



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Communication and Information Sector



THE SAFETY OF JOURNALISTS AND THE DANGER OF IMPUNITY

**REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL TO THE
28th INTERGOVERNMENTAL COUNCIL OF THE
IPDC**

**Jānis Kārkliņš,
Assistant Director-General
for Communication and Information**

2006-2011

The killings of journalists condemned by the Director-General



- In 2006-2007, the UNESCO Director-General condemned the killings of **122** journalists from **29 countries**.
- In 2008-2009, the UNESCO Director-General condemned the killings of **123** journalists from **27 countries**.
- In 2010-2011, the UNESCO Director-General condemned the killings of **127** journalists from **37 countries**.
 - In 2010, **65** journalists and media workers were killed.
 - In 2011, **62** journalists and media workers were killed.



- Most of the victims were not international war correspondents but local journalists and media workers covering local stories.
- In most cases, these journalists were reporting on local conflicts, organized crime, drugs, corruption and other illegal activities.
- 95% of journalists and media workers killed were men and 5% women.

2010-2011

**Countries where five (or more) killings of journalists
were condemned by the DG**

- Mexico: 18
- Pakistan: 16
- Honduras: 13
- Iraq: 11
- Philippines: 7
- Brazil: 5
- Russian Federation: 5

Responses received from Member States on the status of the judicial inquiries concerning journalists' killings condemned by the DG from 2006 to 2009



The 2010 IPDC Decision on The Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity requested all Member States:

to inform the Director-General of UNESCO, on a voluntary basis, of the actions taken to prevent the impunity of the perpetrators and to notify her of the status of the judicial inquiries conducted on each of the killings condemned by UNESCO.

Responses received from Member States on the status of the judicial inquiries concerning journalists' killings condemned by the DG from 2006 to 2009



- UNESCO's Director-General requested information on the judicial inquiries on the killings of 245 journalists and media workers condemned by her between 2006 and 2009.
- The Director-General received information from Member States on 101 of the 245 killings.
- According to the information provided, out of the 101 cases, 9 led to a conviction.

Responses received from Member States on the status of the judicial inquiries concerning journalists killed from 2006 to 2009



- 21 Member States provided information on judicial follow-up:
 - Afghanistan
 - Bangladesh
 - Brazil
 - China
 - Croatia*
 - Colombia
 - Ecuador
 - El Salvador
 - Guatemala
 - Honduras
 - India
 - Indonesia
 - Kazakhstan
 - Kyrgyz Republic
 - Lebanon
 - Madagascar
 - Mexico
 - Myanmar
 - Palestinian Authority
 - Philippines
 - Russian Federation
 - Turkey



THE UN PLAN OF ACTION ON THE SAFETY OF JOURNALISTS AND THE ISSUE OF IMPUNITY

UN PLAN OF ACTION ON THE SAFETY OF JOURNALISTS AND THE ISSUE OF IMPUNITY



The **2010 IPDC Decision on The Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity** requested the Director-General to consult with Member States on:

“the feasibility of convening an inter-agency meeting of all 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.”

UN PLAN OF ACTION ON THE SAFETY OF JOURNALISTS AND THE ISSUE OF IMPUNITY



- On the basis of the responses received following this consultation, the Director-General decided to organize the first **UN Inter-Agency Meeting on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity**, and this took place on 13-14 September 2011.
- The result of this meeting & further consultations with UN agencies, programmes & funds, Member States, professional associations and NGOs is the final draft of the **UN Plan of Action on The Safety of Journalists and The Issue of Impunity** that is now presented to the Intergovernmental Council.

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OBJECTIVE



Working toward the creation of a free and safe environment for journalists and media workers in both conflict and non-conflict situations, with a view to strengthening peace, democracy and development worldwide.

PROPOSED ACTIONS: STRENGTHENING UN MECHANISMS



- Establish focal points within the UN actors and a coordinated inter-agency mechanism.
- Incorporate safety & impunity in UN strategies at country level.
- Promote freedom of expression, safety and impunity issues within the wider UN development agenda.
- Strengthening office of UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, as well as mandate and resources of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of the Right to Freedom of Opinion and Expression, and of the Special Rapporteurs on Extra-judicial Summary or Arbitrary Executions, Violence Against Women and Torture.

PROPOSED ACTIONS: COOPERATING WITH MEMBER STATES (MS)



- Assist MS to develop laws & mechanisms guaranteeing freedom of expression and information
- Assist MS to fully implement existing international rules and principles
- Encourage MS to take an active role in the prevention of attacks against journalists, and take prompt action in response to attacks
- Encourage MS to comply fully with UNESCO General Conference Resolution 29 entitled 'Condemnation of Violence against Journalists'
- Encourage MS to comply with the IPDC Decision on the Safety of Journalist and the Issue of Impunity
- Encourage MS to broaden scope of Security Council Resolution 1738, to also include safety of journalists and the fight against impunity in non-conflict situations.

PROPOSED ACTIONS: PARTNERING WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS



- Reinforce collaboration between UN agencies and other intergovernmental organizations
- Strengthen partnerships between the UN and civil society organizations and professional associations
- Whereas corruption can affect all sectors of society, work with journalists' organisations to develop good practices on reporting on corruption, in line with the principles of the UN Convention against Corruption, and jointly participate at the International Anti-Corruption Day (9 December).

PROPOSED ACTIONS: RAISING AWARENESS AND SENSITIZE



- MS on the importance of freedom of expression and the dangers that impunity for crimes against media professionals represents for freedom and democracy
- Journalists, media owners and policy-makers on existing international instruments and conventions, as well as various existing practical guides on the safety of journalists
- All the above to hostage-taking, sexual violence, kidnapping, wrongful arrest and other forms of punishment and other emerging threats to media professionals
- General public on the importance of the safety of journalists
- Encourage journalism schools to teach safety and impunity issues
- Disseminate best practices on the safety of journalists and counteracting impunity

PROPOSED ACTIONS: FOSTERING SAFETY INITIATIVES



- Urge all stakeholders, and in particular the media industry and its professional associations, to establish general safety provisions for journalists
- Develop accessible, real-time emergency response mechanisms for groups and media organizations
- Sensitize news organizations, media owners, editors and journalists on the dangers confronting their staff, particularly those faced by local journalists
- Strengthen provisions for the safety of journalists in conflict zones

FOLLOW-UP



- Establishment of a network of focal points on issues in all relevant UN agencies, funds and programmes
- Scheduling meetings of relevant UN agencies, funds and programmes on a regular basis
- Entrust overall coordination of UN efforts on the safety of journalists to UNESCO, in cooperation with other UN agencies, in particular with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the UN Secretariat in NY
- Present a finalised UN Plan of Action to the IPDC Council at its next session in March 2012, as well as the High Level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) – 19 and 20 March 2012- and the Chief Executive Board (CEB) at their next meeting (April 2012)

CONTRIBUTIONS FROM MEMBER STATES ON THE FINAL DRAFT (Annex 2 of the DG report)



- Austria
- Burkina Faso
- China
- Colombia
- Mexico
- Nigeria
- Bangladesh*

*March 2012

DRAFT DECISION 2012
SAFETY OF JOURNALISTS AND THE ISSUE OF IMPUNITY



The IPDC Decision on The Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity will be discussed for its endorsement at the end of the session



Thank you