



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

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Subject: **Invitation to a special event to mark the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists on 2 November 2015, UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, France**

Sir/Madam,

It is my pleasure to invite you to attend a special event to mark the International Day to End Impunity in Crimes against Journalists (IDEI), which will take place at UNESCO Headquarters on 2 November 2015. This event will provide a welcome opportunity to launch the forthcoming UNESCO report entitled *World Trends in Freedom of Expression and Media Development: Special Digital Focus 2015*, which contains the Organization's most recent information on the safety of journalists and impunity.

This global launch will be held in Room IX (Fontenoy building) from 3 p.m. to 4.30 p.m. It will open with a speech by the Director-General and representatives of the Kingdom of Sweden and of the United States of America, and will be followed by a high-level panel discussion moderated by Ms Christiane Amanpour, UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador for Freedom of Expression and Journalist Safety, and Chief International Correspondent at CNN. The launch will coincide with observations of IDEI in London and New York, as part of a global campaign against impunity, beginning with a commemoration conference at the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in San José (Costa Rica) on 9 and 10 October 2015. A dedicated webpage for IDEI 2015 is available online at: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/endimpunity>.

Ending impunity is of vital importance, to enhance the safety of journalists and safeguard freedom of expression. These objectives resonate directly with the newly-adopted Sustainable Development Goals and, particularly, Goal 16. Over the past decade, more than 700 journalists have been killed for bringing news and information to the public. Worryingly, less than one in ten cases committed against media workers over the past decade has led to a conviction. This impunity emboldens the perpetrators of crimes against journalists and, at the same time, has a chilling effect on all parts of society, including journalists themselves. Impunity breeds further violence and feeds into a vicious cycle.

I hope very much that you will be in a position to accept this invitation. Mr Getachew Engida, Deputy Director-General, and his colleagues stand ready to provide you with any additional information you may require. Queries should be directed to Ms Rachel Pollack Ichou and/or Mr Gerwin De Roy, Project Officers within the Division of Freedom of Expression and Media Development of the Communication and Information Sector (tels: +33.1.45.68.12.94 or +33.1.45.68.04.48; e-mails: r.pollack@unesco.org or g.de-roy@unesco.org). I invite you kindly to confirm your ability to participate as soon as possible by contacting them.

Accept, Sir/Madam, the assurances of my highest consideration.



Irina Bokova  
Director-General

Enc.

cc: National Commissions for UNESCO  
Permanent Delegations to UNESCO



## Concept note

### *International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists* 2 November 2015

#### **Global launch of the World Trends in Freedom of Expression and Media Development: Special Digital Focus 2015**

UNESCO Headquarters, France

In the past decade 700 journalists have been killed for reporting the news: one death every five days. In nine out of ten cases the killers go unpunished. Impunity leads to more killings and is often a symptom of worsening conflict and the breakdown of law and justice systems. UNESCO warns that impunity damages whole societies by covering up serious human rights abuses, corruption and crime. Governments, civil society, the media and everyone concerned to uphold the rule of law are being asked to join in the global efforts to end impunity. The End Impunity-Day meetings in Paris, London, New York, and elsewhere will be an opportunity for journalists, lawyers, policy-makers and others to consider how best to respond to that urgent challenge.

#### **Summary:**

UNESCO will convene or co-host events in Paris, London, New York and elsewhere, on Monday, 2 November 2015, to mark the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists (IDEI). The events will also serve as an occasion to launch, in various destinations, the forthcoming UNESCO report, *World Trends in Freedom of Expression and Media Development: Special Digital Focus 2015*, which contains the Organization's most recent information on the safety of journalists and impunity. The events can take forward the outcomes of the commemoration conference on the occasion of the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists, in partnership with the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, which will be held in Costa Rica from 9 to 10 October 2015. They can also feed into and prepare the envisaged UNESCO international conference 'News organizations standing up for the safety of media professionals' scheduled for 5 February 2016.

#### **Background:**

The United Nations General Assembly adopted Resolution A/RES/68/163 at its 68th session in 2013, which proclaimed 2 November as the '*International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists*' (IDEI). The Resolution urged Member States to implement definite measures countering the present culture of impunity. UNESCO is requested in the Resolution to facilitate the implementation of the IDEI.

In 2014, the first year of the IDEI, UNESCO co-organized an inter-regional dialogue at the European Court of Human Rights, in partnership with the Council of Europe; Centre for Freedom of the Media (CFOM), University of Sheffield; and the European Lawyers' Union. In conjunction with several permanent delegations to the United Nations (Argentina, Austria, Costa Rica, France, Greece and Tunisia), UNESCO also organized a high-level panel titled "Ending Impunity: Upholding the Rule of Law". Further events initiated by the Organization took place in Abuja, Accra and Tunis.

A dedicated webpage for IDEI 2015 is available online at:  
<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/endimpunity>

**Format of Paris event:**

Venue: UNESCO Headquarters at Place de Fontenoy

Time/date: 2 November 2015 from 3 to 4.30 p.m.

Participants:

- *Opening Ceremony* (20 minutes)
  - o Ms Irina Bokova, UNESCO Director-General
  - o Ms Alice Bah Kuhnke, Swedish Minister for Culture and Democracy
  - o Ms Bathsheba Nell Crocker, Assistant Secretary, Bureau of International Organization Affairs, United States of America
  
- *Panel:* (70 minutes)
  - o Moderator: Ms Christiane Amanpour, UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador for Freedom of Expression and Journalist Safety; Chief International Correspondent, CNN
  - o Ms Janine di Giovanni, Middle East Editor, Newsweek
  - o Ms Chelsia Chan, Working group of Law and Regulation, Press Council of Indonesia
  - o Mr Frank La Rue, Executive Director, Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights Europe
  - o Other speakers to be announced

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