



Joint statement on the Safety of Journalists on the occasion of the World Press Freedom Day 2022

Issued by the Presidents of the United Nations General Assembly, the UNESCO General Conference and the Human Rights Council.

Punta del Este, Uruguay - 3 May 2022 – Today, on the occasion of World Press Freedom Day, we wish to recall the paramount importance of ensuring journalists and media workers can work freely, independently and safely, without hindrances, threats, or violent reprisals. Each and every day, we are reminded of how vital the information they provide is for democracy, the promotion and protection of human rights, fighting corruption, sustainable development and preserving international peace and security.

Multiple resolutions, declarations, and commitments on the safety of journalists have been adopted by our respective bodies, including the 2021 UN General Assembly resolution on the safety of journalists and the issue of impunity (A/RES/76/173), the 2020 Human Rights Council resolution on the safety of journalists (A/HRC/RES/45/18), and the 2021 Windhoek+30 Declaration on information as a public good (UNESCO General Conference Resolution 41C.41). In addition, the wider UN system developed a multistakeholder coordination framework known as the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity, adopted by the UN principals in 2012.

As we mark the 10th anniversary of the UN Plan of Action this year, we welcome the considerable progress made over the past decade in the implementation of the Plan. We applaud those governments which have made the safety of journalists a priority, within their borders and beyond, and highlight the significant contribution of civil society organizations that are committed to advancing media freedom and safety. Still, too many challenges prevail, including high levels of impunity for crimes against journalists, a rise in the number of journalists detained and an increased legal harassment against them, online violence, the use of surveillance tools to hinder the journalist's work, increased attacks on women journalists, and the rise of killings in non-conflict environments.

As we embark on the last decade to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda, it is important to remember the contribution of freedom of expression, press freedom and access to information to all other rights, such as quality education, the eradication of poverty, and access to justice and healthcare.

This is why, as we look forward to 10 more years of progress in defending the safety of journalists, freedom of expression, and access to information for all, we call on Member States, the UN system, regional bodies, civil society, the judiciary and all concerned actors to join forces in furthering the objectives of the UN Plan of Action. By working together to strengthen its implementation and to reach SDG Target 16.10, we can continue to build a safer and more enabling environment for journalists and media workers, and protect the right of every citizen to reliable, and, often, lifesaving information.

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