

UNESCO DIRECTOR-GENERAL CONDEMNS MURDERS OF ALGERIAN EDITOR, GUARD

Paris, 3 October - UNESCO Director-General Federico Mayor today condemned the murders of an Algerian journalist and a newspaper security guard.

Omar Ouartilan, editor of *Al Khabar*, one of Algeria's main Arabic-language newspapers, was shot dead today in Algiers, according to press reports. Yesterday Nourredine Serdouk, a security guard for the weekly French-language paper *Liberté*, also was gunned down in the city, reports said. A media tally shows that more than 40 journalists have been murdered in Algeria since May 1993.

"I categorically condemn these attacks against journalists and media employees who courageously continue to defy extremists who would put an end to the public's right to be informed," Mr Mayor said. "No country can function as a democracy without a free press, staffed with people who can work without fear of intimidation and aggression. I extend my deepest condolences to the families and colleagues of Mr Ouartilan and Mr Serdouk."
