

Ukraine: Peace plan must ensure accountability for crimes against journalists

As negotiations continue over a peace plan to end the Russian war on Ukraine, Media Freedom Rapid Response (MFRR) and partner organisations strongly oppose any proposals on granting amnesty for potential war crimes committed in the course of Russia's full-scale invasion, especially for those against journalists.

Our organisations renew our demand that those responsible for the [killing of at least 16 journalists](#), the serious injury of dozens more, as well as for other attacks on media infrastructure, are identified and held accountable for potential war crimes under international law and relevant domestic law. Investigations should rely, among other sources, on the expertise of Ukrainian journalists and media, who have already contributed to uncovering facts linked to potential war crimes targeting journalists.

We make this call in reaction to the initial 28-point plan [proposed by the Trump administration](#) that contained a provision giving “full amnesty” for all acts committed during the course of the war. While later reports suggest that this provision is no longer on the negotiating table, MFRR partners stress that any attempt to introduce blanket amnesty that covers potential war crimes committed against journalists, or civilians, would represent a severe breach of international law including international humanitarian law and relevant human rights obligations.

All warring parties must protect journalists, as civilians, during times of armed conflict, according to international humanitarian law. The deliberate targeting of journalists, as civilians, as well as media infrastructure, constitutes a war crime, and must be investigated as such under the [Rome Statute](#) of the International Criminal Court (ICC) and relevant domestic law. Any form of amnesty for such violations would lack legal grounds.

In addition to supporting war crimes investigations by the ICC and the Ukrainian judiciary, our organisations endorse efforts by the Council of Europe (CoE) to establish a [Special Tribunal for the Crime of Aggression against Ukraine](#), which would facilitate the investigation of crimes not covered by the mandate of the ICC. We urge CoE member states to accelerate the process of the creation of this tribunal, which should have all means at its disposal to conduct investigations into crimes committed in Ukraine, including those committed against journalists and the media.

Due to Russia's full-scale invasion, at least [16 media workers have been killed](#) while carrying out their professional duties covering this conflict – including [Ukrainian journalist Victoria Roshchyna, who died after being tortured](#) while in Russian captivity in 2024. Of these 16 media workers, some were executed, while others died from artillery fire or lately due to Russian first-person view (FPV) drone attacks. This includes French photojournalist Antoni Lallican, who was [killed by a Russian FPV drone](#) in eastern Ukraine in October 2025, and Ukrainian reporters Aliona Hramova and Yevhen Karmazin who were [killed in another Russian drone attack](#) in Donetsk region weeks later.

As of November 2025, the MFRR has also documented [53 cases in which Russian armed forces destroyed Ukrainian media infrastructure](#). We further note that peace discussions this month follow one of the deadliest periods for journalists in Ukraine since the start of Russia's full-scale invasion in February 2022. As [reported by monitoring bodies in Ukraine](#), this increase in targeted attacks on journalists wearing PRESS vests has created an increasingly dangerous security situation for journalists and media workers reporting from the front lines.

We therefore strongly urge all parties involved in peace deal discussions – including the U.S. and the E.U – not to agree to any measures granting amnesty for war crimes committed against journalists, as civilians. Any such concessions would dramatically undermine international treaties and international humanitarian law, set a dangerous legal precedent, and send a signal to the world that attacks against journalists and civilians can go unpunished.

Signed:

International Press Institute (IPI)

European Centre for Press and Media Freedom (ECPMF)

Free Press Unlimited (FPU)

Institute of Mass Information (IMI)

Reporters sans frontières (RSF) / Reporters without Borders

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