



## Presenter Yalda Hakim to join BBC World News

**December 4, 2012.** The BBC has announced that one of Australia's brightest young journalists, Yalda Hakim, is joining BBC World News as a presenter and correspondent for a new current affairs programme. She is currently the presenter of SBS Dateline in Australia. From a headline-making investigation in Afghanistan's Kandahar province to her reporting from Libya during the Arab Spring, Yalda has already built up a wealth of journalistic experience around the world.

Yalda will launch a new international current affairs programme for BBC World News in 2013, as well as presenting news programmes. The BBC is investing heavily in new programmes and facilities for its international news channel, as it seeks to build on recent successes building audiences and reputation around the world.

Reporting for SBS's Dateline show for the past four years, Yalda Hakim has delivered stories from the Middle East, the United States, Africa and Europe. In March 2012, Hakim was the first western journalist to visit one of the villages in Afghanistan's Kandahar province, where US soldier Staff Sgt Robert Bales is alleged to have shot and killed Afghan civilians. Hakim's report, '*Anatomy of a Massacre*', traced the steps of the rogue soldier to help shed new light on the events of that night. It made headlines around the world, particularly in the United States, with extensive coverage across the major news networks.

Other career highlights include interviewing the President of Afghanistan, Hamid Karzai, and travelling with him to Pakistan for talks with President Asif Ali Zardari and Iran's leader Mahmoud Ahmadinejad about peace in the region. She was also on the ground in Libya as the people fought for freedom from Gaddafi's rule, and reported on the resulting refugee crisis in Tunisia as thousands fled the conflict.

She has presented Dateline from a range of locations including from Ground Zero in New York as the world marked ten years since the 9/11 terror attacks, from the streets of Juba, South Sudan, as thousands celebrated the new country's independence, and from Afghanistan ten years into the US-led invasion where she interviewed a failed suicide bomber in one of the country's most notorious prisons.

Hakim was born in Afghanistan and moved to Australia in the late 1980s after her father fled Kabul with his family when Russia invaded. She began her career as a cadet journalist at SBS's World News Australia. She filmed her first story for Dateline in 2008 called '*Yalda's Kabul*', where she returned to Afghanistan. Hakim was also a finalist for the Australian

Young Journalist of the Year Award and won the United Nations Media Peace Prize for Best Australian Television News coverage in 2009.

As well as English, Hakim speaks five other languages including Farsi, Urdu, Hindi, Pashto and Dari, and is currently learning Mandarin.

Yalda said: “Obviously I'm sad to be leaving my SBS family and home in Australia, but I'm delighted to be joining the dynamic team at BBC World News. Its credibility and standard is truly the best in the world.”

Richard Porter, Controller of English, Global News said: “Yalda is an exceptionally talented young journalist, who has already achieved a great deal in her career and we're very excited to welcome her to the team. With her international background and language skills she'll provide a perfect fit for BBC World News as we continue to develop our services to global audiences during the course of 2013.”

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**Note to editors:**

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