



**Concept Note**

**ON THE OCCASION OF**

**THE INTERNATIONAL DAY TO END IMPUNITY FOR CRIMES AGAINST**

**JOURNALISTS**

International seminar:

“Strengthening regional cooperation to end impunity for crimes and attacks  
against journalists in Latin America”

*Mexico City, Mexico*

*7 November 2019*

Every year since 2013, the International Day to End Impunity for crimes against journalists (IDEI) has been commemorated on 2 November. The 2019 IDEI main event will be organized in Mexico City, Mexico, by UNESCO with national authorities, international, regional and, national stakeholders. The one-day seminar, entitled “Strengthening regional cooperation to end impunity for crimes and attacks against journalists in Latin America”, will seek to advance dialogues and strategies to strengthen regional cooperation on safety of journalists and ending impunity in Latin America, as well as highlighting south-south cooperation opportunities. It will promote the exchange of knowledge and dialogues between the judiciary, protection mechanisms, National Human Rights Commissions, civil society and media in Mexico and with other regional actors including the Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and the Inter-American Court on Human Rights. Through encouraging the exchange of best practices and identifying pragmatic solutions, the event aims to strengthen the fight against impunity and inscribe this issue in the larger framework to protect fundamental human rights and the realization of Sustainable Development.

Since its proclamation by the United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/68/163 as part of its 68th session in 2013, IDEI has gained significant momentum and support by all actors involved in the promotion and protection of freedom of expression and the safety of journalists. With more than 1,010 journalists killed in the world from 2006 to 2017 according to UNESCO, and only one case out of ten judicially solved, the level of impunity for crimes against journalists remains terribly high. This high level of impunity imposes a climate of fear in many parts of the world, not only for media professionals but also for the whole society, which is detrimental to the free circulation of information and the expression of opinions and ideas for all citizens.

Impunity for crimes against journalists, and for the countless other forms of violence against them, such as arbitrary detention, tortures, kidnapping, gender-based violence, threats or harassments, are hindering the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals and in particular SGD 16, which strives to promote peaceful and inclusive societies. More specifically, it affects the realization of target 16.10 that aims to ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms. IDEI commemorations offer a unique opportunity to raise awareness and promote a dialogue and collaboration between all actors involved, including UN agencies, regional bodies, Member States, members of the judiciary, civil society and the media, to address this issue.

It also allows stakeholders to go deeper in the discussion of crimes against journalists, exploring the similarities and differences of journalists attacked due to their coverage related to political corruption, organized crime, illegal mining, environmental issues, drug issues; the gender differences; the local/national differences; the diverse type of media differences, among others.

Combatting impunity is an important step in addressing the high levels of journalists killed, as it perpetuates the cycle of violence against them and sends a chilling message across society. In the last 12 years, 226 journalists were killed in Latin America and the Caribbean with 82% of cases remaining unresolved. The vast majority of victims, representing 98%, were local journalists covering local stories. Mexico remains the Latin American country with the highest rate of journalist murders, and most of these crimes remained unsolved or improperly investigated, with few perpetrators arrested and convicted.

The commemoration of IDEI through a regional seminar in Latin America represents a continuation of a series of seminars at the regional level, which raise awareness and initiated projects to tackle this issue. Previous commemorations of IDEI were held in Latin America (San Jose, Costa Rica) in 2014, Europe (Strasbourg, France) in 2015, Africa (Arusha, Tanzania) in 2016, Asia (Colombo, Sri Lanka) in 2017 and the Middle East (Beirut, Lebanon) in 2018. The first three events were organized in partnerships with regional courts of human rights, which are essential actors to set regional standards to foster freedom of expression and fight impunity.

The regional seminar for IDEI in Mexico City will be organized within the larger framework of the implementation of the [UN Plan of Action on Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity](#) and will provide a strategic opportunity for all stakeholders to focus public attention on the importance of ending impunity for crimes against journalists. The main outcome of the event is that the importance of the fundamental right to freedom of expression and its corollaries such as access to information, freedom of the press and the safety of journalists, are better known and protected by stakeholders.