

# Free seminars on 2009 election reporting next week

A free one-day seminar series on Reporting on the 2009 Election and Beyond is to be held in Johannesburg on 4 March 2009. Hosted by frayintermedia, it is aimed at editors and journalists who will be reporting on the forthcoming general election and its aftermath.

The election, it is claimed, will be held against a background of:

- Resurgent inter-party violence in KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape.
- Political leaders turning the heat up with hate speech against their adversaries.
- South Africa's huddled masses competing for scarce services, jobs and resources with millions of economic migrants and asylum-seekers.
- A fractured ruling party facing down the wild-card threat represented by an untested splinter movement.
- A news media shaken by job losses, threatened curbs of free speech and the rise of virile new media and the tabloid press.

The objective of the seminar is "raising the tone and quality of the national elections debate", according to the organisers. The programme offers participants the chance to cover as breaking news what some of the leading political, analytical and electoral role-players have to say about the election, to engage in debate with them - and to improve the quality of newsroom skills regarding electoral coverage.

## Leading political analysts

Some of the country's leading political analysts, editors and party policy-makers, such as Dr Frederick van Zyl Slabbert, Jovial Rantao, and Smuts Ngonyama will speak. The programme begins with a debate hosted by Prof Adam Habib, VC of the University of Johannesburg, on today's volatile social and political landscape.

Five tailored seminars will follow, led by respected editors and electoral experts who examine key election-coverage issues: how to cost the promises, how to generate and gender election story ideas, how to cover hate speech, how to manage elections logistics, and the legal ground-rules of electioneering.

The seminar concludes with a two-hour policy debate - to be broadcast by SABC Radio - between the leading policy-makers from the ANC, COPE and other political parties, discussing their attitudes towards migration in the shadow of the election.

The free one-day seminar series will be held between 7.30am and 4pm on 4 March at Hackle Brooke, Johannesburg. Space is limited, so early booking is appreciated - contact Debby Kramer at frayintermedia on tel +27 (0)11 341 0767 or

email . For more info, go to [www.frayintermedia.com](http://www.frayintermedia.com).

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