

Concept note

**Impact of IPDC's monitoring and reporting mechanism
on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity**

Thursday, 17 November 2016

This session will provide an opportunity to discuss IPDC work in monitoring safety and impunity, and particularly through the Director-General's regular Report to the IPDC Council. The session will discuss the seriousness of this monitoring role, and what IPDC is doing on the ground to support Member State responses and follow-up.

By way of background, the IPDC Council's thematic debate at its 25th session in 2006 concluded with a request to the Director-General to report on the killings of journalists as well as judicial follow-up. This led to the first Director-General's report being presented to the Council 26th session in 2008. On receiving the Report, the Council adopted a [Decision on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity](#) (27 March 2008), which was renewed at subsequent sessions in 2010, 2012, and 2014. The latest decision from 2014 reiterates "the continuing relevance of [previous] IPDC Decisions that request the Director-General of UNESCO to provide to the Intergovernmental Council of the IPDC, on a two-year basis at its biennial session, an analytical report on the Director-General's condemnations of the killings of journalists, media workers and social media producers who are engaged in journalistic activities and who are killed or targeted in their line of duty". The Report represents the only official figures on this issue produced by the UN system, and includes key information on judicial enquiries supplied by Member States themselves.

IPDC's Bureau in 2016 allocated funds to further promote the visibility of the Report, and for work with interested countries to improve their responses to the Director-General's request for information.

Now in its fifth cycle, the Report has seen increasing responses from Member States to the Director-General's requests for information on judicial process, indicating that the issues involved are receiving ever more attention, even though only one in ten cases is resolved. The Report is seen as significant by various media who provide news coverage, and civil society organizations who use it for their advocacy and support work. In addition, the Report has been recognized as an input to the Universal Periodic Review, and has also been cited in a number of UN resolutions, including most recently at the Human Rights Council (Resolution A/HRC/33/L.6).

Further, the Report been recognized by the UN Statistical Commission as a resource that can contribute towards the Sustainable Development Goal 16.10 which seeks to "Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements", and in particular to indicator 16.10.1: "number of

verified cases of killing, kidnapping, enforced disappearance, arbitrary detention and torture of journalists, associated media personnel; trade unionists and human rights advocates in the previous 12 months”.

It is in this context that this IPDC Council session will provide guest speakers who will report on contributions to the Director General’s Report and its significance to stakeholders.