



FEDERAL MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND CULTURE

Office Of The Honourable Minister

Federal Secretariat, Phase II, Shehu Shagari Way,
Central Business District, P.M.B. 473, Abuja.

FMIC/HM/GEN/001/XIII

13th July, 2018

H. E. Director-General
United Nations Educational, Scientific
and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)
Headquarters
Paris-France.

Attention: Ms Sylvie Coudray, Chief Of Section For Freedom
Of Expression, Communication And Information Sector

RE: SAFETY OF JOURNALIST

The Federal Ministry of Information and Culture of the Federal Republic of Nigeria presents its compliments to Her Excellency, the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)

2. This letter is an acknowledgement of yours Reference No. CI/FEM/FOE/fr/2018/380, dated 3rd April, 2018.

3. Through it, we wish to express our profound appreciation for the role being played by UNESCO in defending freedom of expression and promoting press freedom to foster the safety of journalists in the course of performing their assignments.

4. The Director-General, may recall that at the Communication and Information (CI) Commission meeting of the 39th Session of the UNESCO General Assembly, which was held in Paris, France 6th-7th November, 2017, I gave a report during debate 2 item 4.20 on the status and circumstances of death of the Journalists referred to in the referenced letter. I wish to further restate that none of the killings of the Nine (9) mentioned Nigerian Journalists during the period under review was ascribed to the State. Rather, they were all reportedly carried out by suspected gunmen, Boko Haram terrorists or armed robbers.

5. While the Ministry regrets the circumstances of the death of these Journalists, it must be realized that Journalists face increasing risks these days in the course of performing their assignments, which sometimes are beyond the control of any human authority. This is why we have safety nets and constantly organize workshops and seminars, often with the assistance of UNESCO Regional Office in Abuja. These capacity building programmes are part of safety measures being put in place to ensure the safety of journalists in the course of carrying out their duties,

6. The Director-General is invited to kindly note that in our efforts to come up with an authentic report, my Ministry reached out to the following relevant government agencies to avail it of any information at their disposal concerning the killings of journalists:-

The Ministry of Justice, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), the Nigeria Police, the Nigeria Press Council as well as the Nigeria Union of Journalists. It is their reports that have always informed our responses.

7. The killing on the 15th November, 2017, of Mr. Ikechukwu Onubogu, a cameraman with the Anambra Broadcasting Service (ABS), who was found dead by the Police Station at Obosi, near Onisha, Anambra State, after he was declared, missing by members of his family, is regrettable and the Federal Government of Nigeria strongly condemns the killing.

8. Permit me to state, Your Excellency, the commitment of the President Buhari-led Administration to the freedom of the press, without which the democracy cannot thrive. Violations of press freedom and safety is not an official policy of the Government of Nigeria. We will continue to ensure the provision of an enabling environment for journalists to effectively and safely carry out their duties.

9. Kindly find attached the completed model table providing information on the nine (9) journalists in question.

10. Please accept the assurances of my highest consideration.


Lai Mohammed
Honourable Minister

SECTION 1: Current list of Journalists killed as condemned by the UNESCO Director-General and Legal Investigation

Name of Journalist	Gender	Date of alleged murder	Investigating Authority	Case number	Current status	Verdict	Additional remarks
Godwin Agboro	Male	December 22, 2006	Nigeria Police and Nigerian Union of Journalists	The incident was not reported, but was investigated by a Committee of the Nigeria Union of Journalists in liaison with the Police and Judicial Officers.	Closed	He was killed by unknown armed robbers	
Paul Abayomi Ogundeji	Male	August 17, 2008	Nigeria Police and Nigerian Union of Journalists	“ “ “	Closed	He was a victim of robbery attack	
Bayo Ohu	Male	September 20, 2009	Nigeria Police and Nigerian Union of Journalists	“ “ “	Closed for lack of evidence.	Suspects freed by court due to lack of evidence.	Shot dead by unidentified assailants.
Zakariya Isa	Male	October 22, 2011	Nigeria Police and Nigerian Union of Journalists	“ “ “	Killed by Boko Haram insurgents.		Suspected members of the Boko Haram insurgents killed him in his residence in Maiduguri, Borno State.
Nansok Sallah	Male	18 January 2012	Nigeria Police and Nigerian Union of Journalists	“ “ “	Closed	Police investigations showed he drowned. Case closed.	His body was reportedly found in a shallow stream under a bridge in Jos, Plateau State.

Eneche Akogwu		20 January 2012	Nigeria Police and Nigerian Union of Journalists	“ “ “	Shot by Boko Haram Insurgents		Shot by Boko Haram insurgents while on assignment in Kano State.
Ikechukwu Udenu	Male	January 12, 2013	Nigeria Police and Nigerian Union of Journalists	“ “ “	Case Closed	Police investigations showed he was killed by Bandits.	Killed by unidentified gunmen on his way from Onitsha to his home town Ogidi, Anambra State.
Famous Giobaro	Male	April 16, 2017	Nigeria Police and Nigerian Union of Journalists	Case under official investigation on	Case under official investigation	Case under official investigation	Killed by unidentified gunmen in his residence at Yenagoa, Bayelsa State
Ikechukwu Onubogu	Male	November 15, 2017	Nigeria Police and Nigerian Union of Journalists	Case under official investigation on	Case under official investigation.	Case under official investigation	A cameraman with the Anambra Broadcasting Service (ABS), was found dead by the Police at Obosi, near Onitsha, Anambra State, four days after he was declared missing by members of his family.

Section 2: Positive or innovative Measures the Member State is taking to promote safety of Journalists and combat impunity

Activity	Actors	Outcomes
<p>Honourable Minister of Information and Culture has been taking Journalists on an on the spot assessment tour of the insurgency areas of the North East.</p> <p>On 30th - 31st January, 2018, the Federal Ministry of Information and Culture in collaboration with UNESCO Regional Office Nigeria organised a 2-Day Training Workshop on Conflict-Sensitive Reporting and Safety of Journalists. Under the IPDC Participation Programme (2016-2017)</p>	<p>Journalists, Government officials, security personnel civil society, academia among others.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Over 50 Journalists comprising male and female from the public and private sector selected from the electronic print and online media were in attendance. 2. Strengthened awareness of gender issues and establishing gender balance in reporting. 3. Ensuring that professional standards are maintained in media practice, encourage fair and objective reportage of conflict for the sustenance of democracy and development. 4. Increased appreciation of essential standards in professional reporting on conflict. 5. Strengthened capacity to analyse conflict. 6. Strengthened capacity to make conflict sources, processes and possible solutions more transparent to society. 7. Increased awareness of the importance of reporting techniques upon encounter or resolving conflict.

Section 3: Steps the member State has taken to consider the specific risks faced by women journalists in the exercise of their work

The training workshop conducted by FMIC in collaboration with UNESCO regional office on Conflict-Sensitive Reporting and Safety of Journalists, was gender sensitive as 25 slots was allocated to women journalists and they attended the programme.

Section 4: Agreement to post the submitted information on UNESCO's dedicated webpage

Yes we agree.