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**Message by Mr Getachew Engida
on behalf of the Director-General of UNESCO
at the 29th Session of the Intergovernmental Council of IPDC**

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We rely on journalism to bring us news and information to help us make informed decisions. But the safety of those who perform these services for the benefit of all society is not always guaranteed - they face threats, harassment, violence, and even death. And when journalists are attacked, this intimidates many others from speaking out.

On average, one journalist is killed every week, and while fatalities include foreign correspondents, the vast majority of victims are local, covering local stories. The climate of impunity allows perpetrators to continue attacks without restraint, further crippling the free flow of information. It leads to self-censorship for fear of reprisal, depriving society of even more sources of significant information.

Earlier this month, on 2 November, the international community commemorated the first *International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists*, led by UNESCO.

The United Nations General Assembly, through Resolution 68/163, declared this International Day to End Impunity in order to sensitise the global public about the challenge of impunity and to mobilise action against it. The date also marks the assassination of two journalists, Gislaine Dupont and Claude Verlon, in Mali on 2 November 2013.

As part of this inaugural International Day, UNESCO convened a series of public events in New York, Strasbourg, Tunis, and Accra, working with a wide range of co-hosts, partners and media, to raise awareness about these challenging issues and to explore concrete measures to tackle them.

Chers collègues,

Nous pouvons être fiers du fait que la Résolution qui a créé cette Journée internationale prenne racine au sein de ce Conseil du PIDC qui a vu également naître le Plan d'Action des Nations Unies sur la sécurité des journalistes et la question de l'impunité.

Depuis deux ans, ce Plan est devenu une référence globale pour tous nos partenaires. Le Plan de travail de l'UNESCO sur la sécurité des journalistes et la question de l'impunité confirme notre rôle qui est de faire avancer le Plan d'Action des Nations Unies. Le Conseil des Chefs de Secrétariat des Nations Unies a validé le Plan et, l'année dernière, la Résolution de l'Assemblée générale des Nations Unies a salué l'initiative. Dans cette même Résolution, l'Assemblée générale des Nations Unies encourage l'UNESCO à mener l'initiative et à travailler avec tous les partenaires appropriés, en réunissant les agences des Nations Unies, les gouvernements, la communauté internationale et la société civile pour faire des progrès tangibles sur le terrain. De la même façon, le Conseil des droits de l'homme des Nations Unies a adopté d'importantes Résolutions qui font écho aux actions de l'UNESCO et au Plan d'Action des Nations Unies.

Au début du mois, à Strasbourg, l'UNESCO a co-organisé la troisième réunion inter-agences sur la sécurité des journalistes et la question de l'impunité qui a examiné la mise en œuvre et les leçons apprises pour aborder la seconde phase de la mise en œuvre. Les institutions des Nations Unies, des Etats membres, des organisations internationales, des médias,

des ONG et des organisations professionnelles ont fortement encouragé la mise en œuvre continue du Plan des Nations Unies.

Depuis l'adoption du Plan d'Action des Nations Unies, le PIDC a soutenu 26 projets liées à la sécurité des journalistes en 2013 et 2014. Ce soutien a permis aux professionnels exerçant dans des situations de risque, aux partenaires du secteur des médias, aux professeurs, instructeurs et récipiendaires de formations ainsi qu'aux officiels gouvernementaux des pays et des régions sélectionnés d'accéder à des formations professionnelles et à des développements de capacités permettant de plus sûres conditions de travail pour les journalistes.

Par ailleurs, élargissant les Indicateurs de développement des médias approuvés par le PIDC, l'UNESCO a également développé des indicateurs spécialisés sur la sécurité des journalistes qui procurent une base sur laquelle les progrès effectués sous l'égide du Plan d'Action peuvent être évalués.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

UNESCO will continue to lead forward the UN Plan, working with partners worldwide to create a climate of safety for journalism, and to end impunity for attacks on the fundamental rights of freedom of expression and press freedom.

In this respect, let me turn now to the fourth biennial Director-General's Report on Safety of Journalists and the Danger of Impunity.

This is an important and unique document -- the only report that details the status of judicial inquiry of killings of journalists as condemned by the Director-General based on information provided by Member States.

I would also like to acknowledge that the Permanent Delegation of Greece and Guatemala have submitted to the Secretariat new information concerning four cases of killings of journalists which will be incorporated in the next Report.

Allow me to share with you three key findings:

- Out of the total of 593 cases, which happened between 2006-2013, UNESCO has received information about the resolution of 39 cases, representing 6.6 percent of the total.
- 172 cases, or 29 percent, are still ongoing in various stages of judicial inquiry.
- This leaves 382 cases, or 64 percent of the cases, for which UNESCO received no information concerning their status of judicial inquiry from Member States where the killing had taken place.

In referring to low response rate, the Director-General in a recent op-ed article on impunity, published around the world, wrote: “This cannot go on. I wish to encourage all governments to better show their commitment to justice for killed journalists by responding to requests to voluntarily report on what is happening with judicial follow-up”.

I am pleased to signal that the Secretariat is stands committed and ready to provide support to any Member State that seeks it, to respond to the requests to voluntarily report on judicial process.

Such reporting is not only an opportunity for States to demonstrate their commitment to this issue. It is also a precondition for concerted national action, which hinges on the capacity of Governments to monitor and collate relevant information about the fight against impunity.

As we underlined earlier this month on Impunity Day, the issue of impunity is an issue of the rule of law more broadly.

Member States can send a strong signal about the rule of law, by giving due attention to the question of justice for killed journalists. The climate of fear created by impunity throws a shadow over the sustainable development of entire societies, today and in the future. Impunity is poisonous, and we need to do everything to combat it.

Every journalist killed is a voice lost. It is a set-back to the free flow of news and information. It is a blow against freedom of expression.

It is vital that UNESCO, as the UN agency tasked with the leading role in safety of journalists and issue of impunity, continues to shine the spotlight on these issues in different forum and platforms, and especially in the IPDC.

I wish you a good meeting and fruitful discussion.