

Erie, Pennsylvania, USA
May 15, 2013
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New Documentary on Free Speech and Religion Released Today

As announced today at the Oslo Freedom Forum, currently underway in Oslo, Norway, Internet viewers from around the world can now access the newest Free To Choose Network production of **“Collision! Free Speech and Religion”** featuring Danish Human Rights Lawyer, Jacob Mchangama on www.freetochoose.tv. Public screenings are now planned to take place on 28 May in Copenhagen, Denmark and 30 May in Oslo, Norway. Screenings are also in the planning stages in Ottawa, Berlin, The Netherlands, Italy and the UK. Organizations seeking to arrange additional public screenings should contact Jacob.mchangama@freedomrights.info.

Stories from the U.S and Denmark Highlight the Issues in “Collision!”

The new 18 minute documentary program, written and presented by Danish Human Rights Lawyer, Jacob Mchangama, focuses on one of the defining issues of our time; the global battle of values over the relationship between free speech and religious sensitivities. Recent years have seen increasing demands that free speech should be limited to respect religious feelings. In a globalized world this conflict has become explosive as cartoons published in Denmark and videos uploaded in America have led to violent riots from Cairo to Karachi. The outcome of this battle, says Mchangama, will have profound consequences for the ability of people everywhere to freely express themselves and follow their beliefs. The program further demonstrates why democratic governments are playing a dangerous game when appeasing religious sensitivities rather than defending free speech.

“Collision!” traces the experiences of repressed minorities, threatened cartoonists and liberal Muslims, as Mchangama demonstrates how free speech and freedom of religion go hand in hand. He says: “Far from being a threat to social and religious peace the protection of these rights is in fact the necessary precondition for these values.

“Collision!” shows that limiting free speech empowers authoritarian governments and religious extremists at the expense of religious minorities and secular liberals.

Consequently in the collision between free speech and religious feelings, it is the right to free speech, even to offend, that must be protected and the supposed right not to be offended that must be rejected.”

Advance Critical Praise to “Collision!” and Jacob Mchangama

“Whether a victim of human rights violations or a human rights defender no right is more important to name and shame, mobilize support and speak truth to power than freedom of expression. In Free To Choose Network’s new release “Collision” Jacob Mchangama shows why those democratic governments and intellectuals who argue in favour of limiting free speech in order to respect religious feelings are making a grave mistake and why a principled defense of free speech benefits everyone whether religious or secular.”

Thor Halvorssen

President, Human Rights Foundation

Founder, Moving Picture Institute and Oslo Freedom Forum.

“Jacob Mchangama and the Free To Choose Network have pulled off an amazing feat: they have produced a cool and measured documentary on a subject of great controversy. “Collision” is a poignant defense of free speech, and has a remarkable ability to find the seam between the right to free speech, and the sensibilities of religious believers. A remarkable voice, a presence on camera that is at once soothing and committed to the freedom of ideas.”

Fouad Ajami

Senior Fellow, The Hoover Institution

Author of *The Dream Palace of the Arabs*.

“Hundreds of years after the principle of free speech was enshrined in Western civilization, that most basic value of the open society is now under attack by a combination of religious extremists and feckless European political leaders. Almost as appalling as the violence meted out against those who have dared to criticize religious fundamentalism has been the utterly craven response of so many politicians and intellectuals to these assaults on individual liberty. ‘Collision’ produced by Free To Choose Network and featuring Jacob Mchangama offers a much-needed and

measured response to the creeping authoritarianism that undergirds 'hate speech' laws and other measures designed to chip away at our inalienable right to express ourselves as we wish."

James Kirchick,
Journalist and Fellow
Foundation for Defense of Democracies.

"The film "Collision" produced by Free To Choose Network and written and presented by Jacob Mchangama, on the intricate problems around free speech is an absolute must for anyone interested in contemporary problems and the clash of ideologies. Anyone interested in the tension between radical religions and the principle of freedom of speech, freedom of thought and freedom of religion must see this film. Warmly recommended."

Paul Cliteur
Professor of jurisprudence, Leiden University
Author of *The Secular Outlook* (2010).

"Freedom of expression is increasingly under threat around the world under the guise of calls for increased "respect" for religious sensibilities. This short film produced by the Free To Choose Network and featuring Jacob Mchangama clearly and powerfully explains why these kinds of argument are seductive nonsense. The "collision" is not, as it's often painted to be, between the religious on one side and abusive unbelievers on the other, it is between authoritarians and those of us - religious and non-religious - who recognize how vital is our right to express ourselves freely. A great many religious people vigorously support the views defended in this film."

Stephen Law
Senior Lecturer, Philosophy
Heythrop College, University of London.

About Free To Choose Network

Free To Choose Network is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization whose mission is to use accessible and entertaining media to build popular support for personal, economic and political freedom with these freedoms being interdependent and sustained by the rule of law. Free To Choose Network believes the challenge for the 21st century and beyond is to find ways to avoid the classic failure of the self-governed to retain awareness of the necessary conditions for the survival of their freedom and prosperity.

Free To Choose Network programs and series for public television include, but not limited to *The Power of the Poor*, *Globalization at the Crossroads*, *The Power of Choice: The Life and Ideas of Milton Friedman*, *The Ultimate Resource*, *Free or Equal with Johan Norberg*, *Europe's Debt: America's Crisis?*, *Turmoil & Triumph: The George Shultz Years*, and *Testing Milton Friedman*. Internet offerings from Free To Choose Network can be found at www.freetochoose.tv.

Media Contact:

Free To Choose Network

(800) 876-8930

info@freetochoose.net