



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Organisation
des Nations Unies
pour l'éducation,
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Organización
de las Naciones Unidas
para la Educación,
la Ciencia y la Cultura

Организация
Объединенных Наций по
вопросам образования,
науки и культуры

منظمة الأمم المتحدة
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、
科学及文化组织

FINAL

**Address by Mr Frank la Rue,
Assistant Director-General in charge of Communication and
Information of UNESCO
on the occasion of the 60th IPDC Bureau meeting**

UNESCO, 17 March 2016

Chairperson of the IPDC Council,

Your Excellencies,

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the Director-General, I am honored and privileged to address you on the occasion of the 60th IPDC Bureau meeting. This is my first engagement with this important body within UNESCO, and I would like to appreciate the interest and work by yourselves, with the backing of your Member States, for the business of IPDC.

We hold this meeting at a time when UNESCO as a whole continues to offer its solidarity to our host nation – France – as it continues to respond to the terrorist attacks of last November. UNESCO's efforts to stem the rise of extremist and violent ideology thus continue to undergird many of our activities, including those of the IPDC, especially as regards ensuring the protection of journalists and working with our sister body, the Information for All Programme, in countering radicalization. We also meet at a time when the world is seeing unprecedented migration, including people seeking refuge from war and persecution. Responsive to this issue, IPDC has arranged a special thematic debate on the topic, bringing in the media angle.

Against this background, it is important for me to pinpoint key developments that I think are worthy of your consideration since the last Bureau meeting in 2015. These cover (i) IPDC project support; and (ii) special initiatives on knowledge-driven media development, journalism education, media development indicators and safety of journalists. I will also mention a few major activities within the Information and Communication (CI) Sector which provide the wider programmatic context of the IPDC.

In this regard, taking IPDC's project support as a starting-point, I wish to report that the Programme's activities have continued to supplement the work that we support through the Regular Programme, especially in our field offices, whose efforts in media development are complemented by the IPDC's project support.

Even on a smaller budget than last year's, we were able to attract over 80 proposals for projects, the majority of which came from developing countries, particularly those in Africa. The IPDC Secretariat was able to select for your consideration a total of 59 projects that we believe will go some way towards reinforcing the priorities set out for the Programme, namely:

- Supporting media pluralism (particularly community media) and independence (improving self-regulation and professional standards).
- Promoting the safety of journalists.
- Countering hate speech in media and social media, promoting conflict-sensitive journalism practice and/or promoting cross-cultural/cross-religious dialogue among journalists.
- Supporting law reform as a way of fostering media independence.
- Conducting media assessments and research based on UNESCO's Media Development Indicators (MDIs), the Gender Sensitive Indicators for the Media (GSIM) or the Journalists' Safety Indicators.
- Capacity building for journalists and media managers, including improving journalism education (using

UNESCO's Model Curricula for Journalism Education).

However, although the significance of the IPDC as a complementary support mechanism for UNESCO's Regular Programme is well recognised, there has been a drastic reduction in its budgetary resources, as can be seen from the fact that only 59 projects could be financed this year as opposed to 80 in 2014 and 71 last year. This presents a challenge before our Member States, namely that they need to translate their verbal support for the IPDC into tangible budgetary contributions. The IPDC Chair has made many efforts to reach out and we do trust that many of you will come forward with such support. This unique mechanism in the UN system is an ideal channel for Member States to make impactful contributions to development. IPDC provides you – through your Foreign Ministry, Communications Ministry, National Commission or Development Aid budget, a real opportunity to make a difference in the field of media development. The IPDC offers your country flexibility to focus on particular topics of interest in media development that are of concern to your capitals. And this is also a chance for your nation to shine as a donor to this prestigious programme. We therefore encourage more of you to add your flags to the IPDC brochures, websites and other communications.

Beyond its role in supporting projects, the IPDC has been active in many other areas of its normative work, to which I now turn.

There are four areas I will touch on: knowledge-driven media development, journalism education, safety of journalists, and media-related indicators.

Let me therefore start by highlighting the IPDC's work in the area of knowledge-driven media development as it concerns the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Since the last Bureau meeting, efforts have focused on building greater partnerships within the UN System and with a larger coalition of non-governmental international media development actors to contribute to the work of the Inter-Agency Expert Group (IAEG) on SDGs, whose initial meeting took place in New York in June 2015, followed by a second one in Bangkok in October.

To this end, UNESCO initiated discussion with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the World Bank and over 200 international, regional and national media development actors represented by the Global Forum for Media Development (GFMD). These discussions resulted in an elaboration of two indicators, whose details are contained in an update submitted for your consideration during this meeting.

Secondly, in the area of journalism education, it is worth highlighting the following two activities. The publication "Model Curriculum for Journalism Education: A Compendium of New Syllabi" has continued to be used in different educational contexts, resulting in its translation into Chinese, with the support

of the Communication University of China (CUC). As part of its support, the CUC hosted a review of the Chinese version. More than 100 experts and scholars participated in the review.

The publication has also since been translated into the Mongolian and French languages, with the Mongolian version already published online.

Furthermore, the IPDC's work to support the teaching of specialized journalism courses culminated in the Programme publishing and launching its new publication in the series. Titled "Teaching Journalism for Sustainable Development: New Syllabi", it was launched in Mexico City at the Universidad Iberoamericana. The launch was part of the annual conference of ORBICOM – the network of UNESCO Chairs in Communication. The publication was explicitly linked to UNESCO's role in advocating for the inclusion of media development within the newly-adopted Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), for which new indicators are now being formulated, as reported earlier on.

Thirdly, in terms of our work in promoting the safety of journalists, let me mention the fact that the last Report by the Director-General on the Safety of Journalists and the Danger of Impunity was submitted to the IPDC Council at its 29th session in November 2014. A request for information on the status of the investigations carried out into the killings of journalists condemned by the Director-General between 2006 and 2015 was

sent out to concerned Member States in February 2016, following a similar request sent out in February 2015. The information provided by the Member States will be used for the next DG Report to be presented at the 60th session of the IPDC Council in November 2016.

In 2014, 13 out of 59 countries responded to the formal request for information. In 2015, the response rate rose to 27 out of 57 countries, indicating a possible upward trend in the level of attention being given by Member States to IPDC's monitoring and reporting mechanism on safety.

Against the backdrop of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, this mechanism could become even more significant as a tool for monitoring progress of Target 16.10 which aims to ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, particularly by promoting the safety of journalists as a key indicator of free, pluralistic and independent media.

Fourthly, the IPDC's national media landscape assessments based on the UNESCO Media Development Indicators (MDIs) continue to help policy-makers in determining appropriate policy responses in support of free, independent and pluralistic media systems across the globe. Since the last IPDC Bureau meeting in March 2015, MDI reports on national media landscapes have been finalized in Curaçao, Jordan, Libya, South Sudan,

Madagascar, Mongolia and Swaziland, bringing to 19 the number of published MDI reports.

The research phase of another six studies – concerning Bolivia, Brazil, Morocco, Myanmar, Uganda and Uruguay - has now been completed, and the reports are in the final stages of the editing process.

Capacity building has become an increasingly important component of MDI projects and training activities on the MDIs and international media standards are now systematically integrated into each MDI project. Eight such training workshops were thus organized in 2014-2015 – in the Dominican Republic, Jordan, Madagascar, Morocco, Myanmar, Swaziland and Yemen, as well as a regional training workshop for the Arab region. Most recently, an MDI training workshop was organized in Thailand in January 2016.

In terms of the related Journalists Safety Indicators (JSI), it gives me pleasure to report that three new JSI assessments were launched in 2015 – thanks to IPDC funding – in Nepal, Kenya and Iraq.

The work I have described in relation to the 2030 Agenda, journalism education, media development indicators and journalistic safety is intricately interwoven with the other activities undertaken within the CI Sector as a whole. That is why it is important to highlight briefly several such activities as a way of

demonstrating how the IPDC fits into the overall Major Programme 5.

Take, for example, the fact that with strong IPDC involvement, close to 300 media leaders from around the world shared ideas for urgent action to enhance the safety of journalists and end impunity for attacks on them at a conference held in February. An important outcome of that conference included encouraging news organizations to take concrete actions such as: adopting safety protocols for newsrooms; taking advantage of safety training provided by NGOs; conducting risk analysis; and supporting freelancers.

As you will recall, this conference, which feeds into the IPDC-coordinated UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity adopted in 2012, was in response to Decision 31 of the Executive Board which requested UNESCO to hold an international conference on the safety of journalists as part of its work on freedom of expression and press freedom.

Furthermore, the CI Sector continues to promote the Internet Universality concept. As part of that initiative, fundraising efforts are underway to develop Internet indicators which we will hopefully present for endorsement at the 2018 IPDC Council.

With regard to this year's World Radio Day, celebrated under the theme of "The role of the radio in humanitarian emergency and disaster situations", it is worth calling attention to the Director-

General's remarks. She highlighted the fact that, amidst the ruins and in the face of an emergency, radio is often the first medium for survival. Its durability is an incomparable advantage, often enabling it to resist shocks and retransmit messages of protection and prevention to as many people as possible, better and faster than other media, saving lives.

To this end, on this year's World Radio Day, we broadcast 19 hours of special programmes on a dedicated website, with more than 240 events organised worldwide in celebration of the power of the radio. A key message was that the radio relies on journalists, whose safety requires constant protection if they are to effectively perform their work. IPDC's work in supporting community radio is evidently highly complementary to this.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This overview has given you the context in which the IPDC does its work, and I am pleased that many project proposals supported by the IPDC Bureau since the last meeting continue to dovetail with areas covered by the Sector as a whole.

In conclusion, then, I hope that, given this array of achievements – both within the IPDC Secretariat itself and UNESCO at large – we can all appreciate that the IPDC affords us an opportunity to marshal resources towards making a difference in the way media support the overall process of Sustainable Development. Please,

therefore, do take forward with your capitals the opportunities entailed through supporting IPDC activities.

It thus gives me pleasure to wish you very productive deliberations during this IPDC Bureau sitting.

Thank you for your attention!