

JOINT STATEMENT

The EU and Member States must create safe environment for journalists reporting on the humanitarian situation in Greece

Brussels, 4 March 2020

Physical attacks, online harassment and censorship: In recent days, media freedom organisations have shed light on threats against journalists reporting on the arrival of migrants into Greece. These attacks are taking place in a context of violence against migrants and those supporting them, such as NGOs and self-organised groups. They restrict the ability of journalists to work safely and inform citizens about the humanitarian crisis taking place at the borders of the European Union (EU).

A safe environment is essential for journalists to perform their role as watchdogs of democracy. The current situation in Greece is symptomatic of the severe threats to press freedom witnessed by media freedom organisations within the EU. It does not only have a harmful impact on journalists' working conditions, but also restricts citizens' access and right to information.

We urge the EU and Member States to:

- Take swift action to **create a safe environment** to protect journalists, freelancers and bloggers reporting on the current situation at the Greek-Turkish border, Lesbos Island, and other crossing points,
- **Publicly condemn** the restrictions to press freedom and human rights violations taking place in the context of the humanitarian crisis in Greece,
- Ensure that those responsible for the recent attacks against journalists, freelancers and bloggers **are identified and prosecuted**,
- Continue to **fight disinformation and hate speech** targeting migrants and asylum seekers, contributing to fueling the tensions at the crossing points.

Signatories

- **Alliance Internationale des Journalistes**
- **Association of European Journalists (AEJ)**
- **AMARC Europe**
- **European Centre for Press & Media Freedom (ECPMF)**
- **European Federation of Journalists (EFJ)**
- **Free Press Unlimited**
- **Global Forum for Media Development (GFMD)**
- **International Press Institute (IPI)**
- **PEN International**



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