

## Press Award

The overall quality of the entries was high, providing an encouraging reminder that even in these straitened times, the British press still commissions original reporting from far-away places. We struggled to isolate the three best pieces, conscious that we rejected some that were undoubtedly deserving of recognition. In the end, we felt that the following articles best represented the ideals of original groundbreaking reporting in the most challenging circumstances.

### **Winning piece: Congo: The Horror, by Ed Caesar, GQ Magazine**

One of the bloodiest wars in modern history is the subject of Ed Caesar's piece. His remarkable portrait of the human consequences of an offensive mounted by Congo's army against FDLR rebels offers an outstanding example of superb reportage and vivid descriptive writing. This assault in Congo's eastern provinces, supported by the Western-funded United Nations peacekeeping force, compelled hundreds of thousands of innocent people to flee their homes and caused the deaths of many more.

Caesar's piece laid bare this disastrous episode, which the media had largely ignored. As such, he achieved the first duty of a foreign correspondent – to disclose by firsthand reporting the suffering inflicted on the innocent by the powerful. His piece was made still more effective by the vivid photographs taken by Susan Schulman. For reporting with skill and compassion on a neglected human tragedy, we decided that Caesar deserved the award.

### **1st runner-up: Blood Diamonds of Zimbabwe by Dan McDougall**

Dan McDougall managed to reach the Marange diamond fields in eastern Zimbabwe despite the draconian restrictions imposed by Robert Mugabe's regime on foreign journalists. His compelling piece disclosed how Zimbabwe's army is using forced labour to mine the country's diamonds, the proceeds of which are then used to line the pockets of a corrupt elite. Nonetheless, Zimbabwe's diamond exports are still certified by the Kimberley Process, suggesting that this regulatory regime designed to stamp out the trade in "blood diamonds" lacks all credibility. At considerable risk to himself, McDougall's eyewitness reporting brought this crucial issue to life.

### **2nd runner-up: The Defiant Poet's Society by Christina Lamb, Sunday Times Magazine**

Christina Lamb travelled to Herat in western Afghanistan to report on the suffering endured by the country's women eight years after the US-led invasion. One woman in particular, Nadia Anjuman, was murdered by her husband for daring to display her remarkable talent for poetry. Today, Nadia has become a symbol of the plight of Afghan women and of their bravery in resisting confinement and restriction. With great skill and sensitivity, Lamb brought her story to life and uncovered the hidden world of female poets in Herat.

### **The jury panel:**

CHAIR: David Blair, Middle East & African News Editor, Financial Times  
Christopher Hird, Managing Director, Dartmouth Films  
Chris Frost, Head of Journalism, Liverpool John Moores University  
Rachel Oldroyd, Senior Journalist, The Bureau of Investigative Journalism

