



HonestReporting

Defending Israel From Media Bias



2012

YEAR IN REVIEW



A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIRMAN



Dear Friends,

Israel continues to come under assault in the media. One of the reasons I accepted the chairmanship of HonestReporting was the recognition that all of us can play a role in fighting this anti-Israel media bias.

While HonestReporting relies on the thousands of its readers to take action, I'm constantly amazed at just how much the organization produces and achieves with such a small yet dedicated team.

While many organizations have cut back during this difficult economic period, HonestReporting, through creative thinking and strategic planning, has managed to continue expanding the scope of its activities. A completely redesigned website, professionally produced videos, educational materials and, of course, the regular media alerts have ensured substantial growth in the number of people viewing HR content.

Like many supporters of Israel, I'm concerned at the lack of knowledge and ability within our own communities to stand up for Israel. I believe that HonestReporting fulfils a vital educational role in addition to holding the media to account. It is a source of great encouragement that HR is demonstrably reaching beyond the choir, making inroads on the majority of the public that have previously not known or not cared about Israel and the Middle East conflict.

I'm sure we all wish for a time when HonestReporting will no longer be needed. In the meantime, I hope that this brief overview of 2012's activities will enhance your commitment to HonestReporting's future endeavors.



David A. Barish, Ph.D.
Chairman of the Board, HonestReporting

HonestReporting BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO



2012 witnessed some of the most exciting developments in our recent history.

Central to our growth and achievements has been our new International Headquarters in Jerusalem.

Our first editorial base is also the home of our lecture

facility complete with a rooftop deck designed to cater for student and mission groups from all over the world.

Operation Pillar of Defense saw our new premises transformed into a “war room,” for our media monitoring efforts. Being ready for action and working together in real time afforded us a tactical edge to swiftly counter the lies and misinformation before they could gain a foothold. In fact, our ability to identify, verify and publish a counter effort to the “fake injury” footage (see page 10) was achieved in less than 90 minutes. Our response was shared and elevated as the authoritative account of this fake footage story. So important was the rapid-response capability of our work that over a quarter of a million people saw our video bulletin within 48 hours. CNN and BBC had no option but to evaluate and reconsider the source of the Reuters footage in question.

2013 will see us working hard to develop a presence in new regions, with community involvement and support emerging from Asia, South America, and Australia, in addition to renewed efforts in the UK, Canada, and Europe. In fact, November 2012 witnessed the first joint HonestReporting-New South Wales (Australia) Jewish Board of Deputies Israel Mission – a huge success which we plan to repeat in 2013. You can read more about it within these pages and perhaps consider how your local community might partner with us here in Israel for an unforgettable advocacy training experience.

As weakness and uncertainty in the financial sector continue to suppress income against our revenue goals, we are continuing with a conservative approach in committing to any new staff or outsourced overhead.

The challenge of developing and realizing the objectives and projects laid out in this review depend wholly on a strong financial outlook for HonestReporting. To that end we will be looking at legacy and capital security grants as initiatives through which we can plan mid-to-long-term development responsibly and securely. Importantly I want to recognize each and every one of you who make our work possible. I thank you for standing with HonestReporting despite the economic climate and numerous important causes you may also be involved with. We appreciate everything you do for us and consider it a privilege to serve Israel on your behalf.

Looking only forward.



Joe Hyams
CEO, HonestReporting

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This publication contains underlined hyperlinks in blue text. Clicking them from this PDF will open a related web page. The Table of Contents above is linked to interior pages.

WEBSITE GROWTH

HonestReporting's website enjoyed unprecedented growth in 2012, with **more than 1.5 million visits to the site**, nearly double the number from the year before. HonestReporting published 87 individual communiqués and media critiques, sent out 71 mailings, and added 12 commentaries and guest posts as well as the regular Israel Daily News Stream.

All of that activity generated **3.1 million pages viewed on our site** throughout the year, which is more than double that of 2011. A significant portion of those visitors were referred through HR's strong presence on Facebook and Twitter.

In addition, the figures do not include people who viewed HR's

content hosted on other sites, such as YouTube, Slideshare, and Flickr. Well over 700,000 people visited our pages on those sites, bringing HR's total to **nearly 4 million pieces of content viewed**.

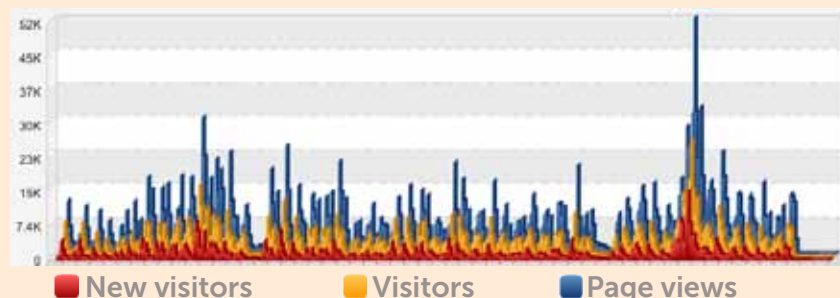
SITE USAGE

Jan 1, 2012 to Dec 31, 2012

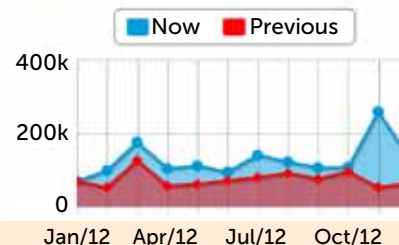
Visitors	584,772	+37%
Page Views	3,140,361	+109%
Visits	1,522,626	+70%
Search Engines	135,978	+40%
Referring Sites	603,601	+80%

DAILY STATS FOR 2012

3,140,361 Total page views
1.95 Page views per visit
43.2% New visitors ratio



SITE VISITS



BREADTH OF AND SPEED OF CONTENT

Israel Daily News Stream

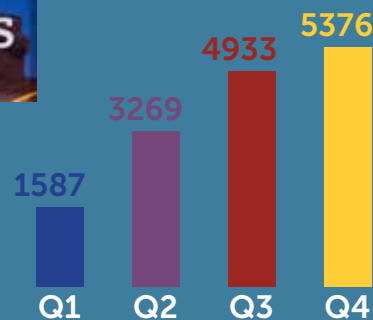
With the realization that our internal, staff-only daily review of the media was full of rich content, we opened it up to our wider community in the form of the Media Cheat Sheet. We've improved the product, relaunching to our entire list as the Israel Daily News Stream, our daily roundup of everything you need to know about how the media is covering Israel, all in

one place for easy reference, delivered directly to your inbox every morning.

The IDNS is now one of HonestReporting's most widely read products, gaining traction with a new and loyal readership, enjoying social media support and attracting thousands of views every day. Average number of readers per post showed steady growth over the year. [Get yours today!](#)



Average views of IDNS posts in 2012:

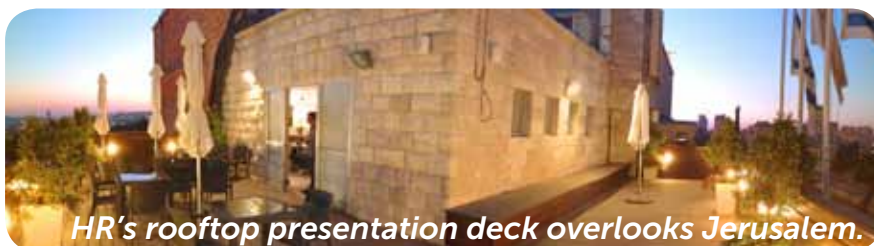


By the end of 2012, the IDNS had achieved over 940,000 page views.

INTERNATIONAL HEADQUARTERS: REALIZING A DREAM

HonestReporting's brand new Jerusalem Headquarters and editorial suite was officially opened by *The Times of Israel* Founding Editor David Horovitz in the presence of HR Mission participants.

The transition into our new office and teaching space is both a symbolic illustration and very real indication of our growth from a small group of scrappy grass-roots activists into a serious media watchdog, a powerhouse and a true force to be reckoned with. We have finally grown into ourselves.



HR's rooftop presentation deck overlooks Jerusalem.

Our new central facility makes us more accessible to student and professional groups from around the world who are interested in taking advantage of our advocacy training programs. This is the beginning of an exciting new era for HonestReporting.

Concentrating our editorial staff in one place has also led to improved communication, collaboration, and efficiency resulting in expanding areas of quality content.

In addition, the new headquarters has allowed us to provide a physical space to host interns who have arrived at HonestReporting both independently and through our working relationships with student organizations and gap year volunteer programs.

These interns have not only contributed to the work of HonestReporting but also return to their campuses having experienced the world of pro-Israel advocacy and able to promote our work to their peers.

Schechter Neshama advocacy trainees in our Jerusalem HQ.

HR HOLDS RECEPTION AT AIPAC CONFERENCE



HonestReporting was proud to take part in the 2012 AIPAC Policy Conference, where Mission alumni, subscribers, and supporters gathered for a unique briefing.

Our after-hours Dessert Reception was honored by a guest speaker – previously unannounced to those gathered – Mr. Noam Katz, Minister for Public Diplomacy at Israel's Embassy in Washington, D.C.

The buzz, the sense of occasion, and the political tension rolling through D.C. Sunday night would have given Minister Katz plenty else to give priority to. But he delivered a frank, engaging message to the HR reception.

Namely that HonestReporting, and groups like ours, are essential as they are central to our shared responsibility to check falsehood and abuse directed at Israel via the media, and in particular the emergent media tools of the Internet age. Addressing the audience, Minister Katz said:



Minister of Public Diplomacy Noam Katz (third from right) with HonestReporting's U.S.A. Executive and Board members.

“When I think about organizations like HonestReporting, there is no doubt that they have the ability to do the work that will expose truth, and the ability to choose how to disseminate it.”

HR's presence at AIPAC was an important opportunity to demonstrate our commitment to shared goals when it comes to defending public opinion vis-à-vis Israel.

LANDMARK LEGAL SUCCESS: HR TAKES ON *THE GUARDIAN* AND THE UK'S PRESS COMPLAINTS COMMISSION

HonestReporting launched a complaint to the UK PCC following a “correction” that appeared in *The Guardian* whereby the paper not only denied that Jerusalem was Israel’s capital but also unilaterally decided that Tel Aviv was.

Much to everyone’s shock, the PCC sided with *The Guardian* in declaring Tel Aviv to be the Israeli capital.

In cooperation with the expertise of Asserson Law Office, we initiated legal proceedings with the aim of overturning both the PCC’s ruling and *The Guardian*’s original statement. In addition, HonestReporting’s campaign on this issue included a humorous video featuring residents of Tel Aviv and the city’s mayor declaring Jerusalem to be Israel’s capital.

The PCC was forced to reconsider its ruling, which was then overturned. As a consequence, *The Guardian* acknowledged that it was wrong to state Tel Aviv was Israel’s capital. The newspaper’s style guide was also amended to ensure that this error will never be repeated.

On the back of this result, HonestReporting also forced the *Daily Mail* and *Daily Telegraph* to correct similar mistakes.



HR’s Managing Editor Simon Plosker made headlines.

These events were widely covered at all points in the process by media including: [*The Times of Israel*](#), [*Jerusalem Post*](#), [*Commentary Magazine*](#), [*Jewish Telegraphic Agency*](#), [*Jewish*](#)

[*Chronicle*](#), [*JN1 TV*](#), [*Jewish News*](#), [*Jewish Telegraph*](#), and [*European Jewish Press*](#). Lead lawyer Trevor Asserson also had opinion pieces published in the [*Jerusalem Post*](#) and [*Jewish Chronicle*](#).



CASE STUDIES OF NOTE

HR Forces *Financial Times* Hamas Clarification

The *Financial Times* is second only to *The Wall Street Journal* as the broadsheet financial newspaper of note, particularly outside of the U.S., which is why we considered it so important to take action.

Back in December 2011, the *Financial Times* [refused to correct an error](#) during an email exchange with HonestReporting. Covering the 24th anniversary “celebrations” of Hamas, the paper reported Hamas boasts of killing 1365 “Zionist soldiers.” The *Financial Times* reinterpreted the statement to mean “Israeli soldiers.”

Despite the fact that other media and Hamas itself understood the figure to include Israeli civilians and military personnel alike, the *FT* simply refused to acknowledge this despite HR providing it with crystal-clear statistical evidence to back this up.

The *FT* told us that **“we don’t feel a correction is warranted”** and **“Hamas was clearly not talking about civilians.”**

While we usually encourage our subscribers to take action, in this case, as the issue had arisen as a result of a direct exchange between HR and the *FT*, we decided, on a matter of principle, to take matters further. Both on behalf of the victims of Hamas terror and to see for ourselves whether the official channels of complaint

would actually work against a UK media outlet, we submitted a formal complaint to the UK’s Press Complaints Commission (PCC).

Some two months later, here is the [result](#) (registration required; also on p. 12 of the *FT*’s Mideast print edition of February 29):

February 29, 2012 6:17 pm

Clarification

Hamas’ bellicose statement in December about its violent attacks since 1987 claimed that the Islamist movement had killed 1365 “Zionist” soldiers, rather than “Israeli” soldiers as reported. The figure appears to have referred to both civilian and military casualties (Uprisings steer Hamas to path of non-violence, Dec. 19).

While the *FT*’s final clarification doesn’t tick all the boxes, nonetheless, this is a successful conclusion. The *FT* was held accountable to the extent that the paper’s Senior Legal Counsel was forced to defend the *FT* when the PCC became involved.

It also showed how just one single complaint made by an individual can get results if one is prepared to persevere and not give up. After all, it took many email exchanges overseen by the PCC, before the *FT* was even prepared to address the main thrust of our complaint.

This was also an opportunity for us, at HonestReporting, to test the Press Complaints Commission and to judge its effectiveness. That this case had to be mediated by the PCC in the first place is an indictment of the *FT*’s stubbornness, bad faith, and a disturbing unwillingness to hold itself to journalistic standards even when presented with an overwhelming body of evidence.



Israel Takes Action after HR Exposes False Photo Tweeter as UN Employee

HonestReporting helped promote the IDF's exposé of a false photo, allegedly depicting the results of Israeli air strikes in Gaza. The offending photo was originally tweeted by Khulood Badawi.

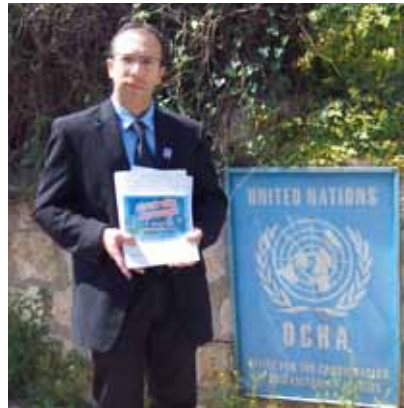
We dug deeper and found that Khulood Badawi was an employee of the UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in Jerusalem.

We immediately launched a campaign calling for Badawi's dismissal. **As a direct result of our information, this call was publicly repeated inside the UN itself by Israel's Ambassador to the UN, Ron Prosor.**

UN Undersecretary Valerie Amos responded by launching an internal inquiry into Badawi's conduct.

In the meantime, a petition promoted by

HR garnered over 15,000 signatures, including some 6,000 new subscribers. HR CEO **Joe Hyams personally delivered the petition to the OCHA headquarters in Jerusalem.**



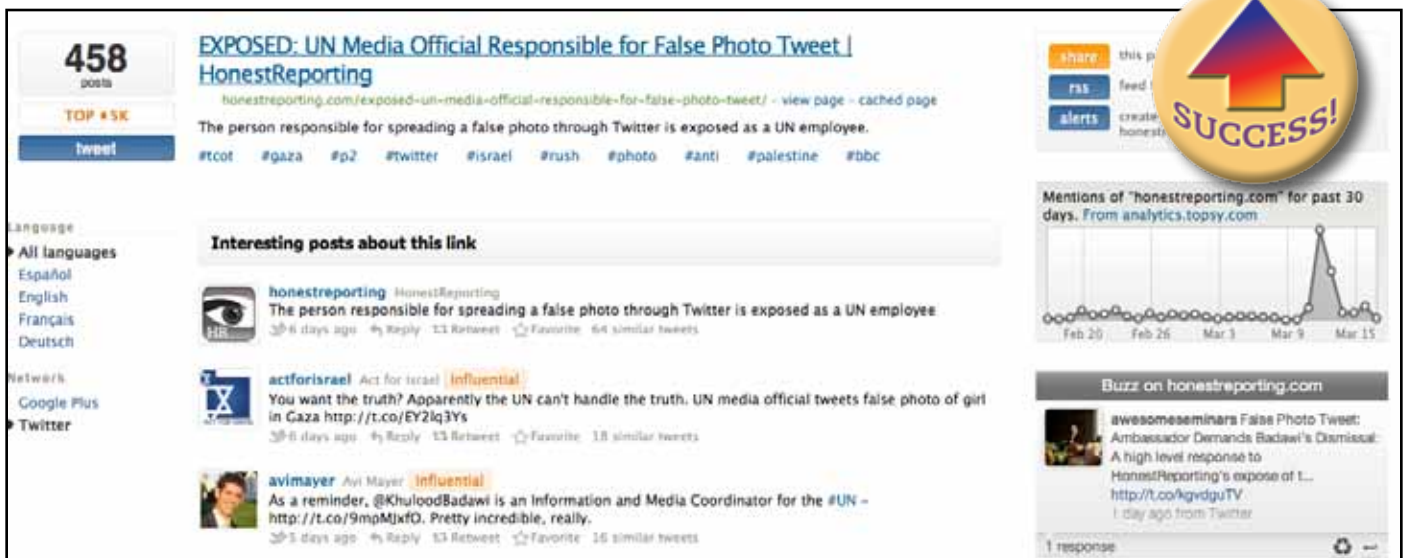
HonestReporting was credited with exposing Badawi in media outlets that included the Jewish Chronicle, The Times of Israel, Jerusalem Post, Israel Hayom, Ottawa Citizen, and The Blaze, one of the most prominent conservative news and opinion sites in the U.S.



THEBLAZE

Here's the problem: The photo is apparently from 2006 and has no relation whatsoever to Israel (or violence for that matter). While it was sent on March 10, the tweet is still present on Badawi's account and has been shared by many other users, including **activist and filmmaker Diana Alzeer.**

On Monday, HonestReporting **wrote** that the photo, "...was proven to have originated in 2006 and to have had nothing at all to do with Israeli action. This photo is now the top tweet for #Gaza, with over 300 retweets. It is completely false."



Screenshot showing HR's social media reach on Twitter where the Badawi story was retweeted and circulated widely.

Israeli Media: Addressing the Source of the Problem

It has long been recognized that some of the most negative stories appearing in the international media are taken directly from the pages of Israel's own domestic

media, particularly the English language edition of *Haaretz*.

That's why we took on *Haaretz*'s Gideon Levy and took apart his analysis of a poll that accused the Israeli public of supporting apartheid. The story appeared in a number of international media outlets causing Israel's image a great deal of harm.

HonestReporting's systematic debunking of Levy and his charges were a valuable tool for subscribers to respond to their own media while also adding to the pressure on *Haaretz* to acknowledge the error.

Gideon Levy was the winner of the 2012 [Dishonest Reporting Award](#), further



publicizing his credentials as a writer not to be trusted and *Haaretz* as a paper that should not be relied on by the international media for anti-Israel stories.



Guest Posts

HonestReporting's readership appreciates a wide breadth of information and opinion on a variety of media and Israel-related topics. It's a sign of the esteem in which HonestReporting is held that credible guest writers are happy to contribute posts and opinion pieces.

Guest writers have included former *Jerusalem Report* editor-in-chief Matthew Kalman on English-language Israeli press, the JCPA's Professor



Manfred Gerstenfeld on Norwegian media, **Emily Gian of the Zionist Council of Victoria** on Australian media, Lyn Julius on Jewish refugees from Arab lands, Ulrich Sahm on German media, and Rolene Marks on South African media.



HI SIMON,

I HAVE TO SAY, IT WAS A REAL HONOUR TO WRITE SOMETHING FOR HR AS IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN ONE OF MY FIRST POINTS OF REFERENCE EVER SINCE I STARTED WORKING IN ISRAEL ADVOCACY IN 2002. IF YOU WOULD EVER LIKE ANYTHING WRITTEN AGAIN FROM AN AUSSIE PERSPECTIVE, PLEASE FEEL FREE TO CONTACT ME.

BEST WISHES,
EMILY

Fighting the Media Battle During Operation Pillar of Defense

The IDF's military operation to bring Gazan rocket fire to an end was viewed as one of Israel's most successful and efficient efforts on the media battlefield relative to what had gone before.

HonestReporting played a prominent role in promoting and multiplying the vast amount of information that the IDF was producing on social media platforms. We were the first and fastest to publish a primer explaining the military operation only hours after it had begun and the developing conflict was live blogged as events unfolded.



HR staff on duty during the military operation.

We also played a key role in exposing a new case of “Pallywood” after *Reuters* footage aired on both *BBC* and *CNN* showed an apparent Palestinian “casualty” back on his feet and recovered only minutes later.

With editorial and technical staff together in HR's Headquarters, we were able

to package the material into a branded [video](#) produced in a mere 90 minutes and uploaded to YouTube. The video has achieved over 325,000 views, making it HonestReporting's most successful video ever and demonstrating that it is possible to reach far beyond HR's traditional subscriber base.



In the aftermath of the conflict, Simon Plosker appeared on a guest panel at a synagogue in Modi'in to discuss the media coverage. Panelists included a Prime Minister's Office representative and a former Israel Police spokesperson.





HR Managing Editor Simon Plosker accompanied a MediaCentral field trip to Sderot and the surrounding area.



“We received HonestReporting’s new primer on the Israeli-Arab conflict today, and an excellent document it is... better than any we could produce at short notice.”

*Information Officer
Embassy of Israel located in Europe*

HonestReporting’s First E-Book

Sometimes, the best way to fight media bias is to proactively educate the public about the history of the region and the central role the media play in shaping people’s opinions. This year, HR released a 34-page primer to help deepen people’s understanding of the central issues affecting Israel today. We published it as a downloadable e-book accessible to anyone on their computers, tablets, or e-readers.

The e-book is particularly useful for new readers of HonestReporting, and it is being used as an incentive for new visitors to our site to become subscribers to our email updates. After only a few weeks of release, the e-book has been downloaded more than 2,500 times, proving that people trust HonestReporting as a source of information about the region, not only about issues related to the media.

HR IN THE MEDIA

With the opening of the new International Headquarters and the increase in content and output, so there has been a corresponding increase in PR benefits and HonestReporting's profile. In addition to the aforementioned examples, HonestReporting appeared in the following media outlets:

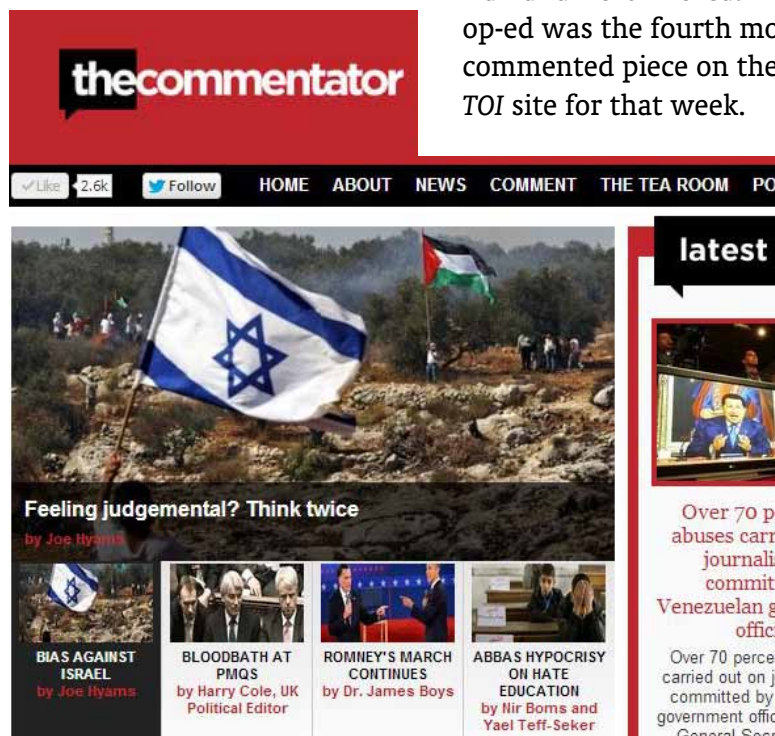
- Simon Plosker appeared on Christian satellite TV station *Revelation TV*'s Middle East report for a full hour-long program (also uploaded to [YouTube](#)).
- Joe Hyams had op-eds published in [The Commentator](#) and [The Times of Israel](#) dealing with how intuition dominates proof in just about every measure of our worldview. He discussed the primary factors in how people form opinions and which has more impact, intuition or reason, in how people perceive Israel.
- Simon Plosker had two op-eds published in *The Commentator*, [one](#) addressing how Syria's regime had previously manipulated the international press and [another on the BBC](#), which was the day's most read piece of content.



Joe Hyams appeared on Israel's [IBA English TV News](#) and [Israel National News Radio](#) discussing the work of HonestReporting.

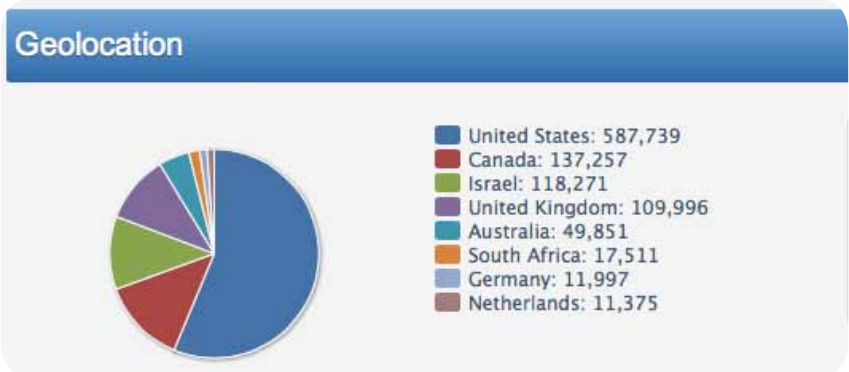
- An interview with Simon Plosker by Dr. Manfred Gerstenfeld was published by [Israel National News](#).
- Simon Plosker has been a regular and popular op-ed contributor to *The Times*

of Israel, where he has published several pieces in a mixture of personal and media-related topics. This included a response to a BBC poll that showed Israel suffering levels of world unpopularity on par with Iran and North Korea. The op-ed was the fourth most commented piece on the TOI site for that week.



HONESTREPORTING AROUND THE GLOBE

While half of HR's visits come from the U.S., the numbers of visits has witnessed astonishing levels of growth in percentage terms across the board.



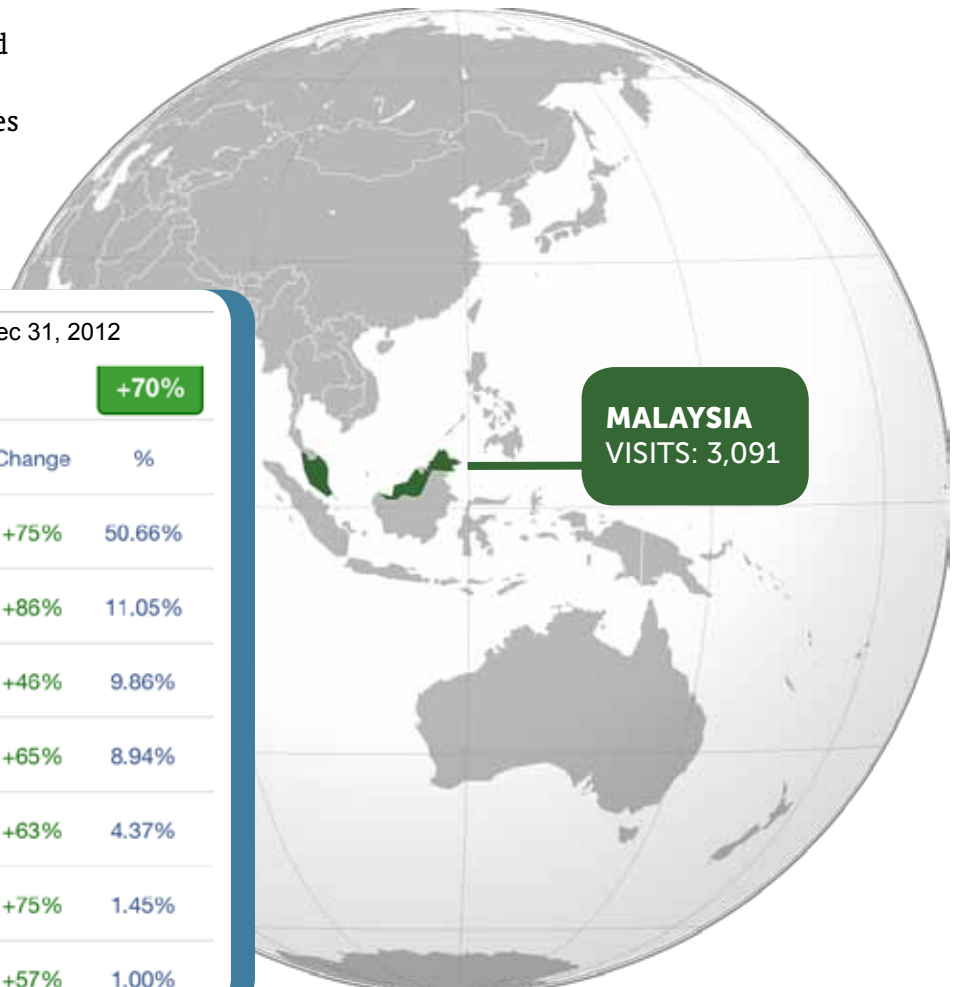
While the bulk of our readers are located in English speaking countries as well as Israel, this only tells part of the story.

HR's mailings are opened around the entire world and even in Arab and Muslim states that have no relations with Israel including over 3,000 visits from Malaysia!

Sun, Jan 1, 2012 - Mon, Dec 31, 2012

Total Visits: 1,522,626 +70%

Country	Visits	Change	%
United States	771,348	+75%	50.66%
Canada	168,272	+86%	11.05%
Israel	150,167	+46%	9.86%
United Kingdom	136,160	+65%	8.94%
Australia	66,488	+63%	4.37%
South Africa	22,094	+75%	1.45%
Netherlands	15,165	+57%	1.00%



EXPANDING HORIZONS AND REACHING OUT

International Content

HonestReporting has made a strategic decision to reach beyond borders, serving smaller communities by leveraging our global weight. By collaborating with locally based advocacy organizations, media bias doesn't have to be addressed solely in English.

For example, the Dutch daily *Trouw* published a vicious article about pre-natal care in Israel containing insinuations reminiscent of classic anti-Semitism. HonestReporting [partnered](#) with Missing Peace, a Dutch-based Israel advocacy and media monitoring organization to respond to the article.

This generated hundreds of emails. According to Yochanan Visser of Missing Peace:

“Thanks to HonestReporting, *Trouw* received e-mails from places far beyond the borders of Holland. This was the first time in the history of Dutch media a thing like this happened.”

The story was also picked up by the [Jerusalem Post](#), which forced *Trouw* to respond.

In addition to the Dutch example, HR partnered with Latin American affiliate ReporteHonesto to take on [Hugo Chavez-inspired anti-Semitism](#) in the Venezuelan media during the presidential election campaign.

The above examples illustrate the value of cooperation with partners in other countries and languages to achieve positive results and mutual benefits.



In addition, we have encouraged guest posts from writers with expertise in media from other countries, including Australia, South Africa, and Germany.

Anti-semitic stereotypes in Dutch paper spark anger

By BENJAMIN WEINTHAL, JERUSALEM POST CORRESPONDENT

LAST UPDATED: 01/17/2012 05:17

“The chosen people have to be perfect,” wrote journalist Ilse van Heusden of childbirth in Israel’s health care system.

The global media watchdog organization, HonestReporting, publicized Visser’s report on its website and encouraged its readers to file formal complaints to *Trouw* and comments on the paper’s website. The Jerusalem-based group HonestReporting debunks slanted reporting against the Jewish State.



Brazil

Joe Hyams visited Brazil as a direct result of a prior lecture given to high school students in Jerusalem by HR staff. Joe was also hosted by B'nai B'rith Brazil.

United Kingdom

The UK is one of the major centers of global media with an influence far beyond the country's shores. Only recently, the BBC's outgoing director general referred to the

organization's global audience when questioned before a parliamentary committee.

The UK has also become one of the major hubs of the global delegitimization campaign against Israel, which is why monitoring and taking action against anti-Israel media bias in the UK matters to HonestReporting and to its global readership.

Simon Plosker was invited to speak at a number of venues during a visit to the UK including Liverpool Limmud,

South Hampstead Synagogue (London), Central Synagogue (Birmingham), Manchester University Jewish Society, and Kings College London Jewish Society.

Hong Kong

Recognizing that the region has been underserved when it comes to combating anti-Israel media bias, Joe Hyams visited the Jewish community of Hong Kong as reported in [Jewish Times Asia](#).



Targeting Student Pro-Israel Advocates: The Blankfeld Award

Aimed at students and offering an award of two thousand dollars, the [Blankfeld Award for Quality Journalism](#) recognizes aspiring journalists who demonstrate a commitment to the values of objective and honest reporting, specifically in the field of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Advertised both online and in some major Jewish

newspapers, HonestReporting received an impressive number of quality submissions from aspiring student writers from around the globe, including the U.S., Canada, South Africa, Australia, and the UK. The finalists were judged by HonestReporting staff and the *Jerusalem Post*'s Political Editor Gil Hoffman.

The winner was University of Toronto student Aidan Fishman, 20, of Winnipeg, Canada, who has already contributed a guest commentary to the HonestReporting website. His achievement was covered by his local Jewish press including the [Jewish Post & News](#) and [Jewish Tribune](#).

SOCIAL MEDIA AND MULTIMEDIA

Facebook and Twitter

HonestReporting's community on Facebook continues to grow, and the massive social networking site remains the most important feeder site to HR's own website. In 2012, Facebook referred a whopping 112,000 visitors to HR's website, including 16,000 through Facebook's mobile

application, allowing HR to reach people who prefer to get their online content through their smart phones and tablet computers.

Thanks to HR's large and vibrant Facebook community, HR's content reaches well beyond its natural readers. Many of the visitors referred to HR's site through Facebook

were first-time visitors who arrived because of the virtual word-of-mouth "recommendations" of their friends.

HR's following on Twitter doubled to nearly 5,000 in 2012, proving that an increasing number of people are looking for HR's content across social media platforms. Dozens of HR's tweets about media bias were retweeted hundreds of times, bringing them to a wider audience than would be possible without Twitter.

YouTube

HR's videos on YouTube received more than 617,000 views in 2012 – nearly matching the total number from the previous four years combined. HR's most popular piece of content for 2012 was a video exposing the BBC's and CNN's fake footage of injured Palestinians. More than 325,000 people watched the video, making it the most successful video in HR's history. The video also caught fire on Twitter, becoming the most tweeted item in HR's history.

HR's second most popular item in 2012 was also a YouTube video that followed Special Projects Editor Yarden Frankl through Tel Aviv, [looking for Israel's capital](#). In all, HonestReporting posted 17 videos in 2012, and plans to post even more in the coming year.



HR's Special Projects Editor Yarden Frankl meets with Ron Huldai, Mayor of Tel Aviv, in the popular video [Searching For Israel's Capital](#).

SlideShare

While videos accounted for some of the most popular content HR produced in 2012, slideshows also found a significant audience, drawing more than 105,000 views. The most popular slideshow of the year, [Why You Should Care About Iran](#), about Iran's threat to the Western world, was picked up by the [Pro-Democracy Movement of Iran](#).



DEAR HONESTREPORTING, THANKS SO MUCH FOR YOUR NEW INSTAGRAM WHICH I RECEIVED TODAY! NO ONE CAN MISS THIS MESSAGE WHEN IT IS SHARED! MORE PLEASE.

ROSALIE LAUGHTON,
BRADFORD, UK



Graphics and Multimedia

In 2012, HR began to post informational graphics designed to be shared through the Internet. Graphics included a [tribute to the Israelis slain during the 1972 Olympics](#), a [map of the E-1 area](#) that helped people understand the fallacy of news reports on the area, and an infographic featuring a [case study of a successful campaign against media bias](#). The graphics are particularly effective in reaching people who get their information on the Internet beyond the many regular readers of HR's media critiques.



HR's case study, above, used a popular format to gain shares, like the gallery for the [Top Ten Media Fails of Operation Pillar of Defense](#).

"INSIDE ISRAEL" MISSIONS



"ISRAEL TOOK ON A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT DIMENSION TO WHAT I'VE EXPERIENCED IN THE PAST... I DON'T THINK YOU CAN ACTUALLY DO IT PROPERLY WITHOUT THIS KIND OF A SEMINAR OR SIMILAR."

KATALIN HAWORTH, LILYFIELD, AUSTRALIA

HonestReporting ran two missions during 2012. In May, Mission participants from the U.S., Canada, UK, and Australia got to spend the week receiving exclusive behind closed doors briefings from Israeli political and security personalities as well as advocacy training and visits to the places making the news. And all of this while staying in a luxury Jerusalem hotel with meals in some of Israel's top restaurants.

Some of the highlights:

- Dinner overlooking the Old City with Deputy Director of the Ministry of Public Diplomacy and Diaspora Affairs, Danny Seaman.
- An off the record briefing on how Benjamin Netanyahu views the Iranian threat from Prime Minister's Spokesman Mark Regev.
- Visiting the controversial Jewish settlement of Migron and Beit El's Ulpana neighborhood.
- Practical advocacy training with David Olesker and Neil Lazarus.
- The Mission and the Jerusalem Headquarters opening achieved some positive publicity with coverage in [*The Times of Israel*](#), [*Israel National News*](#), [*Baltimore Jewish Life*](#), and [*Jewish Press*](#).
- November's Mission, in a first for HonestReporting, ran in conjunction with Australia's New South Wales Jewish Board of Deputies. Each day of the Mission was featured on the [*J-Wire*](#) online news site serving Australia and New Zealand.
- In addition to some of the sessions mentioned above, the Mission participants:
 - Learned how to deal with the issue of Holocaust denial during a visit to Yad Vashem.
 - Toured Israel's security barrier and received an exclusive IDF briefing on security threats in the area.
 - Visited Sderot and the Gaza border to meet the residents under fire and learn how the IDF deals with security while allowing humanitarian aid into Gaza.
 - Toured the Gush Etzion bloc and met with residents there.
- Visited the Golan Heights and the Syrian border, an increasingly volatile area in light of the civil war in Syria.

This is only a snapshot of what is an unrivaled experience that gives its participants access to an incredible array of speakers and tours that only HonestReporting can provide.

Bookings for the next Mission in May 2013 are already being taken through the [HR Mission website](#):

honestreporting.com/mission

NOTHING COMPARES TO BEING HERE ON THE GROUND AND THE IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS THAT WE HAVE BEEN GIVEN FROM SUCH AN ARRAY OF SPEAKERS HAS BEEN INCREDIBLE.

MARILYN IMMERMANN,
SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA

GUEST SPEAKERS INCLUDED:

Itamar Marcus of Palestinian Media Watch on incitement • Jerusalem Post Political Editor Gil Hoffman on Israeli politics • Professor Gerald Steinberg of NGO Monitor • Former Ambassador Yoram Ettinger on Palestinian demographic issues • Jerusalem Post Arab Affairs correspondent Khaled Abu Toameh on how the region's Arab people think • Col. (Ret) Ben-Tzion Gruber on the IDF's Code of Ethics



Deputy Foreign Minister Danny Ayalon met our May Mission for a closed door briefing at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

U.S. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Based in Skokie, IL, our U.S.A. Executive Director Gary Kenzer dedicates his time to grassroots outreach and advocacy, traveling to and educating communities throughout the U.S.

In 2012, Gary:

- Spoke to 28 congregations in six states including: Texas, Michigan, Florida, New Jersey, Illinois, and Colorado. Total audience reach at these congregations was well over 28,000 people.
- Spoke at two Limmud Conferences including Houston and Colorado where he delivered five seminars in total reaching an audience of approximately 750.
- Was the invited speaker at Jewish Federation events in Sarasota and Orlando, Florida where he spoke at their Israel Advocacy Day event.

Gary Kenzer coordinated the logistics for HR's participation at this year's AIPAC Conference at the beginning of March in Washington, D.C. (see page 5).

- Was keynote speaker at Detroit Walk with Israel in May as guest of the Friends of Israel Gospel Ministries and Temple Shir Shalom in West Bloomfield, Michigan. Nearly 100 people attended this event.

- Participated in the 2012 Jewish Festival of Chicago where there were approx. 10,000 visitors.
- Was the invited guest of the Jewish Federation of Santa Barbara for several community events in late October including a Media Bias workshop to the Big Gifts Division and an evening event on Social Media Advocacy and Israel.

- Is now the regular guest of a local public access talk radio show in the Midwest with a reach of over 25,000.



U.S. Executive Director Gary Kenzer.

- Spoke at the Midwest's largest Conservative congregation, Congregation Beth Shalom in Northbrook, Illinois to a group of seniors on Social Media Advocacy and Israel.
- Has presented HR lectures at several Combined Federal Campaign events.

MediaCentral

A foreign journalist looks into Syria from the Golan Heights on one of MediaCentral's frequent field trips.



The demand for MediaCentral's services throughout the year 2012 never abated, from requests handled by staff to briefings and professional field tours throughout the year.

Journalists from *Al Jazeera Arabic* to *Le Monde* sought out MediaCentral services – and let us know with appreciative comments like this from *Le Monde* after one of MC's tours: **“This is just the sort of thing which makes MediaCentral so different, and which we appreciate so much about you – your tours help us really explore the issues and meet the people, not just hear the party line...”**



Mosab Hassan Yousef

Highlights of the Year

During 2012, journalists followed the stories with MediaCentral's help: meeting Druze residents of Golan Heights villages who are questioning their allegiance to the Assad regime; visits to the often tense border with Lebanon after an Iranian-made Hezbollah drone infiltrated Israeli airspace; and a rare field tour to Jordan where top-tier journalists met with refugees from Syria who had fled to Amman.

MC took journalists to Migron, and to Ulpana in Judea and Samaria on the eve of the Supreme Court decision to relocate the 30 Israeli families living there, as well as to meet with the Palestinians who lay claim to the land on which the neighborhood was built – leading to this unusually balanced article in [*The New York Times*](#).

And it was a standing room only event when we welcomed Mosab Hassan Yousef, author of *Son of Hamas*, a former terrorist turned Israeli agent who fled to the U.S. six years ago. His exclusive MediaCentral appearance

drew over 60 media outlets to the event, including AP, AFP, *Le Monde*, CBN, RAI Italian TV, Chinese TV, *Daily Telegraph*, and *Reuters*.



THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR THE TOUR TO BARKAN, IT WAS EXCELLENT, AND REALLY WELL-ORGANIZED. IT WAS INTERESTING TO MEET “SETTLERS” – IT’S A CHALLENGE FOR US TO MEET JEWISH RESIDENTS AND ACTIVISTS. IT IS IMPORTANT TO MEET THEM, INCLUDING THE MAYOR OF ARIEL. AND WE NEVER COULD HAVE GOTTEN THE ARAB WORKERS TO TALK ON CAMERA. WE COULDN’T MANAGE TO DO THIS STORY WITHOUT MEDIACENTRAL.

AL JAZEERA



THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR THIS TOUR TO BEIT EL & ULPANA. IT'S SO IMPORTANT FOR US TO BE ABLE TO ACTUALLY SEE THE FACTS ON THE GROUND. AND WE NEVER COULD HAVE ARRANGED IT ALL AS YOU DID – THE BRIEFINGS, THE RESIDENTS, THE TOUR, THE HOME VISITS... IT WAS JUST GREAT – AND IT SHOWS HOW COMPLEX THE ISSUES ARE – IT'S NOT AS SIMPLE AS THE "COMMON UNDERSTANDING" SUGGESTS (AND AS MOST MEDIA REPORTS).

XINHUA NEWS AGENCY

There were trips to the extraordinary Israeli industrial park at Barkan in Ariel, where Palestinian workers told journalists they prefer working in Israel; and to Shechem/Nablus for meetings with members of the minority Samaritan community on their Succot holiday.

The IDF Operation Pillar of Defense (*Amud Ashan*) in November required a quick mobilization of MC staff who traveled to communities under rocket fire, helping journalists with translations and interviews of local residents who have suffered Palestinian rocket fire from Gaza for over 10 years.

Over 30 journalists from the U.S., UK, Europe, Russia, China, Japan, Latin America, and Scandinavia joined our visit to Sderot and the south including a kibbutz three kilometers from the Gaza border. They met residents, local leaders, paramedics at the Sderot Magen David Adom clinic; and Colonel Richard Kemp, a former commander of UK forces in Afghanistan and a world renowned expert on anti-terror operations.

The day found us running for shelter numerous times as the sirens went off and

witnessing the devastation of a Qassam rocket minutes after it slammed into a Sderot street.

Before Israel's general elections, MC inaugurated a series of events including a meeting with the heads of Hope for Change, a new pro-Israel Arab party which prompted an [article](#) from *Reuters*, and a major [analysis](#) by *AP*. In addition, journalists met representatives from six parties across the political spectrum in a lively debate and discussion of the issues in the elections.

Throughout the election season and beyond, MediaCentral helped the foreign correspondents gain a

more nuanced understanding of the parties, personalities, and issues by providing personal services – including accompanying them to interview Israelis of all persuasions, connecting them with spokespeople from all major parties, and continuing to hold briefings and tours all over the country.



Just the Facts: Numbers Summary January-December 2012

Meetings with members of the foreign press	205
Other interactions (emails, calls, "drop-ins")	519
Research requests	150
Events held (briefings, field trips, tours, TGITs)	88
Number of participants at MC events	678
Articles resulting from MC events (tracked)	136



SUCCESS: HONESTREPORTING ACCEPTED INTO PRESTIGIOUS FEDERAL LISTING

After five years of attempting to be a part of the U.S.A.'s largest Federal Government workplace giving program, in late May, HR received notification that it had been accepted.

Thanks to the work of our U.S. Executive Director, we are pleased to announce that HonestReporting has been selected for the 2012/13 Campaign year in the United States Combined Federal Campaign. The Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) is

Reader Feedback

There is definitely more vitriol in anti-Israel comments not only at NYT website, but just about everywhere. There is no question that this is a new type of warfare, with ultimate goal of destruction of the only Jewish state.

That's why efforts by people from Honest Reporting are so important. I hope that everyone who receives their updates has supported them with \$\$\$.

HonestReporting reader "Sanych" left this comment on our website.

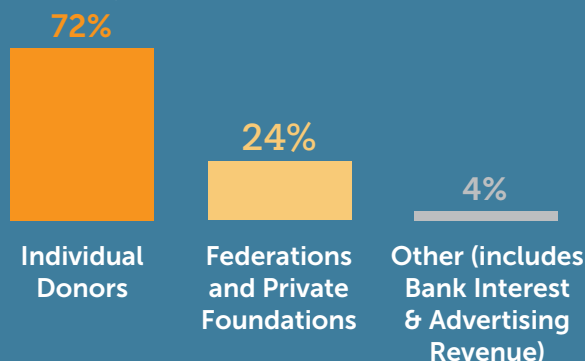
a program allowing certain charitable organizations to solicit contributions from employees of the federal government of the United States. The mission of the CFC is to promote and support philanthropy through a program that is employee focused, cost-efficient, and

effective in providing federal employees the opportunity to improve the quality of life for all. Having successfully complied with rigorous government evaluations, HR will be a part of the coming campaign season allowing us to reach a new group of donors.

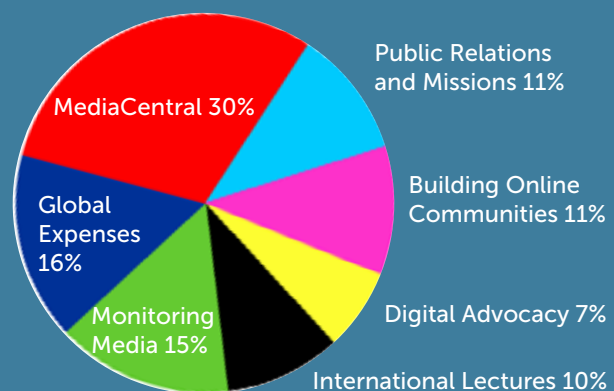
FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Revenue Sources 2012

\$1.2 million USD Total Revenue



Expenses by Program 2012



HonestReporting Guiding Principles and Values

We believe Israel is entitled to fair treatment by the world press according to the same standards applied to any other country.

We believe that public opinion is significantly shaped by media coverage.

We believe that biased coverage of Israel distorts the public's understanding of Israel and its motives and creates an obstacle to a peaceful resolution to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

We believe people have as much right to criticize Israel as any other state. However, when criticism turns to demonization or delegitimization, it is no longer legitimate criticism.

We support the working definition of anti-Semitism provided by the European Union's Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC). We note the fact that this definition stipulates that anti-Semitism "could also target the state of Israel, conceived as a Jewish collectivity."

Principles of Fair Coverage

We believe that the media must be accurate, balanced, transparent, and ethical. Journalists, editors, and publishers must be held accountable for slanted coverage of Israel.

We believe that the media must take Israel's official position into account when reporting on the region.

When errors occur, the media is responsible for correcting the record in a timely manner. Corrections must ensure that the average reader is properly informed about the issue.

We believe that reporters working in areas that suppress freedom of expression must indicate the limitations placed on their reports, including a qualification on the reliability of eye-witness accounts in oppressive areas.

We believe news organizations must ensure that all employees are free of connections to terror groups or security services.

Media Distortions that Constitute Bias

We believe that failure to provide proper context distorts an understanding of motives behind the actions described in the news.

We believe that news articles that quote sources that criticize Israel without also quoting sources that defend Israel are inherently biased.

We believe that Israel should be subject to the same professional standards of reporting that are applied in any other country. Placing greater emphasis on Israeli actions that are ignored by the media in other places constitutes bias.

We believe that the inversion of chronology skews coverage of the conflict. Headlines that focus on Israel's retaliation for an attack, and not the attack itself, give the impression that Israel is the aggressor, thereby distorting the perception of the events.

We believe the use of photos must not distort the situation in the eye of the average reader or falsely evoke an emotional response through staging or selective cropping.



I'VE JUST FINISHED A WEEK WITH HONESTREPORTING HERE IN ISRAEL AND I CAN THOROUGHLY RECOMMEND IT TO ANYBODY WHO WANTS TO LEARN MORE ABOUT WHAT IS HAPPENING IN ISRAEL AND IN THIS PART OF THE WORLD.

HILARY BLACK, RANDWICK, AUSTRALIA
NOV. 2012 HR-NSWJBD MISSION PARTICIPANT

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR HOSTING US, AND ALLOWING US TO GET A BETTER UNDERSTANDING ABOUT MEDIA BIAS. I FOUND THE ENTIRE PRESENTATION TO BE QUITE FASCINATING.

MIKE, ISRAEL EXPERIENCE STUDENT,
EAGLES WINGS MINISTRIES

WOW! WHAT A GREAT IDEA!

I FEEL LIKE A V.I.P., LOOKING OVER MY PRESS REVIEW, DRINKING A GOOD COFFEE AFTER 45 MINUTES DRIVE...

SERIOUSLY, I LIKE YOUR EFFORT, IT SAVES ME TIME AND MAKES ME A BETTER INFORMED FRIEND OF ISRAEL, IN A WORLD CHANGING SO QUICKLY AND ABRUPTLY AT TIMES.

I WILL/ALREADY HAVE RECOMMENDED YOUR NEW SERVICE.

JOHN V. CELEBRATING THE 2012 LAUNCH OF THE
ISRAEL DAILY NEWS STREAM



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Embracing the journalist

MediaCentral

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HonestReporting is a U.S.A. non-profit 501(c)(3) charitable organization as recognized by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).
Our ID# is 06-1611-859.

Your generous tax-deductible donations make a real difference

"We failed to make the right checks. We should never have written the article, and apologise for any offence caused."

– Nathalie Malinarich, world editor of
the *BBC News* website

"Guardian reporters, writers and editors must be more vigilant about the language they use when writing about Jews or Israel."

– Chris Elliott, *The Guardian*
Readers' Editor