



## Launching the Situation Report & Action Plan on Media and Information Literacy and Disinformation in the Caribbean

- Tuesday 1 November 2022
- 10:00 – 11:00 hrs (Guyana time)
- Zoom (see details below)

### Other relevant time zones:

United Kingdom: 14:00 – 15:00 hrs  
Trinidad & Tobago: 10:00 – 11:00 hrs  
Jamaica: 09:00 – 10:00 hrs  
Barbados: 10:00 hrs – 11:00 hrs

## AGENDA

**Introduction** - Mr. Kristian Porter, Chief Executive Officer, Public Media Alliance

- Brief welcome remarks & project information
- Introduction of UNESCO representative for brief remarks

**Opening remarks** – Paul Hector, Advisor for Communication and Information, UNESCO Cluster Office for the Caribbean in Kingston

- UNESCO's work on MIL and disinformation in the Caribbean

**Keynote speech** – Mr. Julius Gittens

- The importance of tackling disinformation and MIL and building trust in news in the Caribbean

**Unveiling the executive summary and action plan** – **Project Facilitators:** Kiran Maharaj (President of the Media Institute of the Caribbean) and Nazima Raghubir (President of the Association of Caribbean Media Workers)

- Discussing the process of the project and its outcomes
- Presentation of the situation report's main findings, barriers, and opportunities
- Presentation of the eight-point action plan

**Telling the stories** – Ava Turnquest (Bahamian journalist & Head of the Digital Department at Eyewitness News) and Denis Chabrol (Guyanese journalist, ACM Executive, and Publisher at Demerara Waves Online News)

- Experiences from veteran Caribbean journalists on MIL, disinformation, and trust in news

**The next steps** – Kristian Porter, PMA CEO

- Information on full report's release date and accessibility
- Information on accessing situation report and action plan

**Closing remarks and thanks** – Kristian Porter, PMA CEO

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## MEET OUR SPEAKERS

### Kristian Porter

Kristian extensive experience working in public media support and advocacy, with prior experience in the NGO sector, events management, and as a journalist at the United Nations. Kristian has worked globally in his roles for PMA and works closely with the association's membership and partners in developing relationships, strategies, research, policies, and projects. He is a passionate advocate for media freedom and independence and is an associate tutor on the University of East Anglia's (UEA) Media and International Development course. Kristian also sits on the steering committee for the Public Broadcasters International (PBI) conference and has an advisory role as part of the Global Task Force for public media (GTF).

### Paul Hector

Paul Hector is the Advisor for Communication and Information in The UNESCO Cluster Office for the Caribbean, based in Kingston. Previously he worked as an Advisor for Communication and Information in the Regional Bureau for Sciences in the Arab States. Over the course of his UNESCO career, he has supported project initiatives and policy actions in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia-Pacific and the Middle East that through research, the design and implementation of policies, strategies and action plans have promoted access to information and knowledge for development and overcome related inequalities particularly on digital networks. These initiatives have sought to address information and knowledge divides linked to issues such as gender, language, literacy, island/rural living and disability. Paul joined UNESCO through its competitive Young Professionals Program. He is an alumnus of the J. William Fulbright Fellowship and US State Department International Visitor Leadership Programmes.

### Julius Gittens

A Barbadian citizen, Julius Gittens is an independent media and communications specialist with 30+ years' experience as an award-winning broadcaster, journalist, producer, and trainer.

He began his career in public media as a cadet reporter and later as a freelance producer and presenter at the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) in Barbados where, at age 21, he won the award for Outstanding Television Journalism in the Caribbean Broadcasting Union/Caribbean Publishers and Broadcasters Association Awards.

Much of his work has been at the regional level – as a journalist and producer for the Caribbean News Agency (later the Caribbean Media Corporation) and as a stringer for the BBC Caribbean Service. As a specialist in media training, he trained journalists and broadcasters and developed programmes for the launch of Antigua and Barbuda's first news/talk station, Observer Radio, in 2001. He has also conducted training for CNMG Television (now TTT) in Trinidad and Tobago and the former Radio Saint Lucia. He has taught courses in online journalism, community media, radio and documentary production for the University of West Indies Open Campus and the Barbados Community College.

In 2016, he formed Herald Media Partners Ltd, where he and regional media and communication specialists conduct training, consultancies and media production in social marketing and public service communication for a variety of regional and international organisations and government agencies throughout the Commonwealth Caribbean.

His work in print and broadcast journalism and public service communication, has also been recognised by the Pan-American Health Organisation, the Barbados Association of Journalists, and the American Advertising Federation.

## **Kiran Maharaj**

Ms. Kiran Maharaj is the President and Co-Founder of the non-profit Media Institute of the Caribbean (MIC) headquartered in Jamaica and Founder of the [Caribbean Investigative Journalism Network](#) (CIJN). Ms. Maharaj's media industry experience spans 30 years in radio, television, film, print, and events management.

Her media career began as a freelance journalist with local newspapers and CNN World Report. Today – beyond her roles at MIC and CIJN – Ms. Maharaj is the Immediate Past President of the Trinidad & Tobago Publishers and Broadcasters Association; a Board Director of the Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Industry and Commerce; and the Managing Director of Caribbean Lifestyle Communications.

In 2019 she received the Woman of Courage Award, presented by the US Embassy in Trinidad. She is also a former Debates Commissioner for the T&T Debates Commission. Most recently, she led the research and authorship for UNESCO's pilot study on Media Viability Indicators with Jamaica as the case study.

Ms. Maharaj's current advocacy thrust is focused on creating a Caribbean-wide legislative framework for Freedom of Information Legislation as a mechanism to uphold democracy by

encouraging transparency and accountability especially with regards to procurement and deployment of resources.

### **Nazima Raghubir**

Ms. Nazima Raghubir is a print and broadcast journalist based in Guyana. She has been in the media all her working life as a writer, reporter, managing editor and news presenter with stints at Prime News, as editor of the public affairs journal "Insight", and as a stringer/correspondent for several regional and international news organisations.

In 2018, she became the first woman to head the now 77-year-old Guyana Press Association and in 2020 she was elected to head the Association of Caribbean Media Workers which represents national media associations across the Caribbean.

Ms. Raghubir has also authored and edited several print and multimedia productions, including a published guide to the Parliament of Guyana, documentaries covering development and human rights issues, and numerous conference presentations.

In her native Guyana, she is viewed as a reliable resource for the mentoring of new and young journalists and as a supporter of human rights.

### **Ava Turnquest**

Ava Turnquest is a literary alchemist based in The Bahamas that uses her prowess as a journalist in the pursuit of an equitable, more egalitarian society. She is passionate about the role of the fourth estate to inform, educate, and sensitize the communities that they serve; and her research interests center on the relationship between news media agenda setting, media uses and gratification, and social development in small island states. Ava worked as a print journalist for 10 years, and is currently Head of Digital at a broadcast and online news agency. Her most notable beat coverage spans but is not limited to: politics, immigration, human rights (with a concentration on minority groups: women, migrants, and LGBT+), and environmental issues.

### **Denis Chabrol**

Mr. Denis Chabrol is an award-winning Caribbean journalist. He has been working in the media industry since 1984 in the technical, production, on-air and news and current affairs fields of broadcasting. In the area of journalism, he is the pioneer of Online journalism in Guyana, having founded Demerara Waves Online News.

Denis started his media career as a High School intern at the now defunct state-owned and controlled Guyana Broadcasting Corporation. During his almost forty (40) years in the media, he has worked for several Caribbean and international media organisations including Radio Antilles, Christian Science Monitor, Caribbean News Agency, the British Broadcasting Corporation's Caribbean Service and Agence France-Presse.

He is an executive member of the Association of Caribbean Media Workers and the

Guyana Press Association. Previously, he has served as the Caribbean representative on the Global Forum for Media Development and has represented the Caribbean at World Press Freedom Day conferences in Ghana and Indonesia.

Denis is the holder of a Bsc Degree in Communications from the University of Guyana, in addition to participating in several professional development courses by the Voice of America, Commonwealth Broadcasting Association and Reuters News Agency.

Though based in Guyana, he considers his outlook as encompassing the Caribbean and further afield.

He is a strong advocate of ongoing training and education in both technical and non-technical aspects of media as well as adherence to the conventional standards of journalism to counter unethical practices, misinformation and disinformation while pursuing the truth in service of the public's interest.