

INTERNATIONAL DAY TO END IMPUNITY FOR CRIMES AGAINST JOURNALISTS (IDEI)

EU Delegation Actions in Support of IDEI 2018

2 November 2018

“ *The EU attaches the highest priority to the safety of journalists and other media actors. The EU will take all appropriate steps to ensure the protection of journalists, both in terms of preventive measures and by urging effective investigations when violations occur.* ”

– EU Human Rights Guidelines on Freedom of Expression Online and Offline

The International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists (IDEI) was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in December 2013 (A/RES/68/163)¹ and is convened annually on 2 November. The date was chosen in commemoration of the 2 November 2013 assassination of two French journalists, Ghislaine Dupont and Claude Verlon, while on assignment for *Radio France Internationale (RFI)* in Mali.

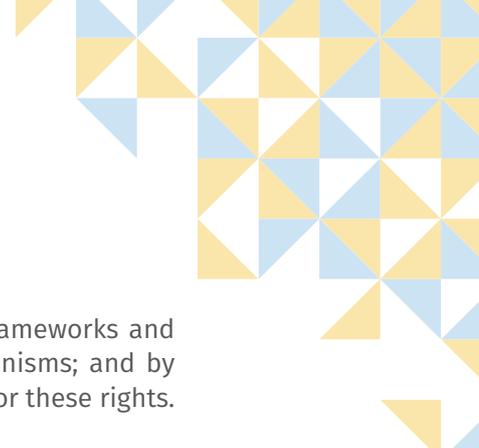
UNESCO, as a leading actor in defending and promoting the safety of journalists and the fight against impunity, is in charge of facilitating the implementation of the International Day in collaboration with governments and relevant stakeholders. UNESCO's principal event for the 2018 IDEI will take place on 2 November in Beirut². This event is a continuation of a series of seminars at the regional level and will focus on the situation in the Arab world.

EUDs often operate in countries where journalists are under threat, where their safety is not guaranteed and where the perpetrators of crimes and violence against them remain unpunished. EU Delegations work at the frontline of promoting freedom of expression in complex environments, and can play a substantial role in strengthening governments' commitments to protect journalists and fight against

1 http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/68/163

2 <https://en.unesco.org/commemorations/endimpunity/2018/beirut>





impunity by, for example: supporting the improvement of legal frameworks and the adoption (and implementation) of national protection mechanisms; and by supporting civil society and media actors to defend and advocate for these rights.

The IDEI provides a platform for all stakeholders – among them the EU Delegations – to condemn attacks and crimes against journalists and other media workers, to call attention to specific cases, as well as to underline the efforts that have been made and measures taken to prevent violence and ensure accountability.

THE EU HUMAN RIGHTS GUIDELINES ON FREEDOM EXPRESSION ONLINE AND OFFLINE

‘Combating violence, persecution, harassment and intimidation of individuals, including journalists and other media actors, because of their exercise of the right to freedom of expression online and offline, and combating impunity for such crimes’ is one of the six priorities outlined by the 2014 EU Human Rights Guidelines on Freedom of Expression Online and Offline³ (later referred to as ‘EU Guidelines’).

The EU Guidelines broadly states that the EU:

- ▶ Condemns the increasing level of intimidation and violence that journalists, media actors and other individuals face; and
- ▶ Will call on States to take necessary steps to prevent violence and to promote a safe environment for journalists and other media actors so they can work without undue interference and without fear of violence or persecution;
- ▶ Support the implementation of UNGA Resolution on “The safety of journalists and the issue of impunity”⁴ and the UN Plan of Action on the same subject⁵.

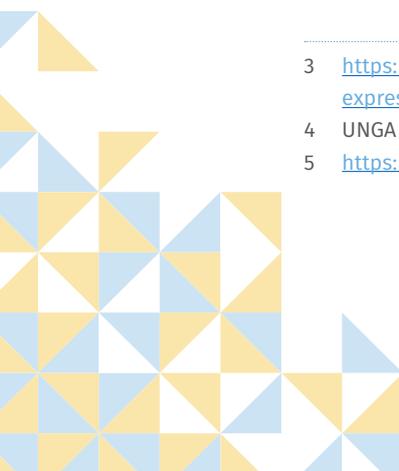
The EU Guidelines outline in more detail specific actions the EU Delegations and Member States can take to further promote protection of journalists and end impunity for crimes against them as they exercise their fundamental right to freedom of expression.

As a parallel support to the EU Guidelines, Media4Democracy, with its partner Free Press Unlimited, will issue later in 2018 the handbook **Protecting the Safety of Journalists, Protecting Freedom of Expression**. This handbook provides tools and hands-on examples to support EU Delegations to protect journalists and implement the EU

3 https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/eu_human_rights_guidelines_on_freedom_of_expression_online_and_offline_en.pdf

4 UNGA Resolution A/RES/68/163 “The safety of journalists and the issue of impunity”

5 https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/un-plan-on-safety-journalists_en.pdf





Guidelines, outlining possible actions for EU Delegations, either in an emergency context or as part of mid- and long-term policy and programming. These recommendations for action are tailored to the EUD's context, including in conflict situations and restrictive environments.

2018 TRENDS REGARDING VIOLENCE AND IMPUNITY (AS OF OCTOBER 2018)

General trends

Murder and other forms of violence (such as arbitrary detention, torture, kidnapping, gender-based violence, threats or harassments) are perpetrated on a daily basis against journalists and media workers. While Reporters Without Borders (RSF) noted 2017 as the least deadly year for professional journalists in 14 years, with 65 journalists killed⁶, the watchdog as well as UNESCO⁷ have already documented in 2018 the killing of 67 media workers (57 journalists, 10 citizen-journalists) and 4 media assistants⁸. Journalists were either fatally injured in the course of their work or murdered because of their investigative reporting.

Afghanistan has been by far the deadliest country for journalists this year, with 13 professional journalists killed, followed by Mexico where 6 journalists have been killed. Syria remains the deadliest country for citizen-journalists with 6 non-professional journalists killed since January 2018.

As of 10 October 2018, a global total of 316 media workers (journalists and citizen-journalists) were detained, according to RSF data. Egypt has the highest global total of detained media actors, with 33 professionals and non-professionals currently being held.

Regarding professional journalists, Egypt (27) and Turkey (27) are the countries detaining the most professional journalists, followed by Eritrea (11), China (10), Bahrain (9), Iran (9), Bangladesh (8) and Uzbekistan (6). China currently detains the most non-professional journalists with 44 media actors detained, followed by Vietnam (26), Iran (20), Syria (14) and Saudi Arabia (9).

According to the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), 60 journalists are currently missing⁹.

6 <https://rsf.org/en/reports/rsf-round-these-figures-are-alarming>

7 <https://bit.ly/2QIAj5A>

8 https://rsf.org/en/barometer?year=2018&type_id=235#list-barometre

9 https://cpj.org/data/missing/?status=Missing&start_year=1992&end_year=2018&group_by=location





Regional trends

Africa – The situation among African countries varies widely, with the coexistence of contexts such as Ghana and Namibia where press freedom is relatively guaranteed, with very tightly controlled environments such as Eritrea. Press freedom is highly restricted in **Djibouti, Burundi** and **Somalia**, where journalists are often the victims of intimidation, physical violence and arrest. Investigative reporting in these countries is very risky, as is covering street protests.

Due to the on-going conflict, **Somalia** is by far the most dangerous in Africa, with 57 journalists killed since 2000, according to CPJ data. The **Central African Republic** is also a dangerous assignment for journalists: three Russian media professionals were killed on 30 July 2018 shortly after their arrival to make a documentary about the presence of Russian mercenaries.

Asia and Pacific – The Chinese model of state-controlled news and information is being replicated in other Asian countries, especially Vietnam and Cambodia. In parallel, violence against journalists is increasing in **Afghanistan, India, Pakistan** and the **Philippines**.

With 76 journalists killed since 2000, the Philippines is the Asian country with the highest number of journalists killed. This can be explained by the mass killing on 23 November 2009, when a private militia operated by a local governor massacred a total of 57 people, including 32 journalists. This is considered the largest single event of killing of journalists. The journalists were covering the campaign of a politician running against the governor's son to be the next governor. Ten years later, the trial of the accused perpetrators and instigators has yet to reach a conclusion. A survivor of the massacre was killed in November 2014 while she was on her way to a meeting with prosecutors to make a statement.

Looking at more general trends since 2000, Pakistan shows a sharp decline in journalist safety with 64 journalists killed, followed by Afghanistan (55), according to CPJ data. However, trends in Afghanistan are worsening with 29 journalists killed in Afghanistan since 2015, including 13 journalists since January 2018 alone (10 of them in a double suicide bombing on 30 April). In comparison, trends in Pakistan are showing reduced numbers, with five professional media workers killed since 2015.

Middle-East & North Africa – Armed conflicts, terrorism charges against independent journalists and media, and growing online surveillance and censorship, thanks to restrictive cybercrime laws, make reporting extremely dangerous for journalists working in the region. 'Red lines' (or off-limit subjects) are a source of self-censorship.

Due to the current conflict, **Syria** has become the most dangerous place for journalists in the MENA region, even if the number of media actors killed has decreased in the two past years. According to CPJ data, 131 journalists had been killed there since 2000. The Syrian authorities that have detained and executed a large number of media actors since the beginning of the uprising in March 2011 are the main threat to freedom of





information. Non-State armed groups (especially in Iraq and Syria from 2013 until the end of 2017) are also responsible for attacks and violence against media actors.

Iraq is one of the most dangerous locations for journalists in the region, even if the situation has slightly improved compared with the 2007-2008 period. In 2017, seven journalists were killed compared to 32 in 2007. Political factions have utilised media to promote their own ideology and political interests. Within this context, media workers are often victims of their own politicization and of the lack of independence of the media outlets they work for.

Looking at the recent years, the number of media actors killed in **Yemen** has increased following the power takeover by the Houthis and the military operation of Saudi Arabia and its allies. Seven media actors (professionals and non-professionals) have been killed since January 2018 alone. Saudi journalists who criticize the military operation over Yemen are also targeted by their own government.

The Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi, who had spoken out about the military campaign and other actions of the Saudi government, disappeared in Turkey early October 2018 after entering the Saudi consulate. In a declaration by the HRVP on 20 October, the EU insisted on "the need for continued thorough, credible and transparent investigation, shedding proper clarity on the circumstances of the killing and ensuring full accountability of all those responsible for it".¹⁰

Since 2008, Palestinian journalists have often been victims of Israeli military operations, mainly over the Gaza Strip.

Although no media actor has been killed in Egypt since early January 2018, the government detains a significant number of journalists and citizen-journalists, with 33 media actors imprisoned. The most well-known case is the imprisoned photojournalist Mahmoud Abou Zeid, also known as 'Shawkan', who was sentenced in September 2018 to five years in prison on charges of murder and membership of a terrorist group. These charges are widely contested by the international community.

Latin America – This is a region with mixed rankings, with a high level of press freedom in Costa Rica, on the one hand, and with **Cuba** on the other end of the spectrum, where journalists and bloggers are often arrested or opt for self-imposed exile. Media actors are subjected to authoritarian policies in countries such as **Venezuela** and **Bolivia**.

In Central America and **Mexico**, violence and impunity against journalists create extreme dangers, fear and self-censorship. Investigative reporters, especially those covering organized crime and corruption, are systematically subjected to threats, intimidation and physical violence.

10 <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2018/10/20/declaration-by-the-high-representative-on-behalf-of-the-european-union-on-the-recent-developments-on-the-case-of-saudi-journalist-jamal-khashoggi/>





Mexico is the most dangerous country for journalists in Latin America, with 58 journalists killed since 2000, followed by Brazil (33) and Colombia (30). Narco-traffickers are the main predators against media workers.

North America – Despite having strong constitutional protections for freedom of expression and media freedom, journalists and media workers in the United States (USA) and Canada face challenges when exercising their fundamental freedoms. In the USA, the anti-press rhetoric from the White House has been coupled with an increase in the number of press freedom violations at the local level, with increasing arrests and intimidation against journalists¹¹. In the United States, 10 journalists have been killed since 2000, five in 2018 alone in the shooting at the Capital Gazette office, a local newspaper in Annapolis, Maryland on 28 June.

Eastern Europe and Central Asia¹² – In the past three decades, press freedom in **Russia** and Turkey has declined, with a heavy crackdown on government critics. This decline is all the more worrying because of the influence that these two countries exert on their respective ‘area of influence’. A climate of impunity encourages more physical attacks on journalists and makes the threats received by independent media outlets all the more worrying. Likely encouraged by the worldwide questioning of democratic standards, Central-Asian leaders continue to exert an increasing control over news and information with impunity.

There has been a recent historic move in **Uzbekistan** where courts freed several journalists and bloggers in Spring 2018. Nonetheless, six journalists remain behind bars. With 35 journalists killed since 2000, Russia is the most dangerous country for journalists, according to CPJ. **Turkey** currently detains the highest number of journalists, with 27 journalists detained as of 10 October 2018 (RSF).

Traditionally safe, **Western Europe**¹³ has been shaken by the murders of 2 journalists¹⁴ in less than a year (Daphne Caruana Galizia in Malta in October 2017, Ján Kuciak in Slovakia in February 2018). Threats to investigative reporters and unprecedented verbal attacks on the media, mainly by political leaders, have been observed. Even countries with a high level of press freedom are affected by this alarming climate, such as in the UK, Italy, Germany, Greece and Hungary.

11 <https://freedom.press/news/34-arrests-44-physical-attacks-and-more-chilling-numbers-us-press-freedom-trackers-first-year/>

12 Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Macedonia, Montenegro, Russia, Serbia, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan.

13 EU and non-EU Member States, such as Andorra, Holy See, Iceland, Lichtenstein, Monaco, Norway, San Marino and Switzerland.

14 At the time of writing this note, the case of Viktoria Marinova killed in Bulgaria on 6 October was still being investigated and appeared UNESCO’s lists. https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/unesco_condemns_killing_of_journalists_bulgaria_en.pdf





MODELS FOR EU DELEGATION ACTIVITIES FOR IDEI 2018

Use the day to raise awareness on safety of journalists

- ▶ Share and publish HRVP statement.
- ▶ Post messages and visual materials distributed by DEVCO/EEAS/NEAR on social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, VKontaktye) raising awareness about the issues of safety and fight against impunity, using the most common hashtags, #EndImpunity and #JournoSAFE. **A social media kit will be provided close to the date.**
- ▶ Publish ad hoc HoD oral or written statements on the country situation quoting UN plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity as well as the EU Guidelines, highlighting specific cases of impunity when relevant and calling for an investigation.

Use the day to hold political dialogue with national authorities

- ▶ Appeal to national authorities to develop and/or strengthen a national mechanism for the safety of journalists.
- ▶ Raise individual cases with national authorities.
- ▶ Raise awareness among media actors on the issue of safety.
- ▶ If suitable, encourage CSOs and other media actors to publicly denounce acts of violence or intimidation against media actors, particularly in cases where national authorities have encouraged or condoned such attacks.

Use the day to organise or support dedicated events with CSOs and media actors

- ▶ Convene public events such as debates, panel discussions, roundtables, on the record discussions, including multiple stakeholders such as: government, media regulatory authorities, media associations, journalists, media bloggers, social media platforms, technology companies, civil society and academics.
 - ▶ Organise closed Member State and other donor coordination meetings, mapping ongoing actions, gaps and future plans.
 - ▶ Support stakeholders' activities, such as those of UNESCO, media institutions, donor groups, governments, educational activities and civil society.
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- ▶ Join or intervene in activities planned by UNESCO office, media or CSOs. Example: UNESCO will organise IDEI ceremonies and events in Brazil, Ivory Coast, Ecuador, Salvador, Ethiopia, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe, among others¹⁵.

Note: *The discrepancies among UN and NGO data (on the number of journalists killed for instance), can be explained by the different methodologies used, especially the definition of the different categories of media actors (journalists, citizen-journalists, etc). In addition, the CPJ distinguishes the killings for which the motive is confirmed from those for which it is not the case.*

SOURCES OF INFORMATION FOR GLOBAL TRENDS AND COUNTRY SPECIFIC SITUATIONS

Committee to Protect Journalists

- > [2017 Global Impunity Index](#)
- > [Database](#) of journalists killed in 2018
- > [Database](#) of journalists killed, imprisoned or missing since 1992

Freedom House

- > [Freedom in the world 2018](#)
- > [Freedom on the Net 2017](#)
- > [Freedom of the Press 2017](#)

International Federation of Journalists

- > [Database](#) showing the number of journalists killed per year with a distinction between targeted or cross fire killings and accidental deaths.

International Press Institute

- > ‘[Death Watch](#)’ lists the names of journalists killed per year. IPI includes in its ‘Death Watch’ journalists and media staff who were deliberately targeted because of their profession – either because of their reporting or simply because they were journalists. IPI also includes journalists who were killed while on assignment.

¹⁵ <https://en.unesco.org/commemorations/endimpunity/2018/aroundtheworld>



Reporters Without Borders

- > [2018 World Press Freedom Index](#), [global](#) analysis and [regional](#) analysis
- > [2017 Round-up](#), that lists journalists killed, detained, held hostage or missing in 2017
- > [Press Freedom Barometer](#), that shows the number of media actors killed per year (distinguished by journalists, citizen-journalists and media assistants)

UNESCO

- > [Observatory of killed journalists](#) – a database of journalists killed since 1993
- > [World trends between 2012 and 2016](#)
- > [World trends between 2012 and 2017](#)

Other sources

- > [EIU democracy index 2017 'Free speech under attack'](#)

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Media4Democracy is a technical assistance facility established by DEVCO B1 supporting Delegations in developing contexts to implement the *EU Human Rights Guidelines on Freedom of Expression Online and Offline*. Media4Democracy provides advocacy support, capacity building and in-country technical support to Delegations.

Consortium: Article19 / DW Akademie / European Partnership Democracy / Free Press Unlimited / Particip / Thomson Foundation