

# FOIANet

## Over 50 Events Celebrate 8th International Right to Know Day



### Right to Know Day Raises Awareness

Two days after Right to Know Day and more than 5,500 people have already checked out the [foiadvocates.net](http://foiadvocates.net) map (above) of over 50 events held in celebration of Right to Know Day this 28th September.

This eighth International Right to Know Day we have seen how more than ever these 50+ events represent just the tip of the iceberg of a growing movement of civil society, journalists, information commissioners and citizens who come together on the 28th September to celebrate Right to Know Day in their own countries, cities, towns, universities and schools.

Among the events scheduled on and around International Right to Know Day 2010, many saw Human Rights groups use the opportunity to outreach to wide target groups, sharing experiences of how citizens and journalists have used the right to know to help their communities and see breakthroughs in their professional lives.

Increasingly advocates have also been making use of media and new technologies in order to spread the

message about the right to know. In Canada five live and on-line chats were held with the Information Commissioner of Canada and the commissioners of four of Canada's provinces. In many eastern European countries great media interest meant Right to Know Day events were seen on national television.



**"With the sculpture that we are placing today, we are once again reminding the authorities that they should be transparent in each of their activities"**  
Dance Danilovska, Macedonia, FOSIM



**Guests of the Access to Information Programme 2010 Right to Know Day awards ceremony, Sofia, Bulgaria**



**Journalists talking to public, Culiacán, Mexico; One of 40 events across Mexico coordinated by Mexico Informate**

# Right to Know Day Advances Information Rights



(From top to bottom) Above, Mr Medi Kagwa, Chairperson of the Uganda Human Rights Commission and Ms Nanjobe of Uganda Debt Network; left, Marcela Cid, Moisés Sánchez from Pro Acceso Chile, and Emelina Alonso from Asociación de Derechos Civiles, Argentina; left below, panelists and participants at Right to Know Day Seminar organised by the EU Ombudsman and Transparency International.

society of the need for greater transparency even in countries with some of the strongest traditions of openness.

As advocates build on 8 years of individual and collective experiences of Right to Know Day since it was first declared in 2002 in Sofia, Bulgaria, the annual movement is also becoming increasingly recognised by recurring visual icons of openness.

This year advocates reached out with symbols such as 'keys' representing openness (awards presented in Bulgaria and Armenia), and an "i" for "information" notably in the form of a statue unveiled in Macedonia.

Fighting against excessive secrecy as part of a campaign for an access to information law in Spain, sealed envelopes marked "state secret" (containing chocolate) were presented to attendees of a public seminar in Madrid. Guests were reminded that just as the recipe for chocolate was once a state secret, it was now time for many more files to be opened to the public and for outdated 'secrets' to be brought into light.

Left, Kevin Dunion, Information Commissioner of Scotland and Alasdair Roberts, Rapport Professor of Law and Public Policy, Suffolk University Law School at Symposium on access to government records in Massachusetts, Boston, USA.

Right top, Golden Key Awards presented at an awards ceremony in Armenia; middle, "State Secret" envelopes with chocolate given to guests at public seminar in Madrid, Spain; and bottom, Golden Key Awards presented at an awards ceremony in Sofia, Bulgaria

Right to Know Day is recognised not only by civil society. It is increasingly supported by intergovernmental organisations and citizen representatives who fight for transparency. This year to celebrate Right to Know Day, the European Ombudsman held a seminar entitled, 'Citizens have a right to know what the EU administration is doing'. More than a third of the Ombudsman's inquiries concern complaints about lack of transparency in the EU administration.

The Prime Minister attended an awards ceremony of golden keys for best use of Freedom of Information in Armenia. In Uganda commitments were made regarding implementation of the Freedom of Information law by the Minister for Information and National Guidance. Elsewhere Information Commissioners spoke alongside civil



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