

DRAFT REPORT 21 June

In preparation of the Multi-Stakeholder Consultation on Strengthening the Implementation of the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity

This draft report elaborates possible ways of strengthening the implementation of the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity (hereafter the UN Plan), based upon the key achievements, challenges and lessons learnt from the implementation to date of the UN Plan.

Contributions by many stakeholder groups have informed the content of this document, which covers achievements, lessons learnt, and suggestions to strengthen the implementation of the UN Plan going ahead. Accompanying this draft report is a separate document of draft recommendations which will be discussed during the Multi-Stakeholder Consultation Meeting on 29 June 2017 in Geneva (hereafter Consultation).*

Discussions during the consultation will feed into a final version of the recommendations, which will constitute the “outcome document” of the consultation, and which underpin future work on the safety of journalists and combating of the problem of impunity.

Feedback on this Report should be sent to M.Benchelah@unesco.org by 27 June 2017 COB, and a finalized version will be concluded in early July. As the Report is non-binding and already the result of extensive consultation, only minor changes will be considered.

** Submissions were received from key stakeholders: Member States of the Group of Friends for Safety of Journalists, with additional submissions by Austria, Denmark, Finland, Lithuania, Madagascar, Morocco, the Netherlands, Norway, Paraguay, Republic of Korea, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and the United States of America, as well as the National Commission of Kenya. In addition from UNESCO and OHCHR contributions, other key stakeholders submissions were received from ARTICLE 19, Centre for Freedom of the Media (CFOM), Centre for Law and Democracy (CLD), Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), Free Press Unlimited (FPU), International Media Support (IMS) Media Legal Defence Initiative (MLDI) and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). Media contributions came from the World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers (WAN-IFRA), the European Broadcasting Union (EBU), the International News Safety Institute (INSI), the International Press Institute (IPI), the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) and ACOS Alliance, while a submission was also made by Twitter. Other submissions were received from Sputnik News and the Russian Peace Foundation. A joint civil society submission was received, representing numerous NGOs, as well as additional contributions from Bytes4All (Pakistan), Committee for Legal Aid to the Poor (India), Foundation for Press Freedom (FLIP, Colombia), Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights (Poland), Media Development Centre (FYROM), Media Policy Institute (Kyrgyzstan), and from a Rwandan organisation and a Turkish organisation which requested their names be withheld.*

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Introduction

The [UN Plan](#) was initiated by debates in the intergovernmental council of UNESCO's International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC). These led to two conferences, convened by UNESCO and attended by multiple stakeholders, out of which the UN Plan emerged in 2012. The Plan is a global, regional and national framework for co-operation. It addresses the problem of physical, digital and psychological attacks on journalists – people who are especially vulnerable to attack for their exercise of their right to freedom of expression, and whose work is of vital public interest and is vital for democracy and sustainable development. The UN Plan has been endorsed by the UN Chief Executives Board and welcomed in resolutions passed by the UN, the UN Human Rights Council and UNESCO. As clarified in the [Implementation Strategy](#) of the UN Plan, and in alignment with UN perspectives, the term “journalists” also includes media workers and social media producers who produce significant amounts of public-interest journalism.¹

The UN Plan contains statements of principle and recognises the need for concerted action by all role-players. In particular, it addresses the complementary, and shared, roles of UN entities, regional intergovernmental bodies, Member States, civil society and media. The [Implementation Strategy](#) of the Plan sets out 120 possible concrete actions that can be taken by stakeholder groups and it encourages their co-operation within and across different groups, while respecting the roles and responsibilities of each.

An initial assessment of activities undertaken in the context of the UN Plan was carried out during 2014. It was discussed at [the 3rd UN-Inter-Agency Meeting on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity](#), held at the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg, France. The resulting [Implementation Review Report](#) provided stakeholders with strategic direction for the subsequent two years.

Further valuable lessons have been learnt, and there have been important developments, in the ensuing period. These provide the rationale for convening a global consultation in June 2017 which is aimed at strengthening the implementation of the UN Plan going forward, on the basis of experience to date. To inform this consultation, many organisations, institutions and other actors have contributed their assessment of these lessons and made corresponding proposals. Not every detail could be included in this document, but an attempt has been made to reflect the key observations and suggestions, and particularly those which are shared by numerous stakeholders. To ensure focus on substance, the report foregrounds content rather than which originating entity made which contributions.

The structure of this document for the June 2017 consultation follows the Implementation Strategy of the UN Plan of Action, which sets out four fields:

¹ The Council of UNESCO's IPDC used this formulation in its Decision of 23 March 2012. The UN Human Rights Committee General Comment no. 34 defined journalism as “a function shared by a wide range of actors, including professional full-time reporters and analysts, as well as bloggers and others who engage in forms of self-publication in print, on the Internet or elsewhere”. UN General Assembly resolution 68/163, recognised that “journalism is continuously evolving to include inputs from media institutions, private individuals and a range of organisations that seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds – online as well as offline – in the exercise of freedom of opinion and expression, thereby contributing to shape public debate.”

1) **Role of UN Actors:** (UN Plan Expected Result: UN coordination mechanisms are strengthened and harmonised, and current and new actions are put in place, in order to increase the impact of work on the safety of journalists and the issue of impunity.)

2) **Role of Member States:** (UN Plan Expected Result: Member States are advised on the implementation of existing international standards at national level and on the development of journalists' safety mechanisms, as well as supported in regards to the sharing of good practices and capacity-building amongst various actors, including the criminal justice chain, to promote a safe environment for journalists at national level.)

3) **Roles of Other Actors:** (UN Plan Expected Result: The work of intergovernmental organisations outside the UN and of other organisations such as professional associations, media, academia, and NGOs, is reinforced and their work is harmonised within the implementation of the UN Plan).

4) **Roles of All Stakeholders in Raising Awareness:** (UN Plan Expected Result: State institutions, governments, media houses, and other key stakeholders have increased awareness of the importance of safety of journalists and combating impunity, and of ways to achieve these conditions.)

Within each of these four chapters, there is a review of key **achievements** in terms of the Expected Results; the **challenges and lessons** learned; and suggestions for the **way forward** (including priorities to be addressed). These structural elements underpin the specific **recommendations** presented in a separate document. A conclusion to the document addresses overarching issues.

To secure the safety of journalists and to end impunity for attacks on them, it is important to point out three distinct areas of intervention in terms of the UN Plan of Action, namely:

- **Prevention:** This refers to measures that take place before an attack and which are aimed at reducing the overall risk or incidence of attacks, including the establishment of an enabling environment for journalism which can contribute to a climate that helps to prevent attacks.
- **Protection:** This refers to measures that are applied once a risk of an attack is threatened or materialises, or sometimes after an attack has taken place. These measures are aimed at reducing the risk of (another) attack, at repairing the harm caused by an attack (or the threat thereof), and at enabling the individual to continue to do his or her work safely.
- **Prosecution:** This refers to measures that are applied after an attack and which aim to bring the perpetrator(s) to justice, and curb a vicious cycle where impunity feeds further attacks.

Actions under each of these interventions depend on **information** whereby decisions are reached with the aid of strong knowledge base. Thus, research, monitoring and analysis are essential to understand the magnitude, character and causes of the safety problem; to develop informed programmatic responses; and to evaluate progress.

This holistic approach is what informs this report, and particularly the accompanying document on draft Recommendations that are founded on the assessment of achievements, challenges and lessons, and ideas for the way forward. To serve as an outcome document of all the consultations, including the June 29 Stakeholders' Meeting, a revised version of the Recommendations will be circulated for any additional comment after the Stakeholders' Meeting. Thereafter, a final version of the Recommendations for strengthening the impact of the UN Plan over the coming period will be issued as a non-binding outcome document of the full Consultation process.

Chapter 1: Role of UN Actors

1.1 Key achievements²

UN system:

A key achievement has been normative work in the form of 10 resolutions in UN bodies over the past 5 years,³ shaping international public opinion and helping to set the international agenda. In turn, this has contributed to increased sensitisation amongst Member States, and to a visible rise in the response rate to UNESCO's annual inquiries about the judicial follow up to the killings of journalists.⁴

The General Assembly (GA) and UN Human Rights Council (HRC) have condemned unequivocally the attacks and violence against journalists and the prevailing impunity for those attacks. Amongst other things, resolutions 69/185 (2014) and 27/5 (2014) on the safety of journalists and the issue of impunity call on States to do their utmost to prevent attacks and violence against journalists, create a safe and enabling environment for them to carry out their work, publicly condemn attacks, and combat impunity for the attacks, including through Establishing specialised investigative and prosecutorial mechanisms. In its resolution 2222, the UN Security Council calls for greater protection for journalists in armed conflict situations in particular. UN General Assembly [Resolution A/RES/68/163](#) also established 2 November as a dedicated day in the global calendar in recognition of the issue – the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists. The resolutions have also mandated reports by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the UN Secretary General.

The issue of safety of journalists has also been addressed by Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council (Special Rapporteurs, Independent Experts and Working Groups), as well as taken up through the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) and UN treaty bodies.

Adding to the normative significance has been the inclusion of safety of journalists and the issue of impunity in several high-level events organised by United Nations entities. For instance, these have been central themes in recent annual celebrations of World Press Freedom Day. Commemorations of International Day to End Impunity at the UN Headquarters in New York, organised by UNESCO and the UN Department of Public Information, have also included strong attention to safety and impunity. A specific event to address protection of journalists was organised during the first ever World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul in May 2016.

Another important development at UN system level is the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. As was not the case with the Millennium Development Goals, the issue of safety of journalists is now recognised as a component of sustainable development. However, as a result of intensive work within the UN, in parallel with advocacy by Member States and civil society, in particular by the Global Forum

² Note that "Achievements" here and the following 2 chapters does not include achievements under awareness-raising. These are grouped and discussed in Chapter 4.

³ [UNESCO Executive 201st Board Decision \(201 EX/SR.10\)](#) (2017); [Human Rights Council Resolution A/HRC/RES/33/2](#) (2016); [UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/70/125](#) (2016) [UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/70/162](#) (2015); [UN Security Council Resolution S/RES/2222](#) (2015); [UNESCO 196th Executive Board Decision \(196 EX/31\)](#) (2015); [UN General Assembly Resolution \(A/RES/69/185\)](#) (2014); [Human Rights Council Resolution \(A/HRC/RES/27/5\)](#) (2014); [UN General Assembly Resolution \(A/RES/68/163\)](#) (2013); [Human Rights Council Resolution \(A/HRC/RES/21/12\)](#) (2012).

⁴ Through the mechanism arising from the mandate of UNESCO's IPDC, responses have risen from 30% in 2013 to 65% in 2016.

for Media Development, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have come to embrace the issue. In particular, Goal 16, which provides for peaceful, inclusive and just societies with effective, accountable and inclusive institutions, highlights the protection of fundamental freedoms and public access to information. Journalists' safety forms part of the accompanying global indicator 16.10.1, which requires the collection of data on a number of verified cases of violations committed against journalists (namely, killings, kidnappings, enforced disappearances, arbitrary detention and torture). The indicator has been agreed by the UN Statistical Commission, and will be presented within the full package of SDG indicators to the UN General Assembly in the second half of 2017. ECOSOC adopted the SDG indicator framework, including this particular indicator, on June 7. The methodology for the indicator is currently being developed by OHCHR in collaboration with UNESCO, ILO and other stakeholders. Relevant to the issue of safety, and pertinent to access to information is related indicator 16.10.2: "Number of countries that adopt and implement constitutional, statutory and/or policy guarantees for public access to information". The safety of women journalists can also be addressed through Goal 5 and a number of the related targets.

Role of UNESCO:

UNESCO has provided leadership to the UN Plan, and worked to foster a spirit of co-operation within the UN system, and between the UN and various stakeholders across the world. The Organisation has also played key roles in monitoring, research and capacity-building. The Organisation continues to monitor killings and impunity each year, publishing the findings in one year in the report of the Director-General to the intergovernmental council of the IPDC, and in the subsequent year in the report on *World Trends on Freedom of Expression and Media Development*, as mandated by the UNESCO General Conference. UNESCO is a contributing agency to SDG indicator 16.10.1, and convening agency for 16.10.2.

UNESCO also developed the Journalists' Safety Indicators, with related studies applied in ten countries either completed or in process. These have provided national-level data that can contribute to, or catalyse, ongoing monitoring, as well as mapping out a baseline against which progress can be assessed. UNESCO, with the support of the Helsingin Sanomat Foundation, has also mobilised a research agenda for academics concerning safety (discussed further in Chapter 3).

UNESCO has supported numerous projects by civil society, media and Member States under the framework of the UN Plan. This includes between 2011 and 2017, the approval by IPDC of 81 projects related to safety in more than 30 countries.

Capacity building has been done with judges and security forces. UNESCO and the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) have joined efforts to promote freedom of expression, access to public information and safety of journalists through training for members of the judiciary in Latin American countries. In this framework, a series of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) has been rolled out for judges and other judicial operators, on the international legal framework on freedom of expression, access to information and the safety of journalists. Through these MOOCs, more than 5,000 judicial actors have either been trained or are in training on freedom of expression related issues.

In parallel, UNESCO and its partners has organised training courses to improve the capacities of security forces to guarantee freedom of expression and the safety of journalists in the context of the implementation of the UN Plan of Action.⁵

⁵ This has been done among others in [Burkina Faso](#), [Colombia](#), [Côte d'Ivoire](#), [Iraq](#), [Libya](#), [Madagascar](#), [Mali](#), [Rwanda](#), [Senegal](#), [Somalia](#), [South Sudan](#), [Tanzania](#), [The Gambia](#), [Tunisia](#). These training sessions focus on

The Organisation has also launched a syllabus on the safety of journalists (2013) to update its model curriculum for journalism education institutions, as well as worked with the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) in 2017 to provide an elaborate course curriculum for journalism schools particularly in the Arab region.

UNESCO and the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) have formed a partnership for a joint programme to protect journalists and promote independent reporting in crises. The work will address the challenges related to ensuring the safety of media professionals and the shrinking space for press freedom in conflict and disaster environments through a wide range of activities based upon the expansion of NRC-NORCAP expert deployments to UNESCO offices. Since 2010, NORCAP experts have been successfully deployed to support UNESCO's press freedom and safety activities in Haiti, Liberia, Libya, Myanmar, Pakistan and South Sudan.

UNESCO also operates a confidential procedure for the examination of complaints (called communications) received by the Organization concerning alleged violations of human rights in its fields of competence, namely education, science, culture and communication. It is implemented by a subsidiary organ of the Executive Board, the Committee on Conventions and Recommendations. The purpose of the procedure is to seek a friendly solution to cases brought to UNESCO's attention, to avoid a conflictual and accusatory context, and to improve the lot of the alleged victims. As recognized by the General Conference, in particular in its resolution 19 C/12.1, the Director-General also has had occasion personally to make various humanitarian representations on behalf of persons, alleged victims of human rights violations in UNESCO's fields of competence, whose cases demanded urgent examination.

Role of OHCHR:

OHCHR has played a lead role in the development of the methodology and data collection methods for the SDG Indicator 16.10.1. As custodian agency for the Indicator, OHCHR is working in collaboration with UNESCO, ILO and other partners at the international, regional and national levels.

OHCHR has drafted reports to the Human Rights Council and General Assembly (A/HRC/24/23, A/69/268 and A/70/290, including a summary report of a Human Rights Council panel discussion on the safety of journalists (A/HRC/27/35) on the issue of safety of journalists, contributing to furthering awareness and understanding of the applicable international human rights law regime and ways to implement it. The next UN Secretary-General report on the safety of journalists will be presented to the General Assembly's 72nd session in September 2017. UNESCO provides substantive contributions to these reports. The High Commissioner has also undertaken advocacy and awareness-raising through public statements and bilateral correspondence. OHCHR field presences have engaged with national authorities and civil society on the issue.

OHCHR has further supported monitoring and reporting of violations against journalists, including in public reports on the human rights situations in multiple countries. Judicial monitoring is one area through which OHCHR has identified areas for strengthening implementation of national laws needs to be strengthened, particularly with regard to due process guarantees.

In addition, OHCHR has been providing technical advice through various field presences to national authorities on how to enhance the safety of journalists and accountability for violations against journalists. Training sessions have been organised by OHCHR for government officials, the judiciary,

developing a dialogue reconciling the media and security forces. In total more than 900 security forces across the world have been trained since 2013, and an additional 1200 have been sensitised on the importance of freedom of expression, safety of journalists and relations with the media.

and journalists on international human rights law norms and standards, corresponding national laws and, more specifically, journalists' rights to freedom of expression and opinion. Some of these training activities included a session on security and safety for human rights defenders.

OHCHR also provides support to the UN human rights system: treaty bodies, relevant special procedure mandate holders (especially Special Rapporteurs on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, and on the situation of human rights defenders) and the Universal Periodic Review, through which issues of safety of journalists are being increasingly raised with States.

Further achievements in the UN:

The UN Plan of Action has generated a common platform of dialogue between different agencies dealing with this issue. This has enhanced, for example, coordination between OHCHR, UNESCO and the Inter-American system of human rights,⁶ and has also resulted in different inter-agency partnerships between UNESCO and OHCHR, UNDP, DPKO, UNOWAS as well as EUCAP and the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie (OIF). The UN Plan of Action has also been an important way to strengthen relationships between UN entities and national Human Rights Commissions.

The work between UNESCO and UN Country Teams (UNCT) has been effective in some countries, and resulted, for example, in the inclusion of international days such as World Press Freedom Day (every 3 May) in the UNCT list of UN days. Some UNCTs condemn violations against journalists through the UN Resident Coordinator (UNRC).

The UN has also responded to the proposal by Reporters Without Borders (RSF), Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), the World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers (WAN-IFRA) and other NGOs, to create a position of a Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) for safety of journalists. While the proposal has not been taken on board as such, UN Secretary-General António Guterres has agreed to establish a direct and continuing channel for communication in emergency cases with organisations working on press freedom, and to better coordinate UN bodies.

The UN has become more engaged with digital safety in recent years, such as sessions on the topic at the World Summit on the Information Society and the Internet Governance Forum. Meetings at UNESCO, UNGA, and at Human Rights Council have given attention to the issue, and UNESCO has researched and published in the area, covering issues such as digital defence, encryption and protection of source confidentiality in the digital age.

1.2 Challenges and lessons learnt

A number of challenges, and potential opportunities, exist for the UN's role.

UN system:

⁶ An example is a programme in Guatemala to protect journalists and to strengthen the capacity of relevant state officials to investigate attacks against journalists. The Attorney-General's Office has detained nine alleged perpetrators who are currently being prosecuted. In January 2017, the Attorney-General's Office announced its request for preliminary impeachment of a congressman on the grounds that he masterminded the killing of the journalists. With the support of OHCHR, the IACHR Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression included this paradigmatic case in his report, "Silenced Zones: Highly dangerous areas for the exercise of freedom of expression".

At international level, participation by UN entities beyond UNESCO and OHCHR has been uneven and overall limited, both in terms of global co-operation and within specific countries. It is the case that safety of journalists is not part of the mandate of some parts of the UN system, and it is not a primary aspect of the work of many others. Nevertheless, more could be done to enhance involvement, where such involvement will be meaningful and result in effective outcomes, with entities such as UNDP, UNDP, UNODC, UN Women, ILO and UNOCHA. The network of focal points on safety of journalists in the UN system, established after the adoption of the UN Plan of Action in 2012, has not been effective.

The inter-agency partnerships and inter-agency inclusion of these issues within the UN system within in the framework of the UN Plan of Action has been limited. UNCTs and national UN Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs) have helped in ensuring inter-agency support to the UN Plan of Action, through pillars related to governance, security and resiliency. It has proven complex to promote condemnations of killings of journalists through UNRCs. The overall lesson is that political buy-in by both UN actors and national states, such as from the relevant ministries of security and civil protection, is crucial to ensure sustained impact.

Generally, the socialisation and adoption of the UN Plan at the national level, such as in UNDAFs, has been limited.

UNESCO:

The work by UNESCO has been handicapped by resource limitations, whereas it has large potential for increased engagement across many more countries.

The studies using the Journalists' Safety Indicators have had long turn-around times, and the impact has not been maximised. The Indicators are not clear enough in terms of which actors bear what responsibility and role as regards safety and impunity.

Submissions by states to UNESCO's requests for information on judicial follow-up to the killings are voluntary and while the response rates to requests for information are improving, there is much space for improvement.⁷ Another lesson is that options for improving engagement need to be further explored.

OHCHR:

Many mechanisms are supported by OHCHR that can advance the objectives of the UN Plan, but little use has so far been made of them and there does not appear to be consistently high knowledge of them among all UN Plan stakeholders.

Special Rapporteurs can send communications to States and non-state entities to bring alleged violations or abuses to their attention. These include, Special Procedures - for example, the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression and the Special Rapporteur on extra-judicial, summary or arbitrary executions - undertake country visits, act on individual cases of alleged violations and concerns of a broader, structural nature by sending letters, known as communications to States, conduct thematic studies and convene expert

⁷ For instance, while the UNESCO Director-General has cumulatively received information from 59 Member States on 408 cases out of 827 cases condemned in the 2006-2015 decade, for 419 cases, which is 51% of total cases, either no information was received or the Member State in whose jurisdiction the killing occurred sent only an acknowledgment of receiving the Director-General's request.

http://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/unesco_report_rgb_english.pdf

consultations, engage in advocacy and raise public awareness, and provide advice for technical cooperation. Communications are sent to States, and sometimes non-State actors, following the receipt of specific allegations of human rights violations. Communications sent and state replies remain confidential until they are published in the special procedures communications reports submitted to each regular session of the Human Rights Council (in March, June and September). However, according to civil society's submission, response rates by some states to these communications tend to be low and the quality of responses where they are received is often poor.

Working Groups, such as the Working Groups on arbitrary detention and on enforced disappearances or involuntary disappearances, have a different role. The WGAD receives information regarding cases of arbitrary detentions and sends urgent appeals and communications to governments concerned. It also investigates cases of arbitrary deprivation of liberty and conducts field missions. The WGED receives, examines and transmits to Governments reports of enforced disappearances submitted by relatives of disappeared persons or human rights organizations acting on their behalf. It requests Governments to carry out investigations and to inform the Working Group of the results. The Working Group follows up on those requests periodically and the cases remain open in the Working Group's database until the fate or whereabouts of the person is determined.

Individuals can also make complaints regarding violations of human rights to the treaty bodies, which are concerned with monitoring the core international human rights treaties. Treaty bodies also consider States' Parties periodic reports and conduct country inquiries. However, safety and/or impunity cases are rarely communicated to the Committee and there is thus potential to coordinate around and make better use of these mechanisms.

Whilst existing resolutions provide strong language and standards on safety-impunity issues, these normative standards could be reinforced through other standard setting bodies. The UPR provides an opportunity for the human rights record of all UN member states to be assessed through a peer review process. It is widely regarded as a successful mechanism, with a high level of engagement from all states. However, a challenge is that safety and impunity issues are not mainstreamed into the reviews.

Current reporting on SDG indicator 16.10.1 for UN General Assembly purposes, via OHCHR in its role as custodian agency, covers the number of verified cases of killing and impunity, but does not provide information on kidnapping, enforced disappearance, arbitrary detention and torture of journalists and associated media personnel, which are also included as elements of this indicator. This means that an opportunity to monitor and report on the wider picture behind killings and impunity has not yet been fully taken up.

1.3 The way forward

UN system:

With the aim of strengthening UN coordination mechanisms and putting new initiatives in place, better integration of decisions and resolutions in specific programmes of UN entities and their translation them into their country level programming will be important. This requires exploring ways to use all avenues available within the UN system, enhancing inter-agency partnerships and inter-agency inclusion of the issues as well as improving monitoring and reporting by states to UNESCO on the status of journalist safety and the follow-up of judicial investigations in crimes against journalists.

Proposals by Member States included better coordination inside the UN system to improve the information flow (i.e. between peacekeeping mission and UNESCO or between field presences and

the Executive Office of the UN Secretary General) and thus allow for a quick reaction by the UN at an appropriately high level. Civil society organisations suggest that the UN should establish an immediate emergency reaction mechanism.

The network of focal points on safety of journalists in the UN system needs revival and a clear role for this network should be defined. Specifically regarding sharing information, developing joint positions/statements, collaborating on specific projects at the international and national levels and avoiding any duplication of roles in relation to existing mandates and activities. A more established network of focal points could result in more tangible results, especially with regard to mainstreaming and including the issues of journalist safety and impunity within the implementation of mandates of other UN agencies. Real and clear coordination of the network of “focal points” that are in place within each agency, fund and program of the UN (para 5.1 of the Plan), and enhance engagement with civil society.

Advocacy for the UN Plan of Action could be enhanced in the framework of national (UNDAF) priorities and UN Country Teams (UNCT) and regional commitments (such as the AU Agenda 2063). Through a better coordination and collaboration with UNCTs on a national level, relevant commemorations can be adopted as part of the UNCT list of UN days, condemning violations of journalists’ safety. UNCTs could also be used to jointly draft condemnations of violations against journalists with other UN agencies, including the UN Communication Group, which could be approved by UNRC/UNCT teams. Other possibilities are UNCT-funded capacity development activities related to promoting the safety of journalists; capacity development activities to UNCTs on the UN Plan; and UNCT-funded contributions to events on international days that concern safety-impunity. To strengthen progress on the national level, UN organs could encourage states to engage in (further) public communication and transparency on the safety of journalists in their country through publishing data, producing specific guidelines, developing campaigns etc.

While the UN system is increasingly demonstrating awareness of the gender-dimensions of safety and impunity, there is still considerably more to be done at the international level and in relation to support offered at the national level.

Implementation of the UN Plan could prioritise the promotion of transparency and accountability on specific cases that remain unpunished or properly investigated, as well as during sensitive periods of time such as elections or in contexts of political and social unrest where the role of the press becomes crucial and the media are even more likely to be targeted. The Plan could also consider giving encouragement to initiatives from civil society to for and monitoring and reporting on safety-impunity that can help cases of low political will by the States; including the funding, training and empowering organisations and coalitions. The UN system could also further engage with the broader human rights implications of attacks against journalists and the prevailing impunity for them.

The UN could also recognise the call by some media actors to move beyond resolutions to consider a Declaration of Principles on the safety of journalists and media workers, referencing the work done in this area by the IPI and Al Jazeera. A suggestion by a Member State was that the UN could consider the establishment of a Special Envoy or Special Advisor to the UN Secretary General, in lieu of the civil society proposal for a Special Representative, to enhance UN system collaboration.

The possibility of offering model laws to Member States with basic regulatory texts with normative elements relevant for the prevention, protection and prosecution of crimes against journalists could be explored to strengthen the normative work. Implementing the UN Plan could highlight how protection of journalism and combatting impunity can help more broadly in strengthening the rule of law, a key dimension of SDG 16.

The SDG Indicator 16.10.1 could also be used as a tool to encourage Member States to establish or strengthen system or mechanisms to monitor progress on this indicator. There is potential to improve coordination on how this is being undertaken and steps taken to fulfill the criteria beyond killing (i.e., kidnapping, torture, etc). The complementary roles to be played by UN Member States, UN agencies and NGOs in monitoring 16.10.1 could be clarified.

UNESCO:

The work of UNESCO could be scaled up at marginal cost, and its leadership role could be applied to bringing other actors into the UN Plan, such as lawyers, parliamentarians and Internet companies, as well as groups promoting transparency and access to information.

The Journalists' Safety Indicators could also be better used to contribute to, or catalyse, ongoing monitoring, as well as mapping out a baseline against which progress can be assessed. In this regard, it is particularly important to explicitly address the interdependence and indivisibility of human rights.

An increased response rate to UNESCO IPDC-mandated monitoring of judicial process following the killing of journalists, with concrete information that is also transparent and made publically available, could make the reporting a more effective tool. UNESCO could therefore consider adding some specific references in its reporting to Member States about those voluntary responses on impunity which do not comply with international standards or are missing data. The list of names of countries, which will have to still send or complete their data to UNESCO can be shared such as during discussions on issues of safety and impunity during meetings of the UN General Assembly 3rd Committee of the HR Council.

The Committee on Conventions and Recommendations could become more well-known and used, in its terms of reference, for safety cases.

On a national level, various concrete actions could be taken to strengthen the multi-stakeholder approach, such as encouraging governments to designate senior officials as focal points and training government officials and UNESCO National Commissions how issues of journalist safety and the issue of impunity, and the work of the UN in this area. The coordination between UNESCO Advisors for Communication and Information in the Organisation's field offices and the Human Rights Advisers in offices of country UN Resident Coordinators (UNRCs) could be strengthened. This could contribute to the process of drafting UPRs as well as issuing condemnations of attacks on journalists.

OHCHR:

Technical co-operation, such as support to national monitoring, protection and investigation and prosecution mechanisms and engaging discussions on safety-impunity issues, could be enhanced through different UN mechanisms and Special Rapporteurs; human rights defenders; freedom of peaceful assembly and of association; freedom of religion or belief; extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions; right to privacy; violence against women, its causes and consequences; on the rights of indigenous peoples; as well as the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention and the Working Group on Enforced Disappearances.

The support from OHCHR could be better utilised in encouraging states to report, specifically through increasing the transparency of the communication processes, including between UN Special Rapporteurs and treaty bodies, on cases, laws, policy or practices considered not to be fully compatible with international human rights standards.

With the third cycle of the UPR due to commence in 2017, there is the potential to explore better utilisation of this process. There may be a possibility to mainstream the issue of safety of journalists and the issue of impunity into all UPRs sessions, which would provide an opportunity for systematically measuring state progress on the issue.

Another way to multiply and reinforce the engagement in the UPR is through the periodical reporting of all ICCPR signatories to the HR Committee on their compliance with their treaty obligations. Furthermore, the Committee is currently working on a general comment on the right to life. This comment has the scope to address threats to the right to life of journalists, media workers and bloggers, including state obligations to investigate and prosecute perpetrators, as well as ensure appropriate protection measures. While not binding, General Comments are considered authoritative interpretations of states' treaty obligations, with greater normative weight than UN resolutions. Coordination could therefore be undertaken on developing and submitting the appropriate recommendations for consideration by the Committee.

Opportunities could be explored for including safety and impunity -related issues in reporting on other Conventions, such as the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, Committee against Torture, and Committee against Enforced Disappearances, all of which have state reporting or complaints procedures.

In its role as custodian agency for SDG 16.10.1, OHCHR can be encouraged to continue liaising with stakeholders about improving the monitoring of progress under this indicator, so as to fulfil all criteria in the metadata of the indicator.

Chapter 2: Role of Member States

2.1 Key achievements⁸

Joint action:

A significant achievement is the formation in 2016 of a “Group of Friends of the Safety of Journalists” by Member States at the UN in New York, at the Human Rights Council in Geneva, and at UNESCO in Paris.⁹ These groups bring together states that commit to strengthening the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity and its implementation at a national level as well as its promotion in all relevant UN-fora.

These groups serve to raise awareness within themselves and with other Member State delegations, to co-operate in relation to debates, to share good practices, and to communicate developments and the availability of resources and technical assistance back to their capitals.

Individual state actions:

Two countries in the UNESCO Group of Friends, which have profited from UNESCO’s capacity-building, also mention that they have new partnerships between Government and Civil Society in working towards a safe environment for journalists. At least two countries, under the UN Plan, have designated officials as focal points with responsibility to gather and provide information on the subject of safety-impunity, including for the purposes of co-operating with UNESCO’s annual request for information on judicial follow-up to killings.

Some countries report about new legislation and institutional mechanisms at a national level that contribute to the objectives of the UN Plan. Also highlighted in the additional Member State submissions is information about their strong involvement in the International Days of the United Nations, specifically in World Press Freedom Day (3 May) and the International Day to End Impunity

⁸ Most contributions in this Chapter were submitted by the **Group of Friends of the Safety of Journalists**, with some replies giving a detailed and specific overview of their national experience with the implementation of new legislation and institutional mechanisms that cannot be adequately reflected in this summary. The Chapter includes a number of points from additional submissions received from Member States that are not part of the Group of Friends, including Madagascar, Switzerland and Turkey, and other stakeholder groups with views about the role of Member States.

⁹ The Group of Friends at UNESCO in Paris is comprised of: Albania; Argentina; Australia; Austria; Brazil; Canada; Denmark; Finland; France; Ghana; Greece; Japan; Kenya; Kuwait; Latvia; Lebanon; Lithuania; Luxembourg; Morocco; Netherlands; Nigeria; Paraguay; Pakistan; Poland; Republic of Korea; Senegal; Slovenia; Sweden; Tunisia; and the United States of America.

The Group of Friends at the UN in New York is comprised of: Argentina; Austria; Brazil; Bulgaria; Chile; Costa Rica; France; Greece; Jordan; Latvia; Lebanon; Lithuania; Sweden; Republic of Korea; Tunisia; Uruguay; and the United States of America.

The list of countries in the Group of Friends at the Human Rights Council in Geneva is in the process of finalization.

for Crimes against Journalists (2 November). The public as well as decision-makers were involved in these celebrations/commemorations, which served as an opportunity to raise awareness and to enhance the safety of journalists and the issue of impunity for crimes against them.

Also noted were successful collaborations between governments and UN entities in applying for Peacebuilding Funds in particular countries. One example cited was of a project with UNESCO, for implementing a collaboration agreement between police and journalists to ensure journalist safety (including sensitivity towards the threats faced by women journalists).

Furthermore, certain governments have been in regular dialogue with various key actors, including federal media commissions and professional associations that deal specifically with these issues, so as to enhance journalistic safety. In some cases, Member States have catalyzed support for journalism safety via their diplomatic missions to other countries. This has sometimes entailed guidelines that encourage staff members at missions around the world to dialogue with human rights defenders and journalists, and to raise safety issues in bilateral discussions with host governments. Some Member States advise that they specifically follow up on the DG's condemnations of the killing of journalists through their local embassies in the affected countries, and at the UPR.

One submission noted that the journalists' protection mechanism in Colombia can be seen as a good practice, where lessons can be learnt or versions adapted for other regions or countries. One Member State explained its work to set up an Inter-Institutional National Mechanism for the Security of Journalists, linking parliament, government and judiciary. The aim is for the mechanism to serve as a decision-making, coordination, consultation and technical assistance body for competent authorities in regard to steps needed to secure journalists.

At least one Member State said it had recognised safety of journalists as a key pillar in its policy on human rights in regard to foreign and development policy. A number of Member States have made voluntary financial or in-kind contributions to promoting the safety of journalists at global, regional and national levels, via support for conferences, roundtables, research, training, advocacy and awareness-raising.

A relevant achievement by some Member States has been change in the legislative environment to create a climate conducive to the free and safe practice of journalism. This has been by decriminalising defamation and by passing Right to Information laws, amongst other steps.

Member States' actions concerning the judiciary and the criminal justice chain:

Increasingly, Member States are recognising that the judiciary plays an important role in addressing the safety of journalists. The role of security forces is also increasingly recognised, as they can play an essential role in protecting journalists in various ways.

There has been strong co-operation by Member States in Latin America with UNESCO in training judges in Latin American countries, and additional co-operation in other regions as regards training security forces. (These have been noted in Chapter 1). Some submissions by states said that the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between UNESCO and the Ibero-American Judicial Summit is an example of a good practice, which can be replicated by and adapted for other countries.

Countries have also co-operated with OHCHR in these areas. For example, Tunisia has worked with OHCHR by holding a dialogue between the judiciary and key media actors on the implementation of the new press code and holding training workshops for judges where safety of journalists, press

freedom and right to access to information are new themes integrated in the professional training program of the High Institute of Judges.¹⁰

2.2 Challenges and Lessons Learnt

The Group of Friends submitted that despite existing actions, combatting impunity - the poor record of States' ensuring punishment for crimes against journalists – is still a major challenge. In their view, this is exacerbated by challenges in holding Member States accountable to bring crimes against journalists to justice. The combined civil society submission also regarded impunity to be at the root of challenges to improving safety. The lack of prosecution for violence and the killing of journalists is the main challenge, according to the submission. Since the adoption of the UN Plan of Action, impunity rates in journalists' killings have continued to hover around 90 percent, while numbers of murdered journalists have remained high. Imprisonment of journalists is seen also as being very high, at least some of which appears to be arbitrary detention. Civil society has documented and advocated for this issue to be addressed more thoroughly in the UN Plan and by Member States and UNESCO, although the focus of the Plan has to date been to concentrate on the protection of journalists from attacks on their safety which are incontrovertibly illegal in every state and around which international consensus is strong.

Furthermore, a lack of media literacy amongst authorities is considered by civil society to have a direct impact on the safety of journalists. State actors are often seen to disrespect journalists regardless of how the latter identify themselves. There are also implementation issues: often the instructions of senior government officials do not filter down to the rank-and-file. For civil society in addition, corruption, both public and private, remains a serious threat to journalist safety.

The Group of Friends further recognised that sufficient funding is a major concern and challenge for the implementation of the Plan. Diversification of funding to support international efforts and the need for co-funding between various government agencies were highlighted by different responses.

Many UN international processes remain with Foreign Ministries and are not shared with other relevant institutions or mainstreamed at the national level.

Many countries face challenges with the development of specific policies to prevent violence against journalists, as well as with the (acceleration of the) application of existing legislation on press freedom. There are also delays in regard to capacity building of police, judges and lawyers.

The monitoring and documentation of cases of violence against journalists is still a challenge that is becoming even more relevant in the light of monitoring SDG 16.10. Civil society highlights that women journalists are still particularly exposed to harassment and specific threats to their safety, which

¹⁰ With the technical and financial support of OHCHR Tunisia and UNESCO Tunisia Project Office, on 16 March 2017, a Monitoring Unit was established within the Syndicat national des journalistes tunisiens (SNJT). It aims to: develop a credible national database on violations of journalists' safety; prepare and publish monthly report on the safety of journalists; develop safety of journalists' indicators; immediately provide journalists victims with legal advice and assistance; immediately engage the NHRI protection mandate in cases of serious violations, and immediately inform OHCHR of cases of serious violations. During 2016, OHCHR conducted jointly with SNJT five training sessions for journalists on monitoring HR violations focus on press freedom and safety of journalists' violations.

include sexual harassment, and this needs more documentation and counter-strategies. Insufficient attention has been afforded by Member States to this issue, and the same applies to the risks faced by social media producers of journalism, plus to local as well as freelance media workers.

Other specific concerns reported by some Member States in relation to the role of Member States are issues that affect the climate in which journalism can be practiced in safety: Journalists being accused of defamation under criminal law, the concentration of media ownership as it affects journalistic independence; and threats related to a lack of trust in the media.

For civil society, legislation that would promote journalist safety and combat impunity has at times been blocked by debates over the definition of “journalist”. In addition, online anonymity, and strong legal guarantees for it, are seen as fundamental elements of journalist security and source protection, yet are sometimes opposed by states and law enforcement without regard for the societal importance of journalism in working with whistleblowers to expose corruption and other crimes. Compelling journalists to reveal sources and give up social media/laptop passwords is seen by civil society as problematic in terms of the ability of journalists to serve the public in conditions of safety from forces seeking to suppress this. A challenge identified was the need for follow-through by the Member State, for example after roundtable meetings with stakeholders, and the need for political will to maintain involvement state in such meetings.

Challenges and lessons on the role of Member States relate to multistakeholder participation, intra-state co-ordination, resource constraints and capacity. A lesson learnt in that respect is the need, noted by the Group of Friends, for close intra-government co-operation, especially the coordination with the Ministry of Justice when it comes to issues concerning the press.¹¹

In co-operation between one country and OHCHR, a challenge experienced in relation to the Journalists Unit protection programme has been to improve the participation of civil society organisations in the process of creating the protection programme. In another country, working with OHCHR, there were challenges in the creation of the Law for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders and Journalists, which included: (i) the lack of cooperation between federal and State authorities to ensure the effective implementation of prevention and protection measures; (ii) the lack of resources for the Mechanism and the implementation of prevention and protection measures.

While a number of states have made progress in their roles of capacitating the criminal justice chain, there have been fewer cases where parliamentarians have been actively seized with the problems of safety and impunity.

¹¹ A submission from civil society proposed that this issue affected Colombia’s renowned mechanism to protect journalists concerning a lack of coordination between the State’s Unidad Nacional de Protección, that provides physical security for journalists and the General Attorney’s Office that investigates the crimes and prosecutes its authors. The participation of civil society and the lack of progress in the situation of impunity were said to be eroding confidence among non-governmental actors in the system.

2.3 The Way Forward

Joint action:

The Group of Friends is in the process of attracting additional members and enhancing joint understanding and action, including in home countries, and this development has much potential going ahead.

One submission referred to the process whereby countries put themselves forward in UNGA elections to be voted as members to the HRC. It was noted that increasingly, states are expected to enter “voluntary pledges” regarding what they will do nationally and internationally to advance human rights protections. Commitments regarding safety-impunity issues could be mainstreamed to this process, with expectations that countries not implementing standards on safety of journalists might not receive support for their candidatures. In addition, it could be considered whether candidates commit, where relevant, to effective co-operation by their countries with UNESCO’s mechanism of requests for updates on the safety of journalists and issue of impunity.

Member States can be encouraged to advocacy at the international level, including in conjunction with the Groups of Friends for the Safety of Journalists; and, ensuring strong international public condemnation of attacks against journalists.

Another suggestion is for the follow-up, as part of bilateral/multilateral relations, in regard to cases of journalists having been killed, assaulted, arbitrarily detained, harassed or missing.

Improved coordination with all UN, international, and regional organisations with a mandate relevant to the Safety of Journalists is seen as essential for Member States going ahead. In this regard, the issues of the safety-impunity could be systematically addressed through the process of the UPR. States could include consistently the issue of safety of journalists in UPR submissions. There are opportunities to raise individual country situations of concern under the regular items of the HRC debate (Item 2/4), or where the country concerned is requesting technical assistance (Item 10). This includes country specific resolutions that fall under these item numbers.

UNESCO’s Journalism Safety Indicators could be used as a normative framework also for UPR reporting. A proposal is to strengthen cooperation by states with the relevant agencies to achieve credible information on the progress of the realisation of target 16.10 of the SDGs, based particularly on indicator 16.10.1.

The way ahead could include Member States strengthening accountability for their peers who do not provide information regarding judicial follow-up concerning cases of killed journalists. Some civil society groups suggested that Member States could make it mandatory for them to reply to the requests for information by UNESCO's Director-General on the judicial follow-up to killings of journalists, as well as be required to provide greater detail about progress, and to make their replies public.

Submissions also proposed that Member States could further cooperate with other States and other stakeholders to prevent attacks against journalists, including through (i) strong political messages that clearly and publicly condemning such attacks and supporting the work of journalists and human rights defenders; (ii) putting in place a legal framework that protects journalists security and their work; (iii) ensuring there are national protection mechanisms to which victims can safely make a complaint that are adequately resourced and have the capacity to respond to changing circumstances, including

technological change; (iv) ensuring accountability for the violations committed against journalists by, for example and where necessary, Furthermore, Member States could also use assistance from their peers to establish specific units to guarantee the investigation and prosecution of attacks against journalists.

Submissions urged that priority be given to the follow-up of HRC, GA and UNESCO Resolutions. The exchange of good practices, cooperation for technical assistance, support with the development of national monitoring mechanisms and the establishment of national focal points as a way to encourage reporting and compliance. Peer support as well as peer pressure among governments, using international fora, was mentioned in one response as a way to ensure that declarations and resolutions are implemented so as to investigate and punish violence targeting journalists.

In light of the significant normative development that has taken place during the period of the UN Plan of Action, Member States could focus increased attention and resources on assisting each other to implement international and regional standards in national law and practice, including through targeted engagement such as via diplomatic missions within the framework of universal human rights norms and standards.

Individual Member states' roles considered holistically:

Prevention: All States could support measures to strengthen the rule of law. Each could also help build broad coalitions/dialogue platforms of media, administration, law enforcement agencies and engage all stakeholders in the development of prevention tools. States could also revise national legislation that criminalises defamation, blasphemy, or other speech in order to create a climate in which journalism can flourish. The confidentiality of journalistic sources needs protection, as per the recommendations made by the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and Opinion. Parliaments could also revise anti-terrorism laws and cybercrime laws so that they are narrowly focused and cannot be misused to target investigative, critical, or oppositional journalists. Specific laws on safety of journalists could play a role in ensuring the importance of prioritising this issue as regards protection and prosecution.

Protection: States could train law enforcement and security agencies on the role of journalists in the society and their contribution to the democratic rule; effective implementation of safety, legal, judicial frameworks when threats arise; and support training of police in safety issues, including gender-based violence (such as sexual harassment and violence). Co-ordinated training/dialogue between the media stakeholders and police is important in order to establish trust and a good working relationship. This role could include generating protocols of action for the security forces that are written and disseminated to the different actors, whether journalists, National Police, Prosecutor's Office, political parties and more.

Prosecution: The best measures to end impunity for attacks and crimes against journalists in the criminal justice chain are: effective, prompt investigations (compelled by court order, if necessary); prosecution of those responsible for committing crimes against journalists (if possible); compensation (including compensation from States. States' roles can include raising awareness on the applicable legal standards in law enforcement and all levels of the judiciary; developing guidelines/protocols on how to handle incidents of violence that are reported to police in a timely and effective manner and with respect for freedom of expression and journalistic work. In order to break the cycle of impunity, States need to engage on the issue with prosecutors, judges, and police forces. Training on impunity is important for police, parliamentarians and judicial actors so as to develop the capacities and legal frameworks needed for effective prosecution. In certain instances it can be beneficial for national level

prosecutors (federal authorities, special prosecutors, etc.) to undertake prosecutions in provincial areas or in jurisdictions where the suspects have economic and/or political sway (effective in several cases in Brazil). Strengthening witness protection in pursuing cases relating to attacks on journalists is important.

In some States, working to strengthen the rule of law more broadly, rather than focusing singularly on the safety of journalists issue, could help to ensure a fair application of the law, particularly in cases of political and international significance.

Building an information base:

States need to recognise that effective steps to deal with safety and impunity require an information mechanism so that an effective knowledge-driven analysis and approach can be rolled out – and the action itself can be monitored and adapted as needs be. This is important even in countries with relatively small problems, in order to assess if trends are emerging that need to be addressed before they reach a scale where it is far more difficult to counter. The need for governments to speak out publicly against violent threats and attacks on journalists is a very important role, especially to send clear signals to would-be perpetrators and to stop situations from escalating. This reassures the public that both press freedom and the right to expression at large will be protected by the state.

Member States could find better instruments to improve risk analysis and the establishment of efficient protection measures, taking into account the cultural and historical contexts of each country. Online platforms, at the international, regional, or national level, could be set up, to collect information on cases of violation of journalists' rights and to alert competent authorities (mechanisms such as the Council of Europe platform for the safety of journalists).

Reinforcing data collection is still necessary. States could be encouraged and supported to duly answer questions on the safety of journalists and impunity as are received from UNESCO or regional organisations. In addition, Member States could increase the quantity and quality of the responses to, as well as transparency and visibility of, the UNESCO DG's Report on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity, including through follow-up through country offices, relevant UN mechanisms and initiatives by the State itself. Further suggestions were to address, and collect data on, online threats and harassment of journalists.

Adequate reflection of the issue of the safety of journalists when Goal 16 of the SDGs is evaluated at the UNGA High Level Political Forum in 2018 is noted in several responses. It is suggested that the SDG indicator 16.10.1 could be used as a standard in monitoring and reporting by individual Member States. Applications of UNESCO's Media Development Indicators and Journalists' Safety Indicators used to enhance data collection and analysis.

Linked to an information mechanism and monitoring is communication and dialogue. States have a significant role to play in supporting national dialogue platforms/broad coalitions between authorities, media and civil society. No government alone can address the full range of the problem. A practice that could be followed is that where some countries have established regular meetings and working groups gathering journalists and media actors, and representatives of the police forces and prosecutors. States can also designate focal persons to follow up progress on cases of violence against media workers and to provide updates to the public and the media.

The focus by individual Member States should be on implementing international standards to make a change on the ground in their country. A communication channel could be set up by Ministries of Foreign Affairs with other governmental bodies to improve the information flow between the UN

system and the individual Member State which can demonstrate a country's concern internationally and help to share good practice. In cases of foreign correspondents, the Foreign Affairs ministry can help with communication between journalists and their home countries, at any time in case of emergency.

An observation was that UNESCO's Journalists' Safety Indicators could be used in Member States as a fundamental mapping exercise to identify gaps in knowledge and monitoring of the safety and impunity situation, and to build multi-stakeholder processes that can strengthen political will and capacity to establish a credible monitoring system.

Safety of women journalists:

States could go further in recognising that threats and other forms of online abuse of women journalists are direct attacks on freedom of expression and freedom of the media. The collection and analysis of data related to online abuse and its effects, disaggregated according to gender, could be supported, including the creation of a database of specific occurrences and follow-up from law enforcement. OSCE recommendations on online harassment of women could be taken into account.

Protocols of action to be followed by the security forces could be installed and security forces and prosecutors could receive adequate training/be sensitised to specific security risks, including sexual abuses, faced by women and the importance of the role of journalists in society generally.

Member States could take steps, including by seeking assistance, to comprehensively mainstream gender in all initiatives and mechanisms established to address safety of journalist issues, including through the creation of tailored protection mechanisms, including legislation and targeted protection mechanisms.

Sharing good practices:

Good practices for States, which could be adapted for other regions, and/or with a specific focus on cases of impunity, include the series of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) for judges and other judicial operators, on the international legal framework on freedom of expression, access to information and the safety of journalists. There could be support for countries (by providing good practice examples) to introduce appropriate legislation if needed.

States can participate in broad coalitions/dialogue platforms/national coordination mechanisms as exist for example in Afghanistan, Nepal and Pakistan. These bring together authorities, media and civil society in order to create awareness and to ensure coordination between the various actors (media NGOs, media enterprises, authorities) could be adapted in many countries, according to local circumstances.

Specific examples from countries:

- standing invitations for mandate holders, special rapporteurs and other experts from both the inter-American system and the United Nations, as well as the continued political support for the independence and operational preconditions of human rights rapporteurs and mechanisms;
- allow for self-regulation of the media by independent (not bound to any political instructions) bodies; ensure legislation to guarantee independence (of programming and journalistic staff) of public broadcasting;
- specific legislation for the protection of journalistic sources;

- all media workers have access to tailored social protection schemes;
- distribution of region-specific information on security and psychological care to media workers;
- creation of regional Security Advisory Networks that assist journalists under threat.

Other ways forward:

Member States could encourage civil society organisations and individuals to utilise UN human rights treaty bodies, which provide an important avenue for human rights protection through their consideration of State parties' periodic reports, consideration of individual complaints, and the conduct of country inquiries.

Training and awareness raising around law is another important element that could be enhanced (to ensure that there is a legal community that (i) is engaged with this area, (ii) is aware of the options for litigating on safety issues).

It was also proposed that Member States implement alert systems and take emergency action against threats or specific risks that affect the safety of journalists, with participation of state agencies, companies, civil society and journalism trades unions.

Other measures that could be taken include establishing and strengthening partnerships with national entities, such as national human rights institutions, that have human rights protection mandates, and encourage the inclusion of safety of journalists in national action plans.

Chapter 3 – Regional intergovernmental organisations, civil society, media, Internet intermediaries and academia

This chapter examines each stakeholder group listed here, in terms of its achievements, challenges and lessons learnt, and the way forward. At the end of each discussion, a list of recommendations for that group is presented.

3.1 Regional intergovernmental organisations

3.1.1 Regional intergovernmental organisations – Key Achievements

Regional organisations, such as the Council of Europe (CoE) and the OSCE, often have very good practices in the area of the safety of journalists. For example the CoE has a “Platform to promote the protection of journalism and safety of journalists” and has also adopted strong guidelines to ensure the protection of journalism and the safety of journalists¹². These guidelines contain specific measures to be taken by states to prevent violations of media freedom and they further offer guidance to states on how to fulfil their obligations, combining legal, administrative and practical measures.

The OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media performs an early warning function and provides rapid response to serious non-compliance with regard to free media and free expression. The Representative maintains direct contacts with authorities, media and civil society representatives and other parties and shares his/her observations and recommendations with the OSCE participating States twice a year. Likewise, the Organization of American States (OAS) Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights (ACHPR) Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information do important work that aligns with the UN Plan.

The active co-operation of the representatives of these regional organisations in other stakeholders’ work on the Action Plan allows the sharing of good practices on different levels and leads to more efficiency.

3.1.2 Regional intergovernmental organisations – Challenges and Lessons Learnt

Good practices on standards or capacity building by regional intergovernmental organisations are not necessarily known across the wider stakeholder community of the UN Plan.

Responsiveness by Member States to certain initiatives by the regional intergovernmental organisations (eg. The Council of Europe Platform) is erratic.

There are gaps in regard to the existence of intergovernmental organisations in the Arab and Asian regions that could take up the issue of safety and impunity.

Lessons learnt are that regional rapporteurs can be very effective.

¹² More information: https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectId=09000016806415d9

3.1.3 Regional intergovernmental organisations – The Way Forward

The organisations can do more to share good practices, and to bring the inter-regional experience into both the UN Plan networks and to regions that do not have institutions with this focus. For example, the guidelines of the Council of Europe could be expanded to other regions.

Monitoring opportunities can be enhanced by regional bodies, such as the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR), the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) and the Council of Europe.

3.2 Civil Society

3.2.1 Civil Society– Key Achievements

Through years of monitoring, documentation and advocacy, civil society groups have played a major role in putting safety and impunity at the forefront of key international mechanisms and processes, and in raising awareness about basic facts related to these issues. These are issues such as: most journalists killed and imprisoned are local journalists; impunity is endemic (with 9 out of 10 killers of journalists going free); sexual assault is a major threat faced by women journalists; threats against journalists include digital or cyber harassment; and so on. No longer can ignorance about the dangers and threats that journalists face be an excuse for inaction. Civil society has also been at the forefront of promoting attention to issues such as the specific situation of women journalists, the impact of attacks on self-censorship, and the growing prevalence of online bullying, harassment and intimidation. Civil society groups have helped make these issues prominent at the UN, from the Security Council to UNESCO to the Human Rights Council. An initiative for a Special Representative on safety in the UN Secretary General's office attracted several civil society groups, and the groups involved say they welcome the setting up a channel for communication about urgent cases of safety, and a commitment to consider the proposal at a later point. Public awareness on safety and impunity has also been raised as a result of these efforts.

At national level, actors are increasingly forming coalitions confronting and addressing the question of protection and impunity in a more comprehensive and strategic manner, which has been encouraged and supported by civil society actors. The UN Plan has provided a common framework and language for states and civil society on safety of journalists and the issue of impunity. No longer is protection addressed only through safety training for journalists and media workers, or impunity only through monitoring and advocacy. Instead, concerted efforts have been made especially by civil society to share national experiences, engage more deeply the media sector, identify good practices and increase coordination. There is greater co-ordination and cooperation amongst civil society organisations. International media development organisations are supporting a variety of tracks at various levels to promote the implementation of the UN Plan. One key strategic achievement is the increased recognition of a need to form robust national protection mechanisms that ensure the inclusion of all key actors at national level. International media support organisations are working hand in hand with national and regional partners to build the capacity of these protection mechanisms.

Civil society organisations have been very much involved in developing good practices, and in building capacity of stakeholders, particularly around the security of journalists. An achievement through the work of civil society is the growing recognition that safety training of journalists needs to be holistic – covering physical, psychological and digital security. Some civil society groups have also helped student journalists to engage with safety risks through workshops in planning and preparation, basic first aid, situational awareness and working in crowds. A civil society initiative in Colombia works to offer certification to media houses which implement prevention and protection measures. Some civil groups have been very active in sharing good practices, especially on a south-south basis.

The international Journalists in Distress (JID) Network is an achievement of note. This is a network of 18 international organisations that provide direct assistance to journalists and media workers whose lives or careers are threatened because of their work. It has demonstrated the efficacy of coordination among civil society actors and functioned very well. Each organisation has its own mandate and criteria for emergency assistance and the network has been effective in enabling the sharing of information, coordinating joint efforts, leveraging different donor pools, and avoiding duplication. This has helped hundreds of journalists every year to continue their work or in certain instances to flee a dangerous situation. Bodies such as the International Red Cross has provided training in some countries. Civil society has also engaged in capacity building with lawyers such as on litigating freedom of expression cases before the East African Court of Justice, the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights, and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, as has been conducted by Media Legal Defence Initiative (MLDI).¹³

3.2.2 Civil Society – Challenges and Lessons Learnt

Civil society identifies the challenge that notwithstanding the combined sum of actions by stakeholders, the problem of impunity remains fundamental. This suggests a need for more focus, by all actors, on this issue. Another major challenge recognised by civil society for the UN Plan to address is that in most cases, journalists are unable to continue working as before after incidents of violence or intimidation have occurred. The ultimate goal of the UN Plan should be to focus on keeping journalists at work, which is a role that both civil society as well as other stakeholders need to help bring to fruition.

Civil society observes a lesson that mechanisms and other safety responses cannot necessarily be replicated in another country and that adaptations that are needed which take into account the specific local context. A further lesson learnt is that impact at country level can only be achieved if

¹³ In 2015 and 2016, training provided by MLDI was composed of interactive lectures on substantive thematic topics, coupled with the work-shopping of relevant cases that the lawyers were working on at the time. The objective of the training was to strengthen the network of lawyers conducting freedom of expression litigation in the region, whilst offering follow-up support for the lawyers in conducting the cases they were working on. One particularly pertinent outcome from the trainings was that some of the lawyers started to incorporate litigation at international/regional level into their litigation strategies, e.g. litigating before the East African Court of Justice, which they had not considered before. MLDI has been involved in several cases for the European Court of Human Rights, as well as several court at domestic level, including Colombia, Indonesia, Israel, Kenya, Montenegro, and Sri Lanka. The organisations continues to take cases before the ECOWAS Community Court of Justice, and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights where journalists' rights to freedom of expression and freedom from torture and ill-treatment have been violated.

coordination efforts are managed by competent individuals and institutions. Where progress has been made in setting up national protection mechanisms (the examples mentioned in the civil society submission are Afghanistan, Nepal, Pakistan and South Sudan) – it is partly due to the presence of competent national state institutions and individuals. A related lesson is the importance of coalitions developing focus and priorities, based on available capacities, commitments and opportunities for change rather than spreading themselves across all issues. It is also important that coalitions for the UN Plan at country-level give attention to maintaining the active involvement of actors beyond NGOs, and at the same time that such coalitions and processes are also inclusive in terms of involving all, and not just some, of the interested civil society bodies.

While a significant contribution by civil society has been its use of litigation, the lesson of this activity is that this is a costly, resource-intensive, and time-consuming process that needs to be complemented with a broader advocacy strategy and other forms of international pressure. Also, implementation and enforcement of international and regional court judgments/decisions remains a challenge. At domestic level, the lack of independence and impartiality of the courts in some countries can frustrate attempts to hold the authorities responsible for their failure to protect journalists and to order investigations to be conducted into the mistreatment of journalists.

A further lesson is that organisations working on freedom of expression need to intervene as part of a coalition to raise the profile of impunity cases for crimes against journalists, which could be supported by human rights organizations with a country-specific or general mandate, as well as UN Special Rapporteurs.

A challenge identified is that there is a lack of guidance to facilitate solid understanding by civil society about the UN Plan of Action and how to strategically engage with it, in a coordinated manner with other stakeholders, such as UNESCO, Member States, media outlets and academia both at international and local level. This is related to the lack of nominated persons to serve as focal points for communication within each different actor.

Another challenge identified is a lack of credible reporting on the motives for the attacks on media professionals, which weakens the support for the journalists who are the victims of these attacks. There could be a role for civil society to help address this.

A further observation is that, like media, the use of litigation by civil society has under-used the existence of right to information laws to obtain information about State performance in regard to safety and impunity.

3.2.3 Civil Society – The Way Forward

Civil society would like to see, and support, better coordination and synergies on the ground between different stakeholders in establishing nationally-owned protection mechanisms with clearly defined and competent leadership responsibilities attached to key institutions/individuals. This would also include sharing of good and bad practices in order to achieve progress. A key role for civil society is to help ensure efficient and effective coordination at the country level so that actors at the national level push forward, instead of external forces creating this push. Civil society actors can help to make national coalitions locally owned with locally-determined priorities. Civil society sees itself as helping to develop country specific strategies that draw on unique resources, points of influence or structures within country (human rights commissions, existing human rights defenders protections, engaging non-traditional stakeholders such as religious groups or figures for example). Civil society can also

help ensure that good practice examples which are documented and shared for replication also highlight the importance of competency and capacity as key to impact.

In terms of the way forward, civil society would also like to contribute to better coordination between stakeholders around further strengthening and use of the results of the reporting by Member States to UNESCO's Director-General on safety of journalists and the danger of impunity. This could include more regular consultations by UN and civil society formations, as well as use of right to information laws where these exist.

Civil society would be able to work better with other stakeholders at national level if the latter nominated consistent and specialised people as focal points. Civil society's use of the information that countries report could be further explored. The strong role of civil society organisations in monitoring and alerts on the safety of journalists remains relevant, and can inform UN Plan stakeholders, especially in reports on SDGs, and responses to UNESCO and the UPR. There are growing opportunities to expand civil society partnerships with other stakeholders that contribute to capacity-building of journalists and judicial actors.

Better coordination within civil society would enable their strategic monitoring of the implementation of all normative-related work by the UN (UNSC, UNGA, UNSG, UNHRC, ICCPR, UPR, UNESCO) and by regional intergovernmental organisations and Special Rapporteurs. Civil society has a role in further engagement on the issue of safety of journalists at the Human Rights Committee. This could be by supporting the submission of individual complaints and by providing recommendations for the consideration of the Committee on the elaboration of general comments and concluding observations.

The effective coordination and synergy between the different actors in providing emergency response is an area where civil society sees further potential. What could be improved in this field is the connection between international and local initiatives in order to ensure that these distress-related initiatives complement and support each other.

A continuing role for civil society is to support legal steps on safety and impunity, including by use of right to information laws, before domestic as well as regional/international judicial fora. This role could continue to push for implementation and enforcement of court judgments, in cooperation with other stakeholders.

Information exchange between lawyers and other stakeholders could be facilitated by civil society. This could help to ensure lawyers have the support necessary to conduct litigation, whether that support be legal, advocacy, or security-based. It is also important that lawyers have measures in place to protect their own security in countries where there is a risk of retaliation for litigating on the issue of impunity. Trainings for lawyers could be held to strengthen their knowledge on how to litigate freedom of expression cases before regional and international bodies, with a focus on bringing cases against states for failure to conduct investigations into mistreatment or violence against journalists. There is a need for litigation to be supported by a strategy for implementation where there is a successful judgement, and implementation and enforcement mechanisms should be engaged following the court outcome.

It is vitally important for lawyers to address the way that violence that is inflicted on women journalists because of their work is aggravated by the fact that it is often of a sexual nature. This is in their arguments when dealing with journalists have been victim of gender-based mistreatment. Lawyers can raise anti-discrimination arguments alongside freedom of expression and ill-treatment arguments.

Civil society could encourage material steps toward commemoration and reparation, such as the creation of memorials and monuments as well as the preservation of historical archives. In this way, the UN Plan could be enriched so as to acknowledge and promote good practice.¹⁴

3.3 Media

3.3.1 Media – Key Achievements

Media organisations cover different actors, which may play different roles within this stakeholder group. The category includes employed journalists, freelancers, unions (such as IFJ and its affiliates, regional broadcasting unions, etc.), media leaders such as editors, media managers and media owners (and their associations such as WAN-IFRA).

Overall awareness about news organisations' responsibility towards the safety of journalists has greatly increased. This includes awareness of both legal liabilities and moral responsibility. Depending on the size of news organisations, and the resources available to them, awareness about safety concerns has translated in two different sets of measures:

- In organisations that have access to fewer resources, or are at an earlier stage in terms of their safety policies, some media institutions have nevertheless put basic measures in place, such as by the promotion of an overall culture of safety, by making journalists themselves aware of the type of danger they may encounter and by reinforcing the notion that no story is worth a journalist's life. Journalists in these cases are being given more support by news organizations when it comes to working in dangerous circumstances.
- For larger organisations that have dedicated greater resources to journalist safety, safety measures include: obligatory crisis training; protective clothing and equipment; specific communication requirements; tracking procedures; exit strategies; psychological debriefings and counselling; special insurance coverage; hostile environment training; targeted training on emerging dangers; first-aid courses; establishment of in-house crisis-management teams.

Numerous news media organisations have either developed internal safety protocols, and/or endorsed international guidelines, such as the INSI Safety Code, the IPI International Declaration on the Protection of Journalists, and the ACOS Freelance Journalists Safety Principles.

Among the good practices at the regional level, it is worth mentioning the European-US networks of security officers that exchange real-time information on high-risk countries and cooperate to enhance journalist security.

Through an elaborate assessment, in the form of qualitative interviews and surveys with editors and media managers of local, national and international news outlets, a number of key achievements are

¹⁴ An example could be the report "The Word and the Silence" published by the Colombian National Center for Historical Memory last year. This document represents the first official account of safety in the midst of the armed conflict that took place from 1977 to 2015. As another potential good practice from an initiative from civil society, there is the project Memory and Truth currently implemented by ARTICLE 19's office in Mexico in conjunction with state's regulatory body on the right to access of information (INAMI). This presents a collaborative framework between the state and civil society to disseminate information on cases of serious violations of human rights and crimes against humanity in the country since 1960.

presented below, (which could be considered for replication or adaption to other country-specific situations).

- Awareness of the legal framework surrounding journalists' rights and the limits of freedom of expression has permitted a number of media houses in Uganda to pursue harassment cases (especially those concerning state security officials) in the courts, leading to positive outcomes for the media. Ongoing safety training and sharing skills has taught journalists to be more careful in dangerous situations, while there has been an increase in the distribution of safety equipment to journalists covering potentially dangerous events. Multimedia conglomerate Vision Group has committed to insuring all journalists (including freelancers).
- In Mexico, safety protocols are more widely used and applied across newsrooms.
- In Kenya, aside from an increase in safety equipment and training being made available, counselling services have been established and are reaching an increasing number of journalists.
- Generally, in the U.S. owned media houses, a climate of 'safety first' and 'newsroom constant contact' is in evidence, as well as increased awareness of the role of freelancers and the need to protect them in dangerous environments, particularly concerning conflict zone coverage. Special attention has been dedicated to news organisations' responsibilities towards the freelancers they employ. Increased attention around common advocacy and solidarity efforts in denouncing attacks/imprisonment is also seen as a positive achievement.
- In Rwanda, journalists have successfully contributed to national dialogue with police and security forces as to the protection of journalists.
- In Sweden, professional assistance in creating action plans and security plans has helped enforce the seriousness of safety within the newsroom culture.
- In Jordan, awareness around the need to increase digital security has greatly increased.
- In the Philippines, some journalists are receiving safety training, but there is nothing systematised. Likewise, some are equipped with protective safety gear, and some are encouraged to liaise with the police and military when entering a dangerous environment. Limited counselling services are also available.
- In Pakistan, most media houses have added an extra layer of security in the last two years to reduce the chances of attacks by militant groups. Some media houses have made it mandatory for journalists operating in hostile areas to wear flak jackets and carry other essential safety/medical items. Some organisations have also introduced a system of security assessment before journalists are deployed in such areas.
- France Médias Monde has launched a training session about safety in dangerous areas adapted to the specific needs of media professionals.
- The creation of the 'Editors for Safety' group in Pakistan has been important in coordinating responses between media professionals via instant messaging (IM) platforms for alert and coordinating coverage of attacks on journalists.
- In Indonesia, professional organisations are offering information and training on safety and security.

There is growing recognition in the media sector that women journalists face aggressive sexual harassment and sexually-based threats as methods to "silence the messenger" and limit the spread of information, as well as targeted sexual violence as a form of reprisal against journalists' work. It is similarly recognised that online, women are exposed more frequently than men to hate speech and intimidation (sometimes linked to specific areas of work, such as when dealing with immigration issues, gender equality or violence against women at work).

3.3.2 Media - Challenges and Lessons Learnt

The issue of safety is being taken more seriously by media managers and editors, not only because of greater awareness, but also because the work of journalists has become indeed more dangerous than it used to be. The challenge is that this is likely to worsen, as journalists face increasing hatred from populists and extremists who seek to paint the media as the enemy. At the same time, taking up the wider fight against impunity has been less evident by media institutions.

Despite what progress has been made on safety, the lesson is that it is still not sufficiently perceived as a priority by the media industry itself. The industry could do more to recognise the rights of journalists covering dangerous subjects, especially freelance journalists who are still the most vulnerable of all media workers despite their increasingly significant contribution to newsgathering worldwide. Many media organisations are not yet providing adequate insurance and proper safety to their journalists, whether staff or freelance.

As a direct consequence of the increased awareness about safety concerns and news organisations' responsibilities in this area, news organisations that cannot put in place adequate measures generally do not send journalists on dangerous assignments. This raises the question of publishing news stories from stringers and freelancers who have chosen to go on dangerous assignment without adequate safety precautions.

Resource constraint is the greatest challenge for small- and medium-sized publishers, which can only afford to put in place certain limited measures and have no access to more expensive protection measures, such as adequate training, especially hostile environment training, and equipment. The overall approach is, nevertheless, perceived as "reactive" rather than "proactive". Safety training is carried out sporadically, and especially when the costs are carried elsewhere, but this ad hoc model is not optimum.

The gap includes designing and implementing proper and appropriate safety procedures, providing access to protective gear and digital safety training to staff and freelancers. Another challenge is for media organisations to provide sufficient pay to freelance journalists to enable them to adopt adequate safety protocols – there appears to be a correlation between pay and safety but this is not recognised by all actors.

Hence, there needs to be greater sensitisation on the part of owners/publishers and managers on safety. In the view of the Group of Friends, many media owners in particular still lack understanding of their role in enhancing journalists' safety and consequently sufficient commitment to provide adequate training (or release journalists for external training), insurances, resources or in-house safety protocols. Media owners are still insufficiently involved in debate and policy-making on the issue. Managers themselves lack appropriate safety training and accordingly often have poor understanding and implementation of safety measures – both offline and online. This contributes to weak standards among journalists themselves.

The lack of a "culture" of safety amongst editors and journalists remains in many cases. There is difficulty in agreeing upon, and abiding by, safety protocols. Regular renewal/refreshment of skills is also required, given high turnover and the ease of forgetting good practice. There is room to improve awareness in the media of professional ethics, the law and their rights (and many in the general public are also unaware of the latter). The extremely competitive environment has been seen to encourage journalists to go beyond the boundaries of what is considered safe or secure. The focus on delivering

stories too often trumps other concerns, including safety. Furthermore, some journalists choose to venture into conflict zones or other dangerous assignments without proper preparation and without informing management. Many journalists and media workers are falling short in their own responsibility to increase their safety and security awareness skills and assess risks, and to properly prepare for assignments that could be dangerous. This causes problems both in terms of liability, and in terms of the success of efforts to discourage this behaviour without losing stories to competitors who have a greater disregard for safety.

A lack of policy and protocol means that newsrooms are often caught 'flat-footed' as events unfold. There is also a lack of means to provide for psycho-social prevention, care and post trauma recuperation to journalists in distress, including a lack of specialised assistance for female journalists, which especially affects freelance journalists who often work alone without peer or organizational support networks.

Another challenge to overcome is that in some countries, stakeholders, and particularly media sector, do not consider attacks on bloggers and citizen journalists to be attacks on media, which weakens larger public mobilisation against all attacks. Another particular group, which has come under attack in recent years, comprises right to information (RTI) activists. One submission said that a number of such activists have been killed as a direct result of their RTI work.

The widespread practice of embedded journalism is also seen as problematic for safety: on one hand, journalists lose their perceived neutrality, which is a core element of their safety; on the other hand, insurance companies may not cover embedded journalists if they consider them as taking an "active war risk". Journalists often find themselves under pressure from all sides of an armed conflict, demanding positive coverage if they wish to avoid attacks.

Some countries prevent journalists from obtaining and importing safety equipment, such as body armour, medical supplies, and satellite phones. When journalists are killed abroad, it is often challenging for their employers and families to receive sufficient information and support to secure justice.

Coverage of attacks is more extensive if the victims of such attacks are journalists from Europe or North America working abroad. This generates a distorted perception of reality and fails to highlight the fact that most attacks are perpetrated against local journalists.

When it comes to mechanisms addressing impunity, a lesson learnt is that media and governments can co-operate to ensure accountability and transparency. A good example is the Serbian Commission, which has made progress in several cases of journalists killed in large part thanks especially to the active involvement of media in the commission.

Safety of women journalists:

Hostility to women doing journalism can have a detrimental effect on individuals in terms of self-censorship and their ability to do their jobs, and it has the potential to cause women to leave the profession or not enter in the first place. Despite increased recognition of the problem, women journalists are often reticent to report sexual harassment, abuse, and violence due to fear of retribution and cultural and professional stigma. Male management models of newsrooms favour careers of men and macho cultures. A lack of senior female editors may further contribute to reluctance to report abuses.

Pressing issues regarding women journalists vary from country to country and threats are not always gender-specific. A lesson is that safety is partly related to the character of gender-sensitive newsrooms

and news cultures (i.e. the extent to which newsrooms are male-dominated; the extent to which women in management roles; the kinds of stories that women cover; the presence of women as newsmakers in the society; and the power of sexist stereotypes).

While there is an increase in awareness about sexual harassment of women journalists, and in the confidence of victims to speak out about it, there is still a long way to go to properly address this challenge. In some countries, the vulnerable social and economic situation of women journalists, in particular, young women, is pressing. In this context, women journalists are forced to endure their employer's or colleagues' attacks, harassment, or offensive comments in order to maintain their jobs.

Sexual harassment and attacks against women journalists are deeply rooted and intrinsically linked to a wider perception of women in society that goes beyond the profession of journalism. This perception greatly affects journalism, in a number of ways, including in the promotion of safety. The widespread acceptance of misogynist statements and jokes, also within newsrooms, is part of a culture that frames attacks against women journalists. Challenges are that gender codes of conduct need to be properly enforced within newsrooms, and claims of misconduct need to be fully investigated. Attacks against women journalists are thought to be even more widespread in rural areas.

In certain news organisations, managers have stated that no difference is made on the basis of gender in assigning reporters to cover dangerous assignments. However, many media organisations appear unwilling to assign women to report on dangerous situations or night events for fear of attacks. For other news organisations, preventive action involves ensuring that women journalists are accompanied when covering dangerous assignments, such as crime, in particular at night. This however is often misunderstood as a reflection on women reporters' ability to work independently.

The overall lesson is that women journalists face attacks based on both their gender and their work, and that particular attention is called for if their safety is to be secured.

3.3.3 Media – The Way Forward

More determined efforts could be made to make media organisations (newspapers, television channels, radio and online media) take ownership and play a lead role in issues related to safety of media personnel. The tremendous power of the media could be harnessed for follow up of cases of violence against journalists and to counter impunity.

Looking ahead, news media outlets and media professionals could do much more within their power. Currently, in some countries, safety is promoted mostly as part of civil society-led initiatives and this greatly challenges the effectiveness of the efforts.

International principles as by INSI, IPI and ACOS are important initiatives both in order to raise awareness and to some concrete guidelines. They encourage standards that any news organisation can implement, independently of resources and size. Crucially, they have been developed by the industry, for the industry, and therefore it is hoped they will have a lasting impact and greater chance of changing the culture around safety practices. More media could be exposed to these initiatives.

It is important for media outlets to cover attacks not only against their own journalists, but also against journalists working for other, even competitor, outlets. This is vital in order to send a strong signal that, in spite of commercial competition, news media organisations are united when it comes to attacks against the profession. Journalists could take a greater stand for their colleagues and show solidarity by covering the instances of violence against their colleagues, and continuing to keep cases

in the spotlight until progress is made. In addition, news organisations could cast light on success stories where there has been a prosecution in order to raise the media literacy of the public by increasing awareness of the importance of press freedom, journalists' safety and ending impunity.

The idea that "journalists should never become the story" can be argued to be outdated when attacks against journalists actually prevent them from fulfilling their professional function. Overall, there seems to be an increased media coverage of attacks against journalists, from both the media organisations affected as well as others. It is not about media covering themselves in a navel-gazing way, but about covering a human rights issue of vital public interest. Looking ahead, incidents could be covered across platforms and formats, including through editorials, human interest, opinion and investigative pieces. There is a need to engage audiences and provide regular updates as inquiries/cases evolve so that the public can get involved with the issue.

News reports could cover not only attacks against journalists and media organisations, but also delays in the investigations of crimes against journalists so as to keep up pressure on the law enforcement and justice systems. It is important to investigate and expose the perpetrators, and to pressure the authorities to follow up where they may not be doing so.

Safety training need to include elements related to gender-specific safety concerns, as well as awareness of post-traumatic stress. Safety training also needs to be included in the curricula of journalism schools. Safety protocols have to focus on holistic security - the psychological health of journalists exposed to traumatic experiences in the course of their work, as well as digital and physical safety. Media professionals should be trained to recognise signs that colleagues may be afflicted by trauma so they can develop preventative measures and help facilitate timely support. In order to promote greater sustainability in safety training, emphasis should be placed on training local trainers, who can develop tailor-made safety tools for their colleagues in their regions. Media organisations can make more use of civil society resources for training.

Sensitisation and training of media managers is seen as essential to disseminating a culture of safety within a news organisation. Simultaneous training in terms of risk assessments, safety protocols and scenario planning are needed at the newsroom/editor/manager level, to align with in-the-field training for those covering a story.

The way forward needs safety trainings for local journalists, both staff and freelance, and digital security trainings embedded as an intrinsic responsibility of all actors in the media sector, and with recognition of the particular challenges faced by freelance journalists who often work alone in challenging environments without adequate training, insurance, or safety equipment and without the benefit of psycho-social support. Media actors could issue identity cards for journalists on dangerous professional missions which attest to their status as journalists (civilians).

Regular exchange with other news organisations, including exchange of experiences and peer contact, contributes to developing and promoting good practices. This may include sharing newsroom protocols – e.g. contingency planning, crisis management, etc. Forming networks and coalitions for safety, across different media institutions, such as in Afghanistan and Pakistan, is a good practice that could profitably be adapted elsewhere. Involvement of journalism unions and professional associations is as important as engaging management and owners and their organisations. Building relations with civil society and academia is important in terms of accessing training and research capacity in the area of safety.

Whenever a news organisation has the possibility to develop and cover the costs of safety training for its staff members, it could strive to also include its freelancers as well as local journalists, who would

otherwise not have any access to such trainings. Editors and news organisations employing freelance journalists need to be aware of, and factor in, the additional costs of training, insurance and safety equipment in war zones. They should clearly delineate before an assignment what a freelancer will be paid and what expenses will be covered.

News media organisations need to also strive to provide lawyers to journalists who have been attacked so that their cases can be followed to their resolution.

Online harassment against journalists contributes to an overall climate of insecurity in the profession. News organisations should aim to develop internal safety guidelines and protocols that also include strategies to address and limit online harassment and its effects on media professionals. This extends to cooperation with social media providers so as to encourage the latter to limit online harassment of journalists disseminated through their channels.

Safety of women journalists:

The issue of gender discrimination in media needs to be addressed on all levels. This includes the level of owners and editors, in order to ensure that women journalists do not hit a glass ceiling. There is a need for sound policy of “positive discrimination” for women, where necessary, and for laws governing the press and the audiovisual sector should be systematically reviewed to eliminate all discriminatory clauses. As a significant step, media organisations should ensure the implementation of existing legislation to prevent and protect against gender-based and sexual harassment against women journalists in the workplace, ensuring also their access to effective remedies.

A network of women journalists, in order to increase the sharing of professional experiences could be promoted. Women should get adequate safety and security training.

It is important to address the lack of solid knowledge, strategies, systematisation of good practices and recommendations on how to address the issue of the safety of journalists from a gender perspective. Civil society could potentially work with media, and in cooperation with gender experts and academia in this regard. All activities to improve protection and reduce impunity need to include a gender analysis to understand the specific impact on female journalists so that measures can be taken to address them.

More attention is needed to cases of cyberbullying and harassment on social networks (trolls etc). This calls for specific procedures and guidelines, which are also sensitive to the fact that women journalists are often the first target of this type of virtual attacks.

Women journalists are not always able to access emergency response programs due to social norms. Emergency response initiatives need to consider interface - having women responders available to document and implement emergency assistance in those cases - and solutions that are accessible - for example some women may not be in a position to travel unaccompanied.

It is important to raise awareness about the direct link between safety of women journalists and broader issues of discrimination and inequality of women, and the consequent necessity to tackle the safety of women journalists in conjunction with this broader framework. Men need to challenge misogynist attitudes in the newsroom and to stand up in support of female colleagues.

Other ways to improve the safety of women journalists going forward include addressing the current absence of a clear understanding about what gender-specific measures are necessary to ensure

greater protection of women journalists, both in relation to their employment and when engaged in the field.

3.4 Internet intermediaries – Achievements, Challenges and Lessons, Way Forward

Several of the larger Internet intermediary companies are now recognising the importance of safety of journalists as an issue within their general interest to provide a safe, quality and non-toxic information service to users.

In a submission to this consultation, Twitter said it actively supports news media companies, journalistic organisations, and journalists. It also cultivated relationships with leading civil society organisations which included safety-related channels for when accounts were compromised. The company said it had range of safety products and tools, available to journalists, particular female and other marginalised journalists. Twitter said it also takes steps to verify established reporters and news outlets, as a hedge against impersonation.

It is well known that Google and more recently Facebook are engaging with the issues of journalism, including increasingly with digital safety in particular. This is in recognition that protection of journalists is part of their corporate and business interest. Symbolic support is starting to be underpinned by more substantive measures to ensure security of journalists at the level of digital defence skills and take-down of threats and imposter content.

A challenge is a degree of scepticism by some within the media concerning the sincerity, responsiveness and consistency of support of these intermediaries. The lesson and way forward is that while the engagement and interest of intermediaries is to be welcomed, more steps could help to bridge gaps in trust.

3.5 Academia

3.5.1 Academia – Key Achievements

A significant achievement inspired by the UN Plan has been the formation in 2016 of a Journalists Safety Research Network (JSRN) around advancing an academic agenda developed by UNESCO¹⁵. The result is that more and more academic research on safety-impunity, including good practices, has emerged, which helps to inform stakeholders.

Research relating to journalism safety and the issue of impunity has mainly focused on eight areas: 1) journalists' perceptions of risk and threats plus the impact of impunity in terms of personal safety and psychological well-being; 2) perceptions of journalism safety and impunity by news editors and senior journalists; 3) impunity as a complex legal-political phenomenon; 4) violence against female journalists; 5) legal approaches to the freedom of expression of journalists/protection of their rights; 6) physical safety of journalists (using specific exemplars) and linked to this, 7) statistical analysis and prediction of safety risks to journalists; 8) human rights approaches (legal perspective) to human rights defenders and the physical safety of journalists. Most of the research is interdisciplinary in nature.

¹⁵ The JSRN was welcomed in the 2017 Jakarta Declaration on World Press Freedom Day.

Research has also been undertaken in adjacent areas such as self-censorship, threats to journalism and freedom of expression as a human right.

Formal academic conferences have been convened around journalism safety and the issue of impunity since 2014. Two were in parallel with the 2016 and 2017 World Press Freedom Day (WPDF) global events. Special academic sessions have taken place at the IAMCR conferences in 2015 and 2016, as well as the Global Communication Association conference in Berlin in 2015. Safety is also a key aspect of the Annual Conference on Journalism Safety Education organised by the Department of Journalism and Media Studies, Oslo and Akershus University College for Applied Sciences, Norway.

Academics have also begun to recognise that journalism safety and the issue of impunity should become part of journalism education curricula. There are various initiatives that have been taken here, such as development by UNESCO and IFJ of a course for journalism schools in the Arab regions. In addition, the University of Columbia, U.S., has also developed a MOOC on freedom of expression for media practitioners and human rights defenders as well as a case law database on freedom of expression.

The Centre for Freedom of the Media (CFOM), at Sheffield University, U.K., is fostering student engagement via the creation of a free online database of available resources on safety of journalists from different regions and countries in the world. CFOM also hosts guest lectures with safety considerations.

3.5.2 Academia – Challenges and Lessons Learnt

The challenge is that the scale of academics taking up the issue of safety to research, while growing, remains small. Meanwhile, more research is needed into almost every issue relating to safety. For instance, very little research has been done into the challenges of ending impunity, into good practices and into problems in existing protection mechanisms.

While the JSRN is a step forward, there is little awareness of existing research as there currently is a lack of channels of information about research projects and funding. One of the major challenges academics have faced is in obtaining funding. On top of that, academic research is dominated by the West and the Global North, although it is in the Global South that most issues of journalism safety and impunity are being faced and should accordingly be researched. Commissioned research is often focused on the consideration of symptoms/gathering evidence rather on the analysis of roots and causes. Other challenges that academia has faced are reluctance by journalists to participate in research (for example through interviews) and a lack of interest in research findings. Academics have also noted the shortage of reliable and systematic empirical data and pointed out that the statistics that are available largely fail to connect findings to context, civil society and politics.

There appears to be a gap between policy-makers, NGOs and the academy that is linked to their different priorities and agendas. A lesson learnt by academics is that there appears to be a lack of knowledge and attendant misconception amongst policy-makers, NGOs and other international organisations of what academic research entails, what it does, how it works and importantly its direct relevance to current problems/issues. There is also an apparent lack of clarity amongst academics/researchers of how policy-makers, NGOs and other international organisations conceive of the role of research and the academy.

Several of these challenges and lessons also apply to the education and training of journalism students in safety issues. There are still relatively few journalism schools that integrate safety into their

curriculum, and there is little interconnection between them and training initiatives in civil society and the media sector.

3.5.3 Academia – The Way Forward

Strengthening the UN Plan of Action encompasses issues both in academic research itself, and in the relationship between UNESCO and the academy.

In academia, there could be greater identification of areas that are directly related to the issues of journalism safety and impunity and to identify priority research gaps. This could see deepening research expertise in relation to policy agendas such as the UN Plan, the relevant UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and law-related initiatives.

In terms of relationships, an opportunity exists to better define synergies between the academy and UNESCO. Effective translation of academic research into something that is practicable, relevant and applicable needs to be addressed by both the academy and end users. UNESCO could support the development of an expert database through the JSRN, which could be accessible to academics and stakeholders.

Academic researchers could become a more formal partner with UNESCO through:

- Creation of a steering group that includes academics for the future development and implementation of the UN Action Plan.
- UNESCO advertising funding opportunities on academic funding websites and having a quota of academic research.
- Development of fora where academics and stakeholders meet and exchange views (through mixed panels for example) to facilitate stronger interaction and mutual exchanges by leading NGOs and industry-based bodies.
- Creation of opportunities for co-production of research agendas/questions by pooling academic and policy expertise through eg. secondment initiatives.
- Development of awareness amongst UN Plan stakeholders of where and how to look for academic work.
- Development of a signalling system that automatically informs UN Plan stakeholders about new relevant publications.

Chapter 4. Role of all stakeholders in raising awareness

4.1 Key achievements

Many stakeholders have taken actions to raise awareness of the problems and their significance, and the UN Plan as a framework for advancing solutions. These include UN actors, Member States, regional intergovernmental organisations, civil society, media, and academia – often working in co-operation with each other.

As noted earlier, safety of journalists and the issue of impunity for crimes against journalists have also been prominently featured in celebrations of World Press Freedom Day (WPF, 3 May). This has been complemented and reinforced by the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists¹⁶ (IDEI, 2 November) and the International Day for Universal Access to Information¹⁷ (IDUAI, 28 September). The three international days have provided a unique opportunity to bring together key stakeholders and to sensitise the public at large as well as important decision-makers in these areas. World Press Freedom Day events took place in at least 80 countries in 2015 and 2016, and 100 in 2017. IDEI events were marked in at least 20 countries in 2014, 20 in 2015, and 33 in 2016.¹⁸

Ms Christiane Amanpour, Chief International Correspondent for CNN and UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador for Freedom of Expression and Journalist Safety, has amplified the UNESCO's work in the field through her status as a world-renowned journalist. She moderated during conferences organised by UNESCO and has been actively promoting the work of UNESCO on these issues through her social media accounts.¹⁹

At country-level, one example of an innovative awareness-raising project on the issue of journalists' safety was an activity implemented in Tunisia in November 2015 by OHCHR and UNESCO in cooperation with the National Union of Journalists reaching out to the most remote areas in the country. It involved a caravan on safety of journalists and impunity that travelled to five governorates in which meetings were held with security officials, judges, lawyers and civil society to raise awareness on the need to end impunity for attacks committed against journalists and to activate the physical and legal protection of journalists while carrying out their duties.

¹⁶ Proclaimed by the UN General Assembly in 2013 via Resolution A/RES/68/163.

¹⁷ Declared by the UNESCO General Conference in 2015 via Resolution 38 C/70.

¹⁸ The most global recent celebration of WPF, UNESCO's flagship event on freedom of expression, has taken place in Jakarta, Indonesia from 1 to 4 May 2017 under the theme *Critical Minds for Critical Times: Media's role in advancing peaceful, just and inclusive societies*. It included several sessions and training workshops dedicated to journalists' safety, as well as a full-day session to discuss prospects for the creation of a special mechanism on freedom of expression and safety of journalists in the Southeast Asia region. The celebration of WPF also included specific academic sessions on journalist safety and the issue of impunity, as well as other academic conferences across the world (more information: Chapter 3, Key Achievements, Academia). [Sixteen points in the recent Jakarta Declaration](#) on press freedom deal with *safety of journalists*.

¹⁹ UNESCO has also led awareness-raising efforts through the organisation of a number of international conferences on topics linked to journalists' safety and freedom of expression. These include: *News organizations standing up for the safety of media professionals* (Paris, February 2016 - see point 25); *Journalism under Fire: Challenges of our times* (Paris, 23 March 2017); and *Strengthening Judiciary Systems and African Courts to Protect Safety of Journalists and End Impunity*, co-organised with the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights in preparation of IDEI (Arusha, September 2016). The latter was preceded by two seminars, all organised in preparation or on the IDEI.

To share information on the implementation of the UN Plan of Action with all relevant stakeholders, UNESCO has been sending out bimonthly newsletters, which include information on various ongoing and upcoming initiatives that contribute to achieving the objectives set out in the UN Plan of Action.

Numerous civil society and media activities have been dedicated to raising awareness. Since 2012 gatherings of international media figures/news organisations around safety and impunity issues have taken place, leading to statements and declarations such as :

- 'The London Statement' (based on an event organised by CFOM and BBC), October 2012.
- 'Joint statement', Safety of Journalists Symposium, April 2014.
- #journalismisnotacrime campaigns and the International Declaration on the Protection of Journalists (Al Jazeera and IPI).

International groups such as IFEX, CPJ and RSF and national groups have all been active in awareness raising activities and campaigns.

4.2 Challenges and Lessons Learnt

Awareness-raising by its nature has to be never-ending if it is to compete for attention effectively in the flow of many other issues and an exponential flood of information. Spread across the year as they are, the International Days serve as regular and cumulative moments to raise awareness. However, a challenge is that some stakeholder groups (such as Member States and media) are still to take up these opportunities at scale and full potential. A lesson is that much awareness-raising has understandably been aimed at the general public with an eye to impacting on public opinion, but there has been relatively little complementary targeting of specific constituencies or actors with aim of producing sustained action. Managers/editors of media houses, and other actors who have a role to play (such as parliamentarians, lawyers and internet companies) have been relatively neglected as target audiences.

A further lesson is that there has been limited use of other platforms or innovative ways to raise awareness. It would also be particularly useful to have more effective ways of sharing knowledge about safety risks and impunity and coordinating responses effectively at country level. There is a gap in terms strategy across all UN Plan stakeholders that could help to address and raise awareness of the growing physical, digital and psychological dimensions of violence against journalists amongst stakeholders.

Furthermore, there is a lack of adequate capacity and knowledge exchange systems to respond to erosions of journalists' protections and growth of cultures of impunity. Campaigns on these issues are important amid growing discourse aimed at delegitimising independent journalism and portraying journalists as adversaries and thereby laying fertile ground for threats, intimidation and physical attacks.

The public as a whole has inadequate understanding of both the importance of journalism for societies, and the importance of safety for both practitioners and for individual's own exercise of expression and access to information.

4.3 The Way Forward

The key elements of the UN Plan of Action should be made more explicit and the strategic dimensions of the Plan could be better communicated to all stakeholders. Strategic communication could be used to engage specific stakeholders in actions relevant to the Plan.

Within active and potential stakeholder constituencies, it is necessary to create more clarity about what is expected of the various groups and to install simple, non-bureaucratic coordination mechanisms (such as the multistakeholder consultative meeting in Geneva on June 29, 2017). The aim would be especially to encourage all stakeholders from each group to be more involved and participative in the UN Plan. Awareness-raising in general needs to signal the concrete opportunities for actors to get involved or become more engaged.

This requires a reinforced strategy to collect, verify, assess and ensure effective use by stakeholders, of information and analysis. To encourage participative and involved stakeholders, this could include working out a strategy for each stakeholder group. In order to action this, it could be worthwhile involving a group of the most competent international experts and institutions on the issue as strategic reference group/commentator to ensure ongoing “peer- review” of efforts and achievements within each stakeholder group. This could inform, and feed into, awareness-raising activities.

The UN system could also consider a focus on how to build public opinion, as well as more commitment at the national level. Many resolutions seem to remain with Foreign Ministries and are not shared with other relevant institutions nor mainstreamed at the national level. Sharing good practice as well as obstacles could help to identify what the solutions are for Foreign Ministries to promote UN processes, in order to avoid that the Ministries are effectively the only national actors involved in the issue.

Submissions from many Member States highlighted the central role that public awareness plays for ending impunity: More campaigns against impunity are needed; media could consequently cover violations of journalists’ safety and increase reporting on impunity. Also, public awareness about the important role of the press as a substantial watchdog in democratic societies must be enhanced. Open and ongoing court cases should be monitored permanently. “Public awareness is the most essential tool to protect journalists” said one Member State.

At a national level, the issue of the safety of journalists and impunity could be incorporated into the agenda for discussion with citizens, organised civil society and relevant forums (parliaments, public institutions, university forums, etc.).

It is also important that awareness-raising include developing understanding of the underlying causes of the attacks against journalists and rather than only the consequences, and ensuring that the work on safety of journalists keeps pace with technological, social, legal and cultural developments.

A suggestion was that UNESCO could consider setting up an initiative along the lines of the Council of Europe Platform for the Protection of Journalism and Safety of Journalists, so to raise greater awareness about attacks against journalists and media organisations, and engage more closely with governments on this issue. A further suggestion was to establish additional UNESCO Goodwill Ambassadors from diverse regions in order to complement the work of Christiane Amanpour.

CONCLUSION

A wealth of insights into achievements, challenges, lessons learnt and ideas for the way ahead have been reflected in this draft document. The specific draft recommendations do not cover all aspects of the way forward, but propose particular priorities for short- and medium-term strategic types and areas of action.

What is evident from the consultation process underlying this document is that, to be effective going forward, the UN Plan has to be about embedding safety as an intrinsic responsibility of all actors, and about creating sustainable institutions and processes to address the challenges. These systemic mechanisms can be built on the value propositions of multi-stakeholder co-operation.

At international level, there is need for continued and increased normative work, sharing of good practices and awareness raising. This applies to the UN, regional intergovernmental organisations, civil society, global media and the academic community. At the same time, this work needs to have impact on the ground in specific societies.

Better coordination and synergies at country level will be needed between different stakeholders in establishing nationally owned protection mechanisms with clearly defined and competent leadership responsibilities attached to key institutions/individuals, and served by an adequate information base.

The UN Plan should continue as a framework for coordinating stakeholders within shared overall strategies to strengthen and extend effective legal frameworks of protection at international and national level. Global conferences, inter-regional dialogues and national engagements could become more systematic means to advance the implementation of the UN Plan.

In particular, there is a need to have intensified efforts to support journalists in places at most risk. This means encouraging all actors to avoid dispersing their efforts where there is the possibility instead to focus on common issues or places. In this way, there can be strengthened development of information systems and understanding, as well as institutionalisation of information and protection mechanisms. This requires engagement with States and local programmes and the support of international expertise. Political leadership in States has a key role to ensure full coordination and capacity of the relevant actors in government, legislatures, judiciaries and security forces.

At the UN level, there is need and opportunity to make a greater contribution. In the media sector, there is need and opportunity to give more attention to the safety and impunity story, as well as to recognise particular challenges faced by freelance journalists who often work alone in challenging environments without adequate training, insurance, safety equipment and without the benefit of psycho-social support. Civil society needs recognition and support to continue and expand its contribution. Internet intermediaries and academia can each step up their involvement.

It is also evident from this consultation that serious concern is also needed by UN Plan stakeholders as regards the safety of women media practitioners both in the field and at the work place. Awareness about sexual violence and harassment, online and offline, and pro-active measures to tackle this are required. This is an area where all actors can put more emphasis in order to strengthen the UN Plan going ahead.

With the combined insights of this draft document, and the envisaged discussion on June 29, stakeholders can be confident that the UN Plan can be strengthened. With a stronger community of interested actors, it is possible to reinforce international norms on safety, build better information and knowledge bases, and ensure ongoing systems to prevent, protect and prosecute, with benefit to

societies in their democratic quests for sustainable development. It may be that the grim picture of killings, assaults, kidnappings, intimidation and online attacks on journalists could be even worse if it were not for the UN Plan. But it is clear that without a strengthened implementation of the UN Plan, little can stop these violations from growing – let alone be put into reverse.