

V. Council decision on the safety of journalists and the issue of impunity

The Intergovernmental Council of IPDC,

1. Welcoming the fourth biennial Director-General's Report on the Safety of Journalists and the Danger of Impunity;
2. Deeply disturbed by the ongoing frequency of acts of violence against journalists, media workers and social media producers who generate significant amounts of journalism in many parts of the world, including in countries which are not considered as conflict areas;
3. Deeply concerned at the rate of impunity reflected in the Director-General's Report and the signal this sends that violence against journalists can go unpunished;
4. Noting UNESCO's role in leading the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity, and the UNESCO Workplan on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity;
5. Reaffirming Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
6. Recalling the 2012 IPDC Decision on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity and the references therein.
7. Recalling United Nations Resolution A/RES/68/163 "The safety of journalists and the issue of impunity" adopted by the United Nations' General Assembly at its 68th session on 18 December 2013, the Human Rights Council Resolution A/HRC/RES/21/12 "Safety of Journalists" of 25 September 2012 and A/HRC/RES/27/5 of 25 September 2014 "The safety of journalists", and the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1738 (2006) on "the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict" which highlight the importance of promoting safety of journalists and combatting impunity for attacks on journalists;
8. Acknowledging the research report "World Trends in Freedom of Expression and Media Development" from 2014 by UNESCO and in particular Chapter 4 on Safety and welcoming the continuation of such research as a UNESCO knowledge resource for governments, media, academia, international community and civil society;
9. Recalling UNESCO Resolution 29 "Condemnation of Violence Against Journalists" adopted by the UNESCO General Conference at its 29th session on 12 November 1997, which called on Member States to remove any statute of limitations on crimes against persons;

10. Taking note of the Paris Declaration adopted during the World Press Freedom Day 2014 on “Media Freedom for a Better Future: Shaping the Post-2015 Development Agenda” which highlights safety for exercising freedom of expression as one of the essential conditions for sustainable development;
11. Welcoming the “Status Report on IPDC’s Contributions to the Post-2015 Development Agenda Process”, document CI-14/CONF.202/5, which highlights UNESCO’s efforts to ensure the inclusion of media issues and journalism safety in the Sustainable Development Goals;
12. Noting the importance of the Director-General publicly condemning each killing of a journalist, as mandated by Resolution 29 of the 29th UNESCO General Conference in 1997;
13. Emphasizes the ongoing relevance of Decisions on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity adopted by the Intergovernmental Council of the IPDC at its 26th, 27th, and 28th sessions in 2008, 2010 and 2012 respectively, which urges Member States “to inform the Director-General of UNESCO, on a voluntary basis, of the actions taken to prevent the impunity of the perpetrators and to notify her/him of the status of the judicial inquiries conducted on each of the killings condemned by UNESCO”;
14. Notes with regret that, in two-thirds of the cases in which journalists have been killed, no information has been submitted to UNESCO’s Director-General;
15. Reiterates the continuing relevance of 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;
16. Urges Member States to promote the safety of journalists by taking advantage of the knowledge, experiences and opportunities available through participation in the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity which encourages the development of national processes and mechanisms involving all stakeholders to achieve an environment for the safe exercise of free expression;
17. Further urges all Member States to encourage the inclusion of freedom of expression and its corollary press freedom in the post-2015 sustainable development goals, in particular the safety of journalists and issue of impunity as a key gateway to achieving Goal 16 which seeks to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development and access to justice for all through achieving a reduction in violence and crime;

18. Invites the Bureau of the Intergovernmental Council of the IPDC to continue to give priority to projects that further the objectives of the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity;

19. Encourages the Director-General and the Member States to continue their efforts in mobilizing additional extra-budgetary funding for this core area of competence of UNESCO.