



**THE COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY INITIATIVE FOR POLICY DIALOGUE
AND
PANTAU FOUNDATION**

Present:

COVERING LABOR ISSUES: A PRACTICAL SEMINAR FOR JOURNALISTS

**December 13-14, 2004
Jakarta**

As globalization takes hold in the smallest corners of the world, companies, governments and local players have new and complicated issues to address, especially with regards to labor. No longer is it sufficient for multinationals to set up shop in countries and ignore international standards. The question of labor standards, as well as what responsibilities U.S. companies and their foreign subcontractors have abroad, has become increasingly explosive, as the widespread boycott of Nike and the controversies over Liz Claiborne and Exxon have shown.

Multinational corporations, international banks and organizations, NGOs, local activists, trade unions, and governments-in-country all have a role to play in ensuring there are widely-regarded standards within labor markets. Most importantly is the role journalists can play in introducing the public to these important issues of the day.

This two-day seminar will educate journalists on these issues and their global context. We will provide a practical lens with which to view these issues; each speaker will address a different framework, including the international and local points, as well as specific issues, such as the end of the Multi-Fiber Agreement. Journalists will explore international and local case studies. Lastly, we will discuss innovative and interesting ways to cover labor stories, what works and doesn't, and how journalists can ensure that their reporting is a vehicle to educate the public.

INTRODUCTION AND OPENING:

DAY 1: December 13, 2004

Introduction: 10:00-10:30 a.m.

Andreas Harsono: director, Pantau Foundation

Introduction of the seminar and briefing of the schedule, major points of the program, and logistics.

Mila Rosenthal, professor, Columbia University

Introduction of the co-sponsor of the event, which is part of the Columbia University think tank, “The Initiative for Policy Dialogue” which is run by Nobel laureate Joseph Stiglitz (see: www.policydialogue.org). Mention of IPD programs with journalists around the world (see: www.journalismtraining.net).

Introduction and background of participants.

PANEL I: 10:30-12:30 p.m.

THE INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT:

Mila Rosenthal: professor, Columbia University School of International and Public Affairs, long term labor rights activist with garment textile factories in Southeast Asia

TOPIC: Labor issues from an international human rights perspective.

Agatha Schmaedick: field director, Southeast Asia, Worker’s Rights Consortium

TOPIC: the ways that multinational corporations can work together with suppliers, workers, and consumers to maintain strict labor standards in the countries they operate in. There will be several first-hand experiences from Indonesia. Lastly, talk about the end of the Multi-Fiber Arrangement and the ramifications this has for the economy and industry in general.

Anya Schiffrin: co-director, International Media Concentration at the School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University

TOPIC: Coverage of labor issues, the importance of covering labor issues, ways to cover labor, what is being covered internationally, how to improve coverage on labor issues. Discussion of how to analyze information and how to make reporting more effective and relevant to the current Indonesian context.

LUNCH: 12:30-1:30 p.m.

PANEL II:

1:30-3:30 p.m.

THE PERSPECTIVE FROM INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Kevin Cassidy, communication manager, InFocus Programme on Promoting the Declaration, International Labour Office of the ILO:

TOPIC: Discussion on “understanding rights in the workplace” which will cover international labor standards, building better labor-management relations at the enterprise level and ILO technical cooperation.

Alan Boulton, director, ILO, Jakarta field office

TOPIC: more on the international environment, legal standards, and ILO participation.

PROGRAM ENDS AT 3:30.

AT 7:00 P.M., THERE IS ANOTHER EVENT:

OPTIONAL: BOOK LAUNCH AND DISCUSSION:

7:00-8:30 p.m.

****TO BE HELD AT DIFFERENT LOCATION:**

QB World Books on Jl. Kemang Raya 17, Jakarta 12720.

Open forum. Participants are encouraged to invite guests.

BOOK: Covering Globalization: A Handbook for Reporters

Hosted by Anya Schiffrin, co-editor

This book is written by economists from the Asian Development and International Monetary Fund, as well as journalists who have worked for the Financial Times, The New York Times, Fortune and Reuters. This book covers globalization’s major issues. The book has an introduction from Nobel Laureate Joseph Stiglitz. Topics include: central banks, trade agreements, privatization, pension reform, banking crises, sovereign debt, The World Bank, poverty eradication programs, etc. To order a copy or for more information see: www.journalismtraining.net

DAY 2: December 14, 2004

THE LOCAL CONTEXT:

Panel 1: 10:00-12:00

LABOR AND THE LOCAL PERSPECTIVE

Dita Sari, labor activist

TOPIC: the impact of activism on the global stage and the local activist scene in Indonesia, and how it influences the policy landscape.

Carmelo Noriel, chief technical officer, International Labor Organization:

TOPIC: the work of ILO in providing technical assistance to the government, trade unions and employers' organizations in Indonesia. Also: the ways ILO is working to promote and ensure freedom of association and collective bargaining, as well as establish sound and equitable labour relations. OTHER DISCUSSION OF: specific information that will be of use to journalists such as: industrial relations data (ie: numbers of: collective agreements, disputes, strikes, causes, manhours lost, means of settlement, violations of freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining, success rates of mediation and arbitration, company closures, mergers and their effects). ALSO: International labour standards and comparative practices in other countries, fundamental principles and rights at work, outsourcing issue, corporate social responsibility, socially responsible restructuring, trends in productivity and competitiveness, and promotion of workplace labor management cooperation for efficiency and equity.

LUNCH: 12:00-1:00 p.m.

PANEL II. 1:00-3:00 p.m.

LEGAL ISSUES

Fauzi Abdullah, NGO consultant, former staff member of Legal Aid Institute, publishes labor journal *Sedane* and labor update.

TOPIC: The role of unions and union struggle with regards to labor issues. The role unions play in helping shape labor standards. Current landscape within the union movement.

Venny Damanik: project officer for AJI Indonesia and former lawyer with GARTEKS of SBSI

TOPIC: the legal framework surrounding labor regulations and specific litigation.

BREAK: 3:00-3:30 p.m.

PANEL III: 3:30-5:30 p.m.

UNCHARTED TERRITORY: NEW WAYS TO COVER THE STORY

Keith Loveard, senior journalist and communications consultant

Paul Dillon freelance journalist based in Jakarta; publications include *The Globe & Mail in Toronto, Canada, and USA Today*

TOPIC: Labor issues and journalism; ways that journalists can tell compelling stories in interesting ways that capture reader's attention. Examples of compelling stories, as well as breakout sessions for the journalists to brainstorm.