



14th January 2009

CNN MULTICHOICE AFRICAN JOURNALIST AWARDS 2009

CNN International and MultiChoice this week officially launched the CNN MultiChoice African Journalist 2009 Awards. The winners of these prestigious annual Awards will be announced at a gala ceremony to be held in Durban, South Africa in July 2009.

Tony Maddox, Executive Vice President and Managing Director of CNN International, said: “The CNN MultiChoice African Journalist Awards, now in its fourteenth year, truly represents the very best in journalism from across the African continent. It is an annual privilege to pay tribute to such a wide range of talented individuals, all of whom have unique and compelling stories to tell, and to join in the celebration of their abilities.”

Nolo Letele, CEO MultiChoice South Africa, said: “A thriving, independent and authentic media continues to play a major role in building democracies on the African continent. We are therefore delighted to once again partner with CNN, in recognising and celebrating media excellence with the CNN MultiChoice African Journalist of the Year 2009 Awards.”

Eben Greyling, President of MultiChoice Africa, said: “We are very proud to once again partner with CNN to recognise and encourage excellence in journalism in Africa. These awards recognise and celebrate the hard work, the talent, the sacrifice and the dedication that the finest African journalists deliver. As a company committed to the growth of media on the continent we strongly believe in supporting the development of African journalists.”

Hopewell Rugoho-Chin’ono, from Zimbabwe, was awarded the top prize at the CNN MultiChoice African Journalist 2008 Awards ceremony. Hopewell, founder and film

director for Television International, Zimbabwe, won for his story 'Pain in My Heart', which was chosen from among 1912 entries from a record 44 nations across the African continent.

Hopewell Rugoho-Chin'ono said: "Winning the CNN Multichoice African Journalist of the Year award was the highlight of my career. I work in a very difficult country which is not comfortable with free speech. The award gave me protection from harassment, since it raised my profile. Professionally it opened new doors and has turned me into an international correspondent with offers coming from major international broadcasters. The recognition has also given me the faith and the zeal to encourage my fellow journalists in Zimbabwe, who have told me countless times that they felt hopeless but now feel that they can also compete on the international journalistic platform. Personally, I felt humbled meeting respected international broadcasting journalists and to hear them say they admire my work. It gave me the impetus to carry on with my work each time I felt low, due to the working conditions in my country."

Over the past fourteen years, the competition has grown in size and status to become Africa's most prestigious media event. In 2008, it attracted a record-number of entries from 44 African countries and a 'Highlights Programme' of the ceremony, held in Accra, Ghana, was broadcast in 41 African countries, on the Africa Channel in the US, OBE TV in the UK and RTP Africa.

This year, the competition will recognise excellence in the following categories:

- Tourism Award
- Arts and Culture Award
- Economics & Business Award
- Environment Award sponsored by Ecobank
- Free Press Africa Award
- MSD Health & Medical Award
- HIV/AIDS Reporting in Africa
- Mohamed Amin Photographic Award sponsored by A24 Media
- Print General News Award sponsored by Safebond Africa Ltd.
- Radio General News Award
- Sport Award sponsored by Global Media Alliance
- Television – Features Award sponsored by IPP Media Tanzania

- Television – News Bulletin Award
- Francophone General News Awards (Print and TV/Radio)
- Portuguese Language General News Award

From these category winners, the judges choose the overall winner - The CNN MultiChoice African Journalist 2009.

Finalists in the 2009 competition will participate in a four day finalists' programme that will include a media forum and networking opportunities with senior journalists, editors, business leaders and media owners from across the continent, culminating in a gala awards ceremony in July, 2009. Each category winner receives a cash prize, plus laptop and printer. The CNN MultiChoice African Journalist 2009 will receive an additional cash prize and a trip to CNN Center in Atlanta.

The competition is open to African nationals who are professional journalists including freelancers across print, television, internet, photographic and radio. Full details on how to enter can be found by logging on at www.cnn.com/africanawards. The closing date for entries is 16th February, 2009 and the judging will take place in April. All entries should be broadcast or published during January – December 2008.

Note to Editors:

Judging of the entries will take place in April by a prestigious panel and includes: Azubuike Ishiekwene, Executive Director, Punch Nigeria Limited; Ferial Haffajee, Editor-in-Chief, Mail & Guardian, South Africa; Joel Kibazo, Journalist and Media Consultant; Arlindo Lopes, Secretary General of SABA – Southern African Broadcasting Association; Sophie Ly Sow, Regional Communications Officer for Oxfam/West Africa; Kim Norgaard, CNN's Johannesburg Bureau Chief, Brahim Ouedraogo, Senior Radio Reporter/Producer, Radio Nationale du Burkina and Anna Umbima, journalist and broadcaster. Filipe Correi de Sá, Senior Producer at BBC World Service will help judge the Portuguese-speaking category.

www.cnn.com/africanawards

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