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Department:  
Communications  
**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR - GENERAL

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World Journalism Education Council  
395 W. Lindsey Street  
Suite 3000  
Norman, OK 73019  
United States

Dear Sir/Madam

**LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR A SOUTH AFRICAN BID TO HOST THE 2ND WORLD JOURNALISM EDUCATION CONGRESS IN 2010.**

The South African Government's Department of Communications has maintained a strong partnership with Rhodes University's School of Journalism Studies over several years. This has been concentrated on the annual Highway Africa conference, which has now been in existence for 12 years.

We take special pride that our involvement and financial support has played a significant role in ensuring that many other stakeholders and sponsors have also been drawn into growing this event as a key date on the pan-African media calendar.

The Department of Communications has always held the view that ICTs have an enabling role to play in economic development and are critically central to the strategies to eradicate poverty and improve the quality of life of our citizens.

As part of this, we have initiated a globally-innovative Chair of Media and Information Society at the Rhodes University School of Journalism and Media Studies, and we have committed to its work for a period of five years. We are also supporting a training programme on ICT reporting, for the next five years.

We place great value on our partnership with Rhodes University's School of Journalism Studies and are therefore pleased to pledge support for the proposal that the 2nd World Journalism Education Congress (WJEC) be hosted in conjunction with Highway Africa in July 2010.

This proposed timing for the WJEC coincides deliberately with an event of enormous importance to South Africa – namely the staging of 2010 the Fifa World Cup™ in our country. We believe that the targeted period will be an excellent time for the world's journalism educators to visit South Africa and be exposed to the media and other issues around this mega-event.

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We further believe that a WJEC taking place on African soil will go a long way to both strengthen journalism education on this continent and in our country, and to contribute valuable African experiences to the global community of media educators.

It is our view that the WJEC will advance to ICT skills development and also promote awareness of ICT policy issues. This will be in part through sharing experiences with each other, and with media practitioners attending the Highway Africa Conference. The World Cup's media coverage will also generate a legacy of interest in global ICT. In this way, the international journalism education community can be further capacitated in their role as major contributors to the building of an Information Society. Our vision is one that sees the South African people and their counterparts around the continent fully integrated into these developments.

In this regard, we are also pleased to align ourselves with the work done by UNESCO to support potential centres of excellence in journalism education in Africa. We note that Rhodes University is one of 12 such named institutions, and we further acknowledge that a meeting of these schools in early 2008 mandated Rhodes to pursue the hosting of an "African" WJEC in 2010.

For all these reasons, the Department of Communications has pleasure and pride in advising that, resources permitting, it will consider an application for financial support towards the conference, should the bid be successful.

In conclusion, the Department of Communications, greets the many organisations that will decide on the location of the 2nd WJEC. We hereby commend the bid being put forward by Rhodes University to host the WJEC, and we are fully confident that its success will deliver significant value to the citizens of South Africa, the African continent and the whole world.

Yours sincerely



Ms. Gerda Gräbe  
**Acting Director-General**

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