



Arkan Sharif at the front-line near Daquq-Kirkuk (@Metrography)

We **urgently** call upon the Iraqi authorities both in Baghdad and in Kurdistan to investigate the killing of journalist Arkan Sharafi and to protect all journalists from future attacks.

We are shocked by the news of journalist Arkan Sharafi's murder in front of his home in the city of Daquq (near Kirkuk), last Monday, the 30th of October. The killing of a journalist is an absolute low point in the escalating tensions related to the recent Kurdish independence referendum. Increasingly, the media has become a target in the escalating conflict. This must end now. Over the last 4 months (since May 2017), 3 journalists have been killed, 5 arrested and 3 journalists attacked.

Any attack on journalists and media outlets should be condemned in the strongest possible terms, and therefore we call upon Iraqi authorities to fulfill their obligation to protect journalists and stop legal actions against the media. We call upon the Iraqi authorities to start a legal investigation into the death of Arkan Sharafi and all journalists that are killed. In order to break the cycle of impunity in crimes against journalists, the perpetrators must be brought to justice. We equally call upon the media to adhere to their professional and ethical standards and to combat any reporting which could fuel hate speech and discrimination.

Statement signed and supported by:

Free Press Unlimited (FPU)

International Media Support (IMS)

Iraqi Civil Society Solidarity Initiative (ICSSI)

Media in Cooperation and Transition (MICT)

Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR)