



Freedom2014

New international BBC season asks what freedom looks like in 2014

January 14, 2014: The BBC today announced *Freedom2014*, a season of hard-hitting investigative programmes from around the world asking what freedom looks like today. Launching on Saturday 25 January, the season will run on the BBC World Service in English and across the BBC's language services, on BBC World News television, BBC News Channel and BBC.com, until April 2014.

Peter Horrocks, Director of BBC Global News said: "The BBC is a champion of media freedom. The BBC has long been a symbol of freedom, as the sole provider of impartial and balanced news reporting in many countries."

"So I'm delighted to announce Global News' *Freedom2014* season, in which the BBC will explore what freedom means to people around the world. We are uniquely placed to explore this theme, drawing on the expertise of our journalists around the world to give local knowledge and context to powerful investigative journalism."

Freedom2014 kicks off with the documentary *Thailand's Slave Fishermen* on both radio and television (Saturday 25 January). Becky Palmstrom investigates the forced enslavement of Burmese and Cambodian men on Thai fishing boats.

On Monday 27 January, BBC World News will be asking to what extent we can or should be free from government intrusion, as technological change makes every aspect of our lives easier to monitor and record. A day of programming on television and radio will look at how government intelligence agencies spy on their allies and millions of ordinary citizens around the world. The programmes will report on what individuals can do to keep their personal information secure.

James Stephenson, Head of News at BBC World News said: "Edward Snowden revealed the extent of surveillance by the US National Security Agency. We will look at the implications for citizens around the world of an age of digital data and digital surveillance."

As part of the season, the BBC will be calling on its worldwide audience to submit their own images of freedom. Details on how to submit images can be found online at bbc.co.uk/freedom2014 from Wednesday 29th January.

The first contributions come from a number of well-known global figures describing what freedom looks like to them in a collection of specially commissioned videos. These include Astronaut Cmdr Chris Hadfield; Wikipedia founder Jimmy Wales; Anti-FGM campaigner Leyla Hussein; former hostage Norman Kember; Tourette's 'Superhero' Jess Thom; and percussionist Dame Evelyn Glennie. They will launch online from 29 January.

Over the coming months there will be a wide variety of programmes commissioned as part of the *Freedom2014* season. They have been produced by journalists from across the World Service's 27 Language services and include:

Freedom Songs: A five part series looking at the ways in which singing is used around the world as an expression of freedom. From Nina Simone's 'I wish I knew how it would feel to be free' to the playlist of a teenager in Argentina during the military dictatorship, and the power of the human voice in South African protest and civil activism.

China's Global Popstars: Rebecca Kanthor reports on China's efforts to groom a state-approved pop star for international stardom.

Missing Histories, China and Japan: The historical record of Japan and China has always been a flashpoint for tension, but what do the younger generations make of this legacy? Japanese journalist Mariko Oi visits her counterpart in China, Haining Liu, and then Haining makes her first trip to Japan, hosted by Mariko.

Freedom to be Single: Rupa Jha finds out first-hand about the discrimination faced by women – widowed, divorced, or single by choice in India.

Guantanamo Voices: Dawood Azami goes to Pakistan, Afghanistan and Guantanamo to hear from former Guantanamo detainees about what freedom means to them. Dawood is the first Afghan journalist to visit and report from the controversial US military prison.

China in Vogue: Jessie Levine looks at the rise in the magazine culture in China, its link to consumerism, and the changing face of Chinese fashion. She speaks to editors, photographers, designers and cultural commentators to find out how these new freedoms are affecting Chinese women.

All That Stands in the Way: Despite most countries legislating against gender discrimination, around the world young women do not have the same opportunities as men. As father to two young daughters, BBC presenter Ros Atkins wants to know how they will be treated differently as they grow up simply because of their gender. Through personal and informal portraits of the lives of teenage girls in Iceland, London, Lesotho, and Oman, Ros will be asking what the entrenched social and cultural attitudes are that stand in the way of girls achieving equality.

Full details of *Freedom2014* programming, as well as images and video content can be found online: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/mediacentre/latestnews/2014/freedom2014.html>

Season hashtag: #freedom2014

ENDS.

For more information please contact:

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Notes to Editors:

The BBC attracts a weekly global audience of 256 million people to its international news services including **BBC World Service**, **BBC World News** television channel and **bbc.com/news**.

BBC World Service is an international multimedia broadcaster, delivering a wide range of language and regional services on radio, TV, online and via wireless handheld devices. It uses multiple platforms to reach its weekly audience of 192 million globally, including shortwave, AM, FM, digital satellite and cable channels. Its news sites include audio and video content and offer opportunities to join the global debate. BBC World Service offers its multilingual radio content to partner FM stations around the world and has numerous partnerships supplying content to news websites, mobile phones and other wireless handheld devices as well as TV channels. For more information, visit bbc.com/worldservice.

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