifa)

**5.00 pm End of Conference**

## Speakers

**Lale Akgün**, born in Turkey, holds a doctorate in psychology from the University of Cologne. From 1981 until 1997 she served as a family consultant to the City of Cologne, by 1992 as deputy agency chief. Afterwards she was chief of the “center of migration” of North Rhine-Westphalia. In 2002 she was elected as MP of the German Bundestag where she was member of the Committee on the Affairs of the European Union, vice-chairman of the working group European Politics and Migration and the SPD’s Faction Representative for Islamic Affairs. After leaving the Bundestag in 2009, she joined the State Chancellery of North Rhine-Westphalia where she is now responsible for International Affairs and development policies. She has published several books, articles and essays on the topics of migration and integration.

**Kai Hafez**, is Professor (Chair) for International and Comparative Media and Communication Studies at the University of Erfurt, Germany. He was a Senior Research Fellow of the German Institute for Middle East Studies, Hamburg, and a Guest Professor at Oxford University and the American University in Cairo. Hafez’ research focuses on: international media reporting, globalization and Islamic-Western relations; mass media and political transformation in the Arab World; and on media and migration in Europe. He is a member of several editorial boards of international academic magazines, and has been a frequent advisor to German governments.

**John Maguire** was named Director of International Development of Audiovisuel de la France, AEF, in March 2012. He had held the post of RFI’S Director of International Affairs from May 2010. Before that he was a journalist and then head of the International Training department from 2004 to 2010. He was previously Managing Editor of RFI’s English service for 6 years. He is an African specialist and has taught in several French schools of journalism. He is a former correspondent of Irish Radio-Television (RTE) and The Irish Times in Paris.

**Salah Methnani**, born in Tunisia, graduated in Foreign Languages and Literature from Tunis University and moved to Italy shortly after. He has worked as a journalist and program author for the pan-Arabian TV “Arab Radio and Television”, as a correspondent for the Tunisian Radio and for a Tunisian newspaper in Rome. In 2011, he became foreign correspondent for Rainews24 and reported on the Arab Spring from Tunisia, Egypt and Libya. Since 2012 he has been reporting from the Syrian conflict area. On November 24th 2012 he was awarded the prestigious “Maria Grazia Cutulli” prize for his coverage.

**Andreas Schwarz**, PhD is senior lecturer in communication and chair of the Department of Media Studies at Ilmenau University of Technology. His research interests include crisis communication, strategic communication, international/intercultural communication and journalism. Since 2006 he is managing director of the International Research Group on Crisis Communication (IRGoCC, [www.crisis-communication.de](http://www.crisis-communication.de)). Schwarz is founding chair of the Temporary Working Group on Crisis Communication at the European Communication Research and Education Association. His research was published internationally in journals such as Public Relations Review, Communications and the International Journal of Strategic Communication.

**Ruth Vollmer** holds an MA in Linguistics, Political Science and Psychology from the University of Bonn. In her Master thesis, she applied a critical discourse analysis approach to the press coverage on the second German "Integrationsgipfel". During her studies, Ruth Vollmer worked as a freelancer with the German Commission for UNESCO and later became a Research Associate with UNU EHS. At the Bonn International Center for Conversion, Ruth has been working on European migration policies, the role of migrant organisations in integration and development processes, consequences of environmentally induced migration, migration and displacement in Sub-Saharan Africa, and the nexus between migration and security.

**Gernot Wolfram** is an author und publicist, and a professor for Cultural Studies and Cultural Administration at Macromedia University for Media and Communication in Berlin and Kufstein University of Applied Sciences. His field of work includes theories in Cultural Studies, Sociology of Culture with an emphasis on „Fremdheitsdiskurse“, integration and migration in Europe, Cultural Administration from a Cultural Science perspective and minority group discourses. He is co-founder of the Kufstein Summer School in Epidavros/Greece, which focuses on European cultural policy. Since 2009 he is member of "Team Europe" of the European Commission in Germany.

**Martin Zint** was editor with the "Evangelischer Hörfunkdienst", the radio news service of the Protestant News agency. Since 1995 he has been working as a freelance radio journalist, reporting on West-African Issues (Deutsche Welle, German public radio, nationwide newspaper). He specializes in "conflict sensitive reporting / peace journalism" and runs training sessions in Germany and French speaking countries in West-Africa. Furthermore, Martin Zint is co-founder and National Coordinator of the Peace and Conflict Journalism Network / PECOJON. Additionally, he presently is press-officer, responsible for public relations and editor of the members-magazine of the „Weltfriedensdienst“, a German NGO for development peace work.

## Moderators

**Fabian Pianka** studied Communications and Political Science (M.A.) at the University of Westminster and the Diplomatic Academy of London in London and Paris. Since 2006 he has worked for the Directorate-General (department of International Relations) at Deutsche Welle, Germany's international broadcaster. In 2010, Pianka was awarded a stipend from the Institute of Foreign Cultural Relations (ifa), an award which promotes dialogue between future "multipliers" of predominant Muslim countries and Germany. The scholarship took place at the Arab States Broadcasting Union (ASBU) in Tunis, Tunisia. Pianka also works as a moderator with a regional focus on the Middle East and Africa.

**Karin Schädler**, 32, works as a freelance journalist, project manager and facilitator in Berlin, Germany, and in other countries. Her focus is on migration topics (especially Islam and Muslim migrants) and on Foreign Policy (especially Arab countries, Afghanistan/Pakistan). Her workshops mostly deal with intercultural understanding and/or journalism. She is currently managing journalism projects in Pakistan and Afghanistan for Deutsche Welle Akademie. She is an alumni of Berlin Journalism School. ([www.karinschaedler.de/](http://www.karinschaedler.de/) [www.twitter.com/karinschaedler](https://www.twitter.com/karinschaedler)).

**Jerry Sommer** studied History, Political and Educational Sciences at the University of Hamburg. Afterwards, he worked as a freelance journalist for a variety of German media (newspapers, radio, television) especially on European affairs and armament/ disarmament issues. He lived in London from 1987 to 1991 and in Brussels from 1999 to 2002. Today, he is based in Düsseldorf/Germany. Jerry Sommer began working for BICC in 2005 and has been BICC Associate Researcher since 2007.