



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Organisation
des Nations Unies
pour l'éducation,
la science et la culture

Organización
de las Naciones Unidas
para la Educación,
la Ciencia y la Cultura

Организация
Объединенных Наций по
вопросам образования,
науки и культуры

منظمة الأمم المتحدة
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、
科学及文化组织

Message from Ms Audrey Azoulay,

Director-General of UNESCO,

**on the occasion of International Day to End Impunity
for Crimes against Journalists**

2 November 2018

It has been five years since the United Nations began commemorating International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists. This day provides an opportunity to assess how we respond to the security problems faced by journalists as they carry out their investigative and reporting duties; it is an opportunity to assess how we address the impunity with which, all too often, crimes and attacks against journalists are perpetrated.

To be sure, significant progress has been made over the past five years, a time during which both the public at large and political actors have become far more aware of the problem of impunity. The corresponding international legal framework has been strengthened through the adoption of more than 10 resolutions by United Nations organizations since 2013. However, implementing the necessary measures at the national level remains a challenge.

Since 2006, UNESCO has condemned the murder of 1,010 journalists and media professionals. Nine out of 10 such cases have not been brought to court. Moreover, according to the 2017-2018 edition of UNESCO's *World Trends in Freedom of Expression and Media Development* report, attacks against, and harassment of, women journalists, particularly on online platforms, have increased. We must urgently address the specific threats which face women journalists and which ultimately extend to the journalistic profession as a whole.

The fight against impunity is inseparable from the defence of fundamental freedoms such as freedom of expression, freedom of the press and freedom of access to information. Because these freedoms are central to the establishment of better-informed societies, of true knowledge societies, the fight against the obstacles to their exercise is in line with our sustainable development work in general.

To increase public awareness of the issue of impunity for crimes against journalists, UNESCO is launching the #TruthNeverDies campaign on 2 November. The campaign seeks to encourage the publication of articles written by, or in tribute to, journalists killed for doing their job. UNESCO has developed a toolkit for any media outlets wishing to participate.

It is our responsibility to ensure that crimes against journalists do not go unpunished. We must see to it that journalists can work in safe conditions which allow a free and pluralistic press to flourish. Only in such an environment will we be able to create societies which are just, peaceful, and truly forward-looking.