CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Press freedom is created by social practices and values. To transplant press freedom, which has been introduced into various societies, joining-at-the-middle of values and practices through a glocalization process is needed. Based on constructivism, shared ideas and norms must be created in societies by involved actors. In this case, it is people who are the driving force determining the accepted level of press freedom. This is where ideational structure occurs. Nevertheless, power from local organs and governments cannot be ignored. By this process, the very term press freedom will vary even though the WSIS promotes the issue as universal values. At the same time, the involved actors are being shaped by new face of press freedom.

This is evident in China, despite the fact that its touted freedom is limited to some ICT users and media. As explained earlier, the movements of advocates in cyberspace and media stressing the notion of press freedom can alter the government's media organ. At the same time, there is evidence that the government's traditional ideology is being diluted. Hence, the government's values have changed, although not completely. By saying this, it does not mean that there is no tension in this situation. If there were a line drawn where free press advocates stand on one side and the Chinese government stands on the other side, it would be exciting to see in the future at which point they will move to meet each other.

On the other hand, the history of press freedom in 'democratic' Thailand is more liberalized compared to other countries in Asia, although it cannot be denied

that intervention of government and the protected institutions still exist. The majority of people see media as a liberalized institution and are satisfied. This is sometimes seen to indicate that participation from a civil level is lacking. However, a high level of governmental press control, such as during the Thaksin administration, can trigger a wave of demand to maintain press freedom in the country. It shows that the power of the people is a mechanism to maintain the status-quo of domestic media.

The success of the glocalization process is low in Singapore, whose government strictly controls both media and people. Geographical factors and economic prosperity support the government's success. To further clarify this point, the powerful regime of a government which leads people's attitude cannot be penetrated by outside forces, such as NGOs. Hence, its central values can be firmly rooted in every level in society. In other words, without changed values at the civil level, the term press freedom will remain ignored.

Although the role of UNESCO is limited and it cannot function effectively to implement press freedom under the WSIS framework, it does not mean that there are no solutions. To begin with, problems in WSIS itself must be solved by states willing to decide on what path WSIS should be shaped and implemented. First, WSIS, like other global governance, is determined mainly by major states. They are trying to push the issue of press freedom on the basis of economic interest. Also, each member state holds different agendas concerning press freedom. Thus, all members should seek joint basic agreement to reach a final consensus. Small states should collectively voice their opinions. Besides, as press freedom does not concern only economic but also social and cultural arenas of each country, WSIS's scope should be widened. As a result, UNESCO will have room to work in collaboration with ITU and host

countries to address and implement the WSIS agreement. UNESCO should enhance the role of NGOs, civil society, or local communities to create a model, or schemes for press freedom.

What can we learn from three research countries and glocalized press freedom? Most evidently, UNESCO and other involved international organizations and NGOs should play more important and active role in encouraging press freedom. Creation of the new projects, their most prominent activity, may be not the best and flexible solution in any given circumstances because this might end up as the forced attempt of press freedom introduction into the local. Therefore, it is necessary that they have to understand nature of the certian local; what kind of press freedom that is appropriate and meets the local's requirement; to what extent they should promote press freedom. Cooperation from government and local people must be provided in the process. After that, the spread of knowledge, guidance and programs to governments and local people should be ensued.

Besides cooperation with international organizations and NGOs, government has to adjust itself by listening to voices from other parties. The media outlets in present days come with more alternatives either traditional and non-traditional ones. As a result, people can reach and digest information easily and quickly. Although a state's government can control the certain media to ward off the unwanted information that may be adverse to it, as, the government may claim, its stability is the utmost importance, the possibility to do the same with the alternative non-traditional media is very slim. Once the traditional media are unavailable, people will turn to non-traditional media and undeniably throw their anger towards their government. In

ideally win-win situation, the government should give straightforward explanations and information to alleviate the situations and reason out their people.

Media themselves have to comply with code of conduct and realise the significance of existence of the regulations and rules even in their most-desirable press freedom scenario. Well-rounded and straightforward reports are the must since one important role of media is fact finder and, at the same time, educator. If these are achieved, their credibility will be created in public.

On the other hand, people must be active in promoting press freedom and need to realize that it is actually their basic constitutional right. To do so, they should voice their demands or their expectations to government, media, or other players. Besides, people have to recognize that there are numerous sources of information. Some are reliable, some are not. The facts and subjective opinions are easily intertwined, both in old and new media. As a result, they should develop the smart news consumption, such as reading news from multiple sources to compare and sift through information, which will help avoiding misinformation.