



## PRESS RELEASE

### **MEDIA AND POLITICIANS SIGN ISLAMABAD DECLARATION ON SAFETY OF JOURNALISTS**

**Islamabad:** United Nations in Pakistan, Members of the Parliament, Human Rights Commission, Media workers, Journalists and Press Clubs together signed “Declaration on Safety of Journalists” in Islamabad today, to demand collective and coordinated action from all stakeholders to stop the killing and harassment of journalists and end impunity.

The declaration was adopted and signed as an outcome of National Consultative Meeting organized, to provide Pakistan specific inputs to United Nations implementation strategy of the Action Plan on the Safety of Journalist and the Issue of Impunity--- an initiative of which United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is convening agency in collaboration with other United Nations agencies, including United Nations Information Centre (UNIC), United Nations Development Program (UNDP), UNODC and UNWOMEN. The declaration was signed on 5th November ahead of the United Nations 2nd Inter-Agency meeting, which will be held on November 22- 23 in Vienna, Austria with year.

Dr. Kozue Kay Nagata, Director, UNESCO Islamabad in her opening remarks highlighted the importance of the Declaration on Safety of Journalist by saying, “The safety of journalists and the struggle against impunity for their killers are essential to preserve the fundamental right to freedom of expression, guaranteed by Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Freedom of expression is an individual right, for which no one should be killed, but it is also a collective right, which empowers populations through facilitating dialogue, participation and democracy.”

Mr. Timo Pakkala, United Nations Resident Coordinator in Pakistan also attended the meeting. He emphasized on the strategic importance of adoption of Un system wide Plan of Action and its strategies noting the alarming numbers of journalist killings in Pakistan. According to Committee to Protect Journalist (CPJ), Pakistan is ranked 3rd world’s deadliest nation for the press in 2012 after Syria and Somalia.

Mr. Haider Abbas Rizvi, Member of National Assembly's Special Committee to Investigate the Issue of Threats to Journalists and Media Personal, in his keynote address urged for consolidated efforts, by taking responsibility not only by accountability and regulatory mechanisms by also media owners and journalists themselves. "By signing this declaration, we are bound to show commitment as whole, and not in fragments".

The participants worked in different groups, along with the drafting committee nominated by the participants. The declaration proposes various interventions including enacting policy and legal framework, enabling civil society as accountability and watchdogs, and equipping media workers with capacity to practice their duties, to protect them against attacks and to combat impunity, in the interest of freedom and democracy.

This meeting provided a rare window of opportunity for global action ahead of the UN meeting, which will focus on practical ways to implement the UN system wide Plan of Action for the Safety of Journalists at country, regional and local level.

In Pakistan the Implementation Strategies to be developed at the Vienna meeting will mainstream into One-UN Operational Plan II, from 2013- 2017.

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***For more information:***

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