



"Our job is to tell other peoples' stories and uncover the truth of what happens around us", says Al-Jazeera news producer, Sami al-Hajj. Four months ago he was released after six years in Guantanamo.

PHOTO: SCANPIX

## The most global conference so far

The Olympic city Lillehammer is up for a new record: Over 450 investigative journalists from more than 80 countries are attending GIJC-2008.

**By: Heidi Molstad Andresen**

- The four previous global conferences were strongly dominated by Western participants. As hosts, our goal was from day one to gather the broadest and most international conference ever. I am very satisfied to conclude that we have succeeded in this, says chief organizer Jan Gunnar Furuly from the Norwegian Foundation for Investigative Journalism (SKUP), which is hosting the conference.

Furuly is amazed how successful the funding has been. He says the flow of good will from a long list of donors is the key reason why GIJC-2008 is breaking all previous records on global participation.

- When we started we had optimistic hopes to get funding to invite some 50-60 journalists from Asia, Africa, Latin America, Middle East and countries in transition in Eastern and Central Europe, the Balkans and former U.S.S.R. In the end we were able to get in over 150 from these areas. We are proud and happy to introduce a lot of new faces to the GIJ family, and with journalists from close to 80 countries coming to Lillehammer this will be a unique opportunity to learn from colleagues and build new social networks, he says.

### **The donors**

The travel grant fund grew close to 3 million NOK with key contributors as the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norwegian media houses, the Norwegian Association of Journalists, Association of Norwegian Editors, the Norwegian Freedom of Expression Foundation and Open Society Institute.

The host SKUP has alone set aside 300.000 NOK for the conference.