



Jakarta Declaration

World Press Freedom Day 2017

“Critical Minds for Critical Times: Media’s role in advancing peaceful, just and inclusive societies”

We, the participants at the UNESCO World Press Freedom Day International Conference, held in Jakarta, Indonesia, 1-4 May 2017,

1. **Considering** freedom of expression and press freedom as cornerstones of well-functioning democracies and guardians of the protection and promotion of all human rights and fundamental freedoms;
2. **Recalling** Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states: “Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers”;
3. **Recalling** further Resolution 38 C/53 adopted by the UNESCO General Conference in 2015 on options for the concept of Internet Universality which points to four fundamental principles that need to be embodied in the broad norms of evolution of the universal dimensions of the internet. These principles are: (i) that the internet is human rights-based (ii) open, (iii) accessible to all, and (iv) nurtured by Multi-stakeholder participation;
4. **Recalling** also Article 23 of the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration, which protects the right of every person to freedom of opinion and expression and the right to seek information.
5. **Emphasising** the connection between free media and development, as expressed in the 1991 Windhoek Declaration, a cornerstone of the World Press Freedom Day (WPFDF) international celebration;
6. **Emphasising also** the mutually reinforcing relationships between freedom of expression and all other rights and freedoms, including freedom of thought, freedom of conscience, as well as religious, academic and artistic freedom;
7. **Welcoming** the United Nations (UN) 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its recognition of the contribution of information and fundamental freedoms to good governance and development;
8. **Recognising** that the media, both online and offline, can be enablers of all of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);

9. **Noting** in particular SDG 16 that aims to promote just, peaceful and inclusive societies, and **evoking** SDG target 16.10, which aims to “ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements”;
10. **Welcoming** actions to highlight these issues further on 28 September, the International Day for Universal Access to Information; on 3 May, World Press Freedom Day, and on 2 November, International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists;
11. **Highlighting** the importance of free and independent journalism for the achievement of SDG 16 as well as media’s potential as a catalyst of peace, dialogue and mutual understanding;
12. **Recognising** the mutually reinforcing role of the rule of law with an independent judiciary, along with strong participatory mechanisms and free and independent media as fundamental underpinnings of democracy;
13. **Acknowledging** that strides are still needed to achieve gender equality in and through media;
14. **Underlining** the continued relevance for freedom of expression, intercultural dialogue, mutual understanding and social inclusion of the *Rabat Plan of Action on the prohibition of advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence* (“Rabat Plan”);
15. **Noting** the growing role of citizens as communicators of news given the use of mobile technologies and emphasising the importance of the right to assemble and exchange freely online to crowdsource and exchange information;
16. **Observing** how the proliferation of falsified information and the phenomenon of “social-media bubbles” can polarise public debate, mislead whole segments of society and undermine professional journalism;
17. **Noting** with concern the increasing tendency to effect internet shutdowns that undermine citizen trust, the right to freedom of expression, including press freedom, and the right to access information;
18. **Observing** with concern the global trend to disproportionately limit freedom of expression in the name of national security and the fight against terrorism, as well as through disproportionate use of legislation and state security apparatus;
19. **Emphasising** the importance, for democratic civic and political life, of high-quality public-interest journalism, including investigative journalism, respecting professional and ethical standards and enjoying protection of confidentiality of sources, and **recognising** that such journalism represents a public good for all members of society;
20. **Appreciating** the importance of respect for the confidentiality of communications as a pre-requisite for independent journalism, and the protection of journalists and their sources;
21. **Stressing** the importance of media and information literacy, including digital and privacy literacy, in the development of critical thinking regarding media use and production;
22. **Honouring** the journalists and media workers who contribute to press freedom through their work and commitment, often at the risk of their safety and personal security;
23. **Condemning** all forms of violence, aggression and intimidation against journalists and recognising in particular the specific threats faced by women journalists, including sexual harassment;

24. **Recognising** the need for a multi-stakeholder international approach in order to achieve success in ending violence against journalists and addressing the issue of impunity for crimes committed against journalists;
25. **Welcoming** the multi-stakeholder efforts made by the international community to enhance the protection of journalists and address the issue of impunity through the implementation of the *UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity* (“UN Plan”); and
26. **Recognising** that the internet is a powerful medium for self-expression which facilitates the ability of its users to speak freely and in the public interest.

We therefore:

Call on each UNESCO Member State to:

27. **Recognise**, in terms of their commitments to international human rights standards, the relevance of a free, independent and pluralistic media in the advancement of the sustainable development goal of peaceful, just and inclusive societies;
28. **Create** an enabling legal, political and institutional environment where fundamental human rights and freedoms, including freedom of expression, freedom of thought and freedom of conscience, are promoted and protected;
29. **Recognise** the importance of a decent work agenda, as set out in SDG 8, in creating an environment in which journalists are able to operate free from corruption, poverty and fear, and to develop professional solidarity and their social and professional rights;
30. **Consider** making it a criminal offence wilfully to interfere with the legitimate exercise of media freedom;
31. **Support** the development of quality journalism, investigative journalism and a free media as public goods which are able to deliver quality information and create spaces for healthy public debate, for good governance and for public participation in decision-making;
32. **Enhance** the capacity and accountability of police, prosecutors and judges to fulfil the state’s duty to ensure the effective and independent investigation, prosecution and punishment of crimes committed against journalists in the course of their work;
33. **Implement** the *UN Plan* and ensure that national efforts in this regard include the protection of journalists, the prevention of violence against the media and the prosecution of those who perpetrate these crimes;
34. **Recognise** the legitimacy of the use of encryption and anonymisation technologies;
35. **Promote** media pluralism, including by preventing excessive concentration of media ownership, ensuring the diversity of public debate and inclusiveness in the media landscape, and promoting fair representation of marginalised groups;
36. **Align** with the *Rabat Plan* when considering any regulatory measures to deal with hate speech, especially in relation to national, racial and religious issues
37. **Enhance** media and information literacy initiatives in order to enhance access to information and encourage critical thinking;

38. **Ratify and implement** the 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, thus committing to the creation, distribution and enjoyment of diverse cultural expressions;
39. **Encourage** an inclusive internet and promote universal access to the internet, based on the four key principles of Internet Universality: Human Rights, Openness, Accessibility and Multi-stakeholder participation;
40. **Refrain** from internet shutdowns and other measures that unduly limit freedom of expression and access to information online, such as disproportionate filtering or blocking techniques;
41. **Bring** their laws, regulations and policies into line with international standards on freedom of expression and promote awareness of and respect for those standards among public officials;
42. **Fully** implement resolutions and decisions on the safety of journalists and respect for freedom of expression adopted by the UN General Assembly, the Human Rights Council, the Security Council and UNESCO, and by regional human rights organisations;
43. **Take cognisance** of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and of the opportunities it provides for the future of human development and **take steps** to enable the free flow of government information to the public by engaging with interested stakeholders to develop, adopt and implement an access to information law.

Call on UNESCO to:

44. **Promote** the further strengthening of an international legal, institutional and social framework that addresses violence against journalists and impunity for such crimes, and promote the full implementation of existing provisions and structures that address these issues;
45. **Support** the creation of national and regional mechanisms promoting the safety of journalists and tackling impunity;
46. **Promote** the uptake of the *UN Plan* by local stakeholders and work towards its reinforcement, building upon the conclusions of the *Multi-Stakeholder Consultation on Strengthening the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity* that will take place on 29 June 2017 in Geneva, Switzerland (“Multi-Stakeholder Consultation”);
47. **Strengthen** its collaboration with academic and other similar institutions to enhance research in and understanding of freedom of expression and media development issues, including by making use of the Journalism Safety Research Network to reach a wider range of relevant institutions and researchers;
48. **Support** the capacity of the media to practise professional journalism which can promote public education, dialogue and mutual understanding;
49. **Promote** public discussion to find alternatives to counter the proliferation of falsified content and the phenomenon of “social media bubbles”;
50. **Further reinforce** its Media and Information Literacy programme initiatives;
51. **Promote** skills and techniques to enable journalists to ensure the confidentiality of their work, including through encryption;
52. **Strengthen** inclusiveness and gender-equality efforts in the media through the dissemination and promotion of the Gender-Sensitive Indicators for Media;

53. **Promote** artistic freedom as a pillar of freedom of expression and as a cornerstone of participatory democracy, and support artistic creation and ensure access to cultural life for all members of society;
54. **Continue** to highlight the importance of freedom of expression and public access to information;
55. **Strengthen** its capacities to monitor indicators on the safety of journalists and access to information in the context of the SDGs;
56. **Promote** the adoption of internet-related policies that are guided by the principles of Internet Universality for the achievement of an inclusive Knowledge Society for all.

Call on journalists, media outlets, social media practitioners and internet intermediaries to:

57. **Provide** reliable public-interest journalism, both online and offline, which in turn can serve as a shared currency of information that allows for mutual understanding and intercultural dialogue;
58. **Encourage** conflict-sensitive journalism, in particular when reporting from armed conflict zones, including by providing professional and inclusive reporting that can support dialogue and reconciliation;
59. **Enhance** media inclusion by giving voice to under-represented and vulnerable groups in society, and avoiding over-representing elite or dominant segments of the population, as well as reporting based on prejudice and discrimination;
60. **Address** persistent inequalities based on gender in both media content and media operations;
61. **Ensure** that reporting is based on verifiable information, and by promoting media and information literacy initiatives, to counter the proliferation of falsified news;
62. **Refer** to the guidance of the *Rabat Plan* and Article 20(2) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) which set out principles for protecting freedom of expression while addressing the issue of hate speech;
63. **Raise** awareness about the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes Against Journalists on 2 November, and **participate in** the UN Plan with complementary or joint actions in accordance with its shared, multi-stakeholder approach;
64. **Implement** preventative physical and psychological safety measures, paying attention to gender and digital security issues, as well as implement effective crisis response mechanisms to ensure the welfare of journalists and media workers exposed to threats;
65. **Take cognisance** of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and of the opportunities it provides for the future of human development.

Call on civil society, academia and the technical community to:

66. **Advocate** in favour of joint efforts and the engagement of all stakeholders in supporting the achievement of the SDGs and promote recognition of the contribution to this process by free, pluralistic and independent media;
67. **Support** efforts to promote freedom of expression, press freedom and the right to access information, including through support for initiatives at the national, regional and international levels;

68. **Collaborate** with relevant international efforts to strengthen the safety of journalists, such as the UN Plan and the upcoming Multi-Stakeholder Consultation;
69. **Highlight** the importance of the protection of confidentiality of journalists' sources in the digital age;
70. **Advocate** for internet policies to be based on human rights, openness, accessibility and multi-stakeholder participation;
71. **Undertake** activities to advance media and information literacy policies, programmes and research;
72. **Monitor** the behaviour, proposals and actions of public authorities, internet intermediaries and multilateral bodies which affect freedom of expression, where relevant denouncing risks and suggesting alternatives which advance freedom of expression and access to information;
73. **Strengthen** debate about and activities to implement SDG target 16.10, which aims to “ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements”; and
74. **Support** engagement with legal professionals in order to strengthen legal frameworks for the protection of freedom of expression and media freedom.

Adopted on 4 May 2017 in Jakarta, Indonesia