

International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists (IDEI)

Concept Note

“Ending impunity for crimes against journalists: putting resolutions into practice”

Monday, 2 November 2015

1:15 – 2:45 pm, ECOSOC Chamber, UN Headquarters, NY

SUMMARY:

UNESCO together with the Permanent Mission of Greece to the UN and the Permanent Missions of Lithuania to the UN, will co-organize a High-Level event at UN Headquarters in New York on Monday, 2 November, to mark the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists (IDEI).

Other events to mark this Day will take place in Paris, London and elsewhere around the world. These shall serve as an occasion to launch, in various destinations, the new UNESCO Report titled ‘*World Trends on Freedom of Expression and Media Development*’, which contains the Organization’s most recent information on safety of journalists and impunity. The previous edition of the report was welcomed in [Resolution 69/185](#) on The safety of journalists and the issue of impunity adopted on 18 December 2014.

The events can profitably take forward the outcomes of the “Commemoration conference on the occasion of the International Day against Impunity for Crimes against Journalists”, in partnership with the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, which took place in Costa Rica on 9-10 October 2015. The event in New York will also serve as a resource for Member States seeking to update past UNGA resolutions on safety of journalists.

A **dedicated webpage** for IDEI 2015 is online at: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/EndImpunity>

BACKGROUND:

Under the leadership of Greece, the United Nations General Assembly adopted [Resolution A/RES/68/163](#) at its 68th session in 2013, which proclaimed 2 November as the ‘*International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists*’ (IDEI). The Resolution urged Member States to implement definite measures countering the present culture of impunity. The date was chosen in commemoration of the assassination of two French journalists in Mali on 2 November 2013. UNESCO is requested in the Resolution to facilitate the implementation of the IDEI.

In 2014, the first year of the IDEI, UNESCO co-organised a [high-level panel](#) titled “Ending impunity: upholding the rule of law” together with several permanent missions to the United Nations (Argentina, Austria, Costa Rica, France, Greece, and Tunisia). UNESCO also organised [an inter-regional dialogue](#) at the European Court of Human Rights, in partnership with the Council of Europe, Centre for Freedom of the Media (CFOM), University of Sheffield, and the European Lawyer’s Union. Further events initiated by the Organization took place in Abuja, Accra, and Tunis.

Later that same year, the UN General Assembly adopted [Resolution A/RES/69/185](#), recognising that everyone’s right to freedom of expression depends upon the safety of journalists and an end to impunity for crimes against them, as noted in the [Riga Declaration](#) of the World Press Freedom Day international conference, held in Latvia on 2-4 May 2015.

Since then, the Security Council under the presidency of Lithuania has adopted [Resolution S/RES/2222](#), which saw a large number of Member States comment on the need for implementation steps to ensure safety of journalists and an end to impunity. A side event, organised by Lithuania and Latvia was held to discuss actions.

THEME:

The Panel discussion will focus on the issues of impunity and justice in regard to the safety of journalists. It will serve as the occasion to launch UNESCO's 2nd edition of the *World Trends in Freedom of Expression and Media Development*, which shall be used as a factual basis for the interaction.

Another element to be incorporated is the reference in Resolution 2222 about underscoring the need "to enhance the coherent and effective implementation of applicable international humanitarian law and relevant Security Council resolutions including those on protection of journalist, media professionals and associated personnel in situations of the armed conflict."

Moreover, the event will elaborate the linkages with sustainable development Goal 16 which recognizes the need for access to information, fundamental freedoms, reducing violence and combatting impunity.

Participants will also learn about the [Commemoration Conference involving global and Latin American judges in the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in Costa Rica](#) to be held two weeks earlier.

Thus, this event aims to sustain momentum from UNGA Resolution 68/163 and SC Resolution 2222 and to contribute insights for the 70th UNGA's resolution on 'The safety of journalists and the issue of impunity'. It shall focus on the need to address implementation, relate to the SDGs, and draw on the latest figures on safety and impunity.

FORMAT:

For the second celebration of IDEI in New York, the event shall take place on the actual International Day of 2 November at one of the larger and more prestigious meeting rooms of UNHQ: the ECOSOC Chamber and be webcast through UN Web TV. Given the many plenary UNGA committee meetings, the time chosen is 1:15 to 2:45pm. The event shall take the shape of an interactive panel discussion.

VISIBILITY and PARTNERSHIPS:

At the occasion of the IDEI, UNESCO is acting in coordination with UNICs to contact private, public and associative media to encourage them to produce and broadcast reports and features to raise awareness on the crimes against journalists and the challenge to bring the perpetrators to justice. UNESCO has developed a press advisory kit about the day, including all information resources available for the occasion, which is being circulated widely to key media contacts around the world.