



**JOINT MESSAGE FROM
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IRINA BOKOVA, DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF UNESCO AND
ZEID RA'AD AL HUSSEIN, UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR
HUMAN RIGHTS
ON THE OCCASION OF WORLD PRESS FREEDOM DAY**

3 May 2015

Let Journalism Thrive!

This is the theme of World Press Freedom Day this year.

In 2015, States are accelerating to reach the Millennium Development Goals and shaping a new global sustainable development agenda. Freedom of expression and press freedom are essential to success at every level.

For peace to be lasting and development to be sustainable, human rights must be respected. Everyone must be free to seek, receive and impart knowledge and information on all media, online and offline. Quality journalism enables citizens to make informed decisions about their society's development. It also works to expose injustice, corruption, and the abuse of power.

For this, journalism must be able to thrive, in an enabling environment in which they can work independently and without undue interference and in conditions of safety. The world has recently witnessed horrendous attacks against journalists -- at least one journalist is killed each week, in conflict and non-conflict zones. We must redouble efforts to enhance the safety of journalists and put an end to impunity, and this is the

goal of the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity, spearheaded by UNESCO and supported by other UN entities.

We need every voice to speak out and be heard – especially those of women. Twenty years after the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, women remain under-represented throughout the media, at decision-making level but also in the coverage of issues. We cannot let this stand. Men and women must participate equally in making and sharing the news.

Freedom of expression and press freedom are not luxury attributes that can wait until sustainable development has been achieved – it is an enabler for the enjoyment of all human rights and, therefore, vital to good governance and the rule of law.

This is our message today, to let journalism thrive!

BAN Ki-moon

Irina Bokova

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