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Agenda item 11: IPDC SPECIAL INITIATIVE ON THE SAFETY OF JOURNALISTS: FUTURE STRATEGY

SUMMARY CONTENT OF DOCUMENT

This document presents a strategy for IPDC's work on the safety of journalists and the issue of impunity for the period of 2017 and 2018, with a focus on reinforcing IPDC's monitoring and reporting mechanism, as requested by the 60th IPDC Bureau meeting (17-18 March 2016).

IPDC SPECIAL INITIATIVE ON THE SAFETY OF JOURNALISTS: FUTURE STRATEGY

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1. INTRODUCTION

During the 60th IPDC Bureau meeting held in March 2016, the IPDC Bureau members requested the IPDC Secretariat to promote the uniqueness of IPDC's work on the safety of journalists, particularly its reporting and monitoring mechanism and its flagship *Report by the Director-General to the Council of IPDC on the Safety of Journalists and the Danger of Impunity*.

For this purpose, the IPDC Bureau further requested the IPDC Secretariat to present a document to the Intergovernmental Council of the IPDC (referred to in this document as the IPDC Council). The strategy for IPDC presented below takes into account decisions taken by the Bureau at its 60th meeting which cover IPDC work:

- To continue to develop national assessments based on the IPDC-approved Journalists' Safety Indicators.
- To ensure gender mainstreaming in IPDC safety projects, by addressing - when appropriate - particular risks and dangers faced by women journalists.

- To compile and disseminate best practices in monitoring, reporting on and promoting the safety of journalists, including national and regional protection mechanisms for journalists.
- To formulate, publish, translate and disseminate a booklet explaining IPDC's monitoring and reporting mechanism.
- To improve IPDC branding of the Programme's role in promoting the safety of journalists, particularly the reporting and monitoring mechanisms.
- To monitor the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Target 16.10 and related Indicator 16.10.1, including by encouraging Member States to co-operate with the IPDC's work in monitoring and promoting the safety of journalists.

The IPDC Bureau also requested the Secretariat to prepare proposals to donors, in particular those improving reporting and monitoring mechanisms at national level. All of these actions fall in the framework of UNESCO's wider actions to enhance the safety of journalists and to tackle impunity.

2. BACKGROUND

It was in 2008 that the IPDC Council decided to give particular priority to the promotion of the safety of journalists and the fight against impunity. It was reflected as such in the first *IPDC Decision on The Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity*. That year the first *UNESCO's Director-General Report on The Safety of Journalists and the Danger of Impunity* was also launched with the aim of providing analytical information on the killing of journalists and the judicial inquiries, based on information provided by Member States on a voluntary basis. It is the only report worldwide that provides this type of information, and it is the UN system's source of official information on these issues. The report is a fundamental mechanism to support governments and civil society organizations with factual information as they tackle the issue of impunity. In 2016, the fifth report is being tabled at the 30th meeting of the IPDC Council.

In 2010, the IPDC Council planted the seed for the development of the *UN Plan of Action on The Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity* (from now on, the UN Plan). Its *2010 IPDC Decision on The Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity* invited UNESCO's Director-General to evaluate the feasibility of convening an inter-agency meeting of all the relevant UN agencies "with a view to formulating a comprehensive, coherent, and action-oriented approach to the safety of journalists and the issue of impunity". In 2012, after a multi-stakeholder process, the UN Plan was approved by the highest-level coordination forum of the United Nations (UN) system, the UN Chief Executives Board (CEB), and subsequently welcomed by the UN General Assembly, the UN Security Council and the UN Human Rights Council. In addition, an implementation strategy was approved to guide the work for the next few years, whose execution has also been supported by the IPDC. Since then, the UN Plan has served as a roadmap for governments and other actors. Its impact, particularly at the UN normative level where nine resolutions have been passed in recent years, has been significant. The Plan was reviewed in 2014, and a follow-up review is in planning. IPDC's subsequent work on the safety of journalists operates on the basis of these developments and within the framework of UNESCO's continued leadership of the Plan.

The IPDC is also behind the creation of critical tools to assess national media landscapes, including journalists' safety. The success of the Media Development Indicators (MDIs), created within and endorsed by the IPDC in 2008, led to the development of the Journalists' Safety Indicators (JSIs) that are designed to assess the security challenges faced by journalists. The results are a useful set of data and recommendations for governments and other stakeholders to address this issue. The JSIs have been applied in Guatemala, Honduras, Kenya, Nepal and Pakistan and studies are underway in Afghanistan, Iraq, Rwanda, South Sudan, and Uganda.

Since the IPDC decided to give priority to journalists' safety in 2008, 74 projects in this area have been approved for funding in more than 35 countries for close to US\$ 1.4 million dollars¹. In terms of geographical distribution, figures show that the Africa region has received the most support related to safety, which is aligned with UNESCO's priority given to this continent. Asia and the Pacific come second, Latin America and the Caribbean third and then the Arab Region. These IPDC projects mainly involve building capacities among journalists, professional associations and public institutions and reinforcing monitoring mechanisms and advocacy tools to raise awareness on the important role that journalism plays in both democracy and sustainable development.

In addition, in the last eight years, the IPDC has allocated more than half a million dollars to special projects related to safety. Although not only focused on safety, nearly US\$450,000 were allocated to the project "Develop and design communication and information strategies for the recovery, reconstruction, and democratization of the Tunisian Society". Additionally, US\$55,000 were spent in applying the JSIs. At the 60th IPDC Bureau meeting in March 2016, the Bureau allocated another US\$30,000 to the JSIs and US\$70,000 to various projects aiming to reinforce safety reporting and monitoring mechanisms and to collect good practices about promoting safety and combatting impunity.

3. STRATEGY FOR IPDC 2017-2018

This 2017-2018 IPDC's future strategy on Journalists' Safety and against Impunity aims to build upon the uniqueness of the IPDC's work in fulfilling its responsibilities for supporting the safety of journalists, and particularly upon the mandate of its reporting and monitoring mechanisms. This is complementary to wider actions led by UNESCO to enhance the safety of journalists and to tackle impunity. It follows that this strategy document defines IPDC's contribution to UNESCO's wider leadership of the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity. The strategy also includes proposals for funding, as requested by the IPDC Bureau.

The strategy recognizes further that while challenges related to the safety of journalists are many and interrelated, IPDC's efforts need to be prioritized in a limited number of areas in order to have an impact, while also optimizing their complementarity to the work of other UNESCO initiatives in this area. The guiding rationale is to put the focus on activities which

¹ This information is based on the analytical paper *The Role in the Promotion of the Safety of Journalists: A Way Forward*, prepared for the IPDC by Silvia Chocarro Marcesse. This data includes IPDC projects entirely focused on, or including some activities related to, the promotion of the safety of journalists.

the IPDC is particularly well placed to successfully address, with an emphasis on actions that complement other activities and which avoid duplication.

For example, one area of activity where IPDC is well placed is to make the link between the Director-General's Report and what needs to be done in a selected number of countries with interests in co-operation with IPDC, in order to address the issue of impunity. This line of action calls on IPDC to encourage strategic partnerships in the field, and to report on progress made when the subsequent Reports of the Director General are presented.

In addition, IPDC's character as an Intergovernmental Programme enables it to bring different actors together, and to link work at global level with grassroots initiatives. Moreover, IPDC – using its indicators and its role in monitoring progress on SDG 16.10 – brings a knowledge-driven advantage to the field.

All this complements the extensive other work also being done on safety and impunity within UNESCO. It reinforces, for example, the promotion of the UN Plan and worldwide commemorations of the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes Against Journalists, which actions are implemented by the Freedom of Expression Division in the Communication-Information Sector. The IPDC's niche activity on safety further synergises that by numerous other actors, particularly at local level. In several cases, initiatives originating in IPDC have the potential to be taken up, expanded and co-implemented by other parts of UNESCO as well as by external actors. In overview, this future strategy for IPDC's special initiative on safety highlight the distinctive character of this "stream" within UNESCO as it joins with other flows that can together constitute a powerful river.

Against this background, this strategy is based on the following documents, as requested by the IPDC Bureau:

- The outcomes of the UNESCO conference *News Organizations standing up for the safety of media professionals*.
- The analytical paper *IPDC's Role in the Promotion of the Safety of Journalists: A Way Forward*, presented to the 60th meeting of the IPDC Bureau.
- The discussion which took place at the 60th Bureau meeting.

Overall objective

To strategically prioritize the work of the IPDC on the safety of journalists and the issue of impunity to increase the impact of this work, particularly in terms of reporting and monitoring mechanisms.

Outputs

- IPDC work on journalists' safety and impunity at the strategic level reinforced.
- IPDC's standard-setting role is strengthened.
- IPDC's reporting and monitoring mechanisms are supported.
- IPDC's knowledge-driven role on the issue of the safety of journalists is reinforced.
- IPDC' safety projects are strategically prioritized so as to increase IPDC impact worldwide.

Activities

IPDC's strategic and standard-setting level

- To promote debates and discussions towards the advancement of IPDC's standard-setting role, following the tradition of planting the seed for initiatives such as the UN Plan, the Media Development Indicators (MDIs), the Journalists' Safety Indicators (JSIs), and the Director-General's Report on the Safety of Journalists and the Danger of Impunity. The recently created initiative *IPDCTalks* can also be used for this purpose, and specific funding proposals can be submitted to organize similar events at national and regional levels where media and other actors can tell stories that generate and disseminate information on the topic of safety and which highlight the standard that this is of great significance to sustainable development (and SDG 16.10 in particular).
- To ensure IPDC journalists' safety initiatives are in synergy with other IPDC initiatives promoting free, independent and pluralistic media as well as with all other UNESCO actions related to this issue, including in Field Offices.
- To strengthen synergies with other international and regional organizations, Member States, civil society groups, professional associations, academia, and media outlets as part of IPDC contribution to UNESCO's wider work in leading the UN Plan of Action.
- To increase external communication to disseminate and make widely available the value of the IPDC-driven initiatives among States, civil society groups, professional associations, academia and media outlets, in particular its reporting and monitoring mechanisms. This involves ensuring that any report, paper and training material prepared within the IPDC is widely distributed and publicized among all relevant actors.

IPDC's mandated reporting and monitoring role:

- To continue to reinforce the quality of IPDC's reporting and monitoring mechanisms which underpin the UNESCO's Director-General's Report on the Safety of Journalists and the Danger of Impunity.
- To request information from Member States on good practices they have developed in order to address safety and impunity, and to add this information as a new chapter in future Reports of the Director-General on the Safety of Journalists and the Danger of Impunity.
- To increase distribution and dissemination of the Director-General's Report among all stakeholders, such as the UN, other international and regional organizations, NGOs, academia and media outlets. To prepare a communication and marketing strategy for this purpose, also for social media.²

² The IPDC Bureau, for example, in 2016 allocated US\$20,000 for "the formulation, publication, translation (English, French, Spanish, Arabic) and dissemination of a (print and on-line) booklet explaining IPDC's monitoring and reporting mechanism on the safety of journalists and impunity issues to Member States, UN bodies, civil society, NGOs, human rights bodies, media professionals and other stakeholders".

- To identify complementary monitoring mechanisms developed by other international, regional and national institutions with which IPDC can create synergies. An example is the one supported by the Council of Europe.
- To contribute to the monitoring of the implementation of SDG 16.10 on public access to information, by providing IPDC's information on killings and impunity as an input to the wider field of indicator 16.10.1: "number of verified cases of killing, kidnapping, enforced disappearance, arbitrary detention and torture of journalists and associated personnel".
- To support Member States to reinforce their reporting and monitoring mechanisms for the UNESCO Director-General's Report.³
- To reinforce the use of the IPDC reporting and monitoring mechanisms to provide inputs on killings and judicial process to the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) and other documents prepared within the UN and other intergovernmental organizations.
- To reinforce the use of the IPDC's reporting and monitoring mechanisms as a source of relevant information by non-governmental institutions and academia.

IPDC's knowledge-driven role:

- To promote the IPDC as a think tank for issues related to journalists' safety in complementarity with UNESCO's work, by organizing discussions under the brand "*IPDC Talks*" as well as debates during the IPDC Councils on issues related to safety.
- To continue to support research in the field of journalists' safety and impunity, including application of the Journalism Safety Indicators. This could include creating a brand for supporting relevant academic research. This brand could be called "IPDC Fellowships on Freedom of Expression and Media Development" which could provide funds annually to at least two researchers to contribute to knowledge development on the issue, while also reinforcing UNESCO's wider promotion of this agenda within academia. This specific IPDC Fellowship initiative could be submitted to donors for funding.

IPDC's safety projects:

- Amongst its grant-making, IPDC gives priority to applications for support for safety projects. The choice of projects to support in future can be considered more closely within the following niche, in particular where an IPDC grant, coming from a specialised intergovernmental body within UNESCO, can involve all stakeholders in:

³ The IPDC Bureau in 2016 allocated US\$20,000 to allow a pilot project in a selected country and efforts are already being made in Iraq and Pakistan. More resourcing will be needed to follow through and consolidate these initiatives.

- Carrying out assessments based on the Journalists' Safety Indicators, as a first step to develop medium-term strategies within the framework of the UN Plan.
- Creating and/or reinforcing national reporting and monitoring mechanisms that can support the UNESCO's Director-General's Report on The Safety of Journalists and the Danger of Impunity, as well as monitoring of SDG indicator 16.10.
- Strengthening judicial systems to be capable of tackling the issue of impunity for crimes against journalists.
- Sensitizing government officials, law enforcement and military personnel on the importance of journalists' safety.
- Promoting the inclusion of the issue of safety of journalists within education and training institutions.
- Implementing gender-transformative projects in the area of safety.

As per track record, some of these approved IPDC projects will continue to support activities that reinforce norms around safety and impunity with global, regional or national impact. Other projects will deal with capacity building amongst actors, including at grassroots level, such as journalism schools or journalist unions. By way of grant-making to projects, IPDC is a valuable channel for external ideas. It can thus be responsive in provide resourcing to external actors in order that they can implement specific safety-related activities. In this way, the projects that win a grant also complement the broader work by the IPDC governing bodies on norms and strategies, as well as the specific work by the IPDC secretariat which is resourced through special allocations by the IPDC Bureau.

The IPDC projects focused on the safety of journalists and the issue of impunity should take into account the following **crosscutting principles**:

- Fostering multi-stakeholder processes.
- Promoting collection, sharing and implementation of good practices.
- Mainstreaming gender.
- Promoting South-South cooperation.

Increased financial support to IPDC would enable the Bureau to consider many more worthwhile initiatives which can improve safety and combat impunity at grassroots level.

Evaluation:

This IPDC strategy will be followed-up on a regular basis by the IPDC Bureau. Its implementation will be monitored by the IPDC's Bureau members through reports to the annual IPDC Bureau meetings. It will be adapted to new circumstances or challenges, if needed, by the IPDC Secretariat in consultation with the IPDC Chair and the IPDC Bureau.

4. COUNCIL ACTION

The Council, having discussed this document, may wish to consider endorsing the strategy, as provided for within the wider proposed Decision on IPDC and the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity.