



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



CENTRE FOR FREEDOM OF THE MEDIA
CFOM



Concept note

International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists 2 November 2015

Stop the killing of journalists! Prevention and justice to end impunity

London, United Kingdom

In the past decade 700 journalists have been killed for reporting the news: one death every five days. In nine out of ten cases the killers go unpunished. Impunity leads to more killings and is often a symptom of worsening conflict and the breakdown of law and justice systems. UNESCO warns that impunity damages whole societies by covering up serious human rights abuses, corruption and crime. Governments, civil society, the media and everyone concerned to uphold the rule of law are being asked to join in the global efforts to end impunity. This End Impunity-Day meeting in London is a chance for journalists, lawyers, policy-makers and others to consider how best to respond to that urgent challenge.

Summary:

UNESCO will convene or co-host events in Paris, London, New York and elsewhere, on Monday, 2 November 2015, to mark the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists (IDEI). The events will also serve as an occasion to launch, in various locations, the forthcoming UNESCO report, *World Trends in Freedom of Expression and Media Development – Special Digital Focus 2015*, which contains the Organization's most recent information on the safety of journalists and impunity. The events can take forward the outcomes of the [commemoration conference on the occasion of the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists, in partnership with the Inter-American Court of Human Rights](#), which will be held in Costa Rica from 9 to 10 October 2015. They can also feed into and prepare the envisaged UNESCO international conference 'News organizations standing up for the safety of media professionals' scheduled for 5 February 2016.

Background:

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. UNESCO is requested in the Resolution to facilitate the implementation of the IDEI.

In 2014, the first year of the IDEI, UNESCO co-organized [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 Lawyers' Union. In conjunction with several permanent delegations to the United Nations (Argentina, Austria, Costa Rica, France, Greece and Tunisia), UNESCO also organized a [high-level panel](#) titled 'Ending Impunity: Upholding the Rule of Law'. Further events initiated by the Organization took place in Abuja, Accra and Tunis.

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

Format of London event:

Venue: Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) Room, Palace of Westminster

Time/date: 2 November 2015 from 4:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m., followed by a reception (6:30 – 8:00 PM)

Theme: Journalists, international lawyers, human rights figures and policymakers share their understanding of the acute situation regarding the issue of impunity for crimes against journalists, as well as potential responses from each of the actors involved. Responses include: raising awareness about the issue in accordance with the UN Plan of Action on Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity; gathering evidence and pressing for justice in cases of killed, injured and jailed journalists; requesting information on the status of investigations; promoting best practices; strengthening international legal frameworks; and enhancing the effectiveness NGOs' work.

Partners: Centre for the Freedom of the Media (CFOM) – Sheffield University, PEN International, Article 19 and UNESCO

Participants:

- Sponsoring Member of Parliament: Mr Paul Farrelly
- *Opening presentation*
 - Mr Getachew Engida, UNESCO Deputy Director-General, will present the *World Trends in Freedom of Expression and Media Development: Special Digital Focus 2015*
- *Panel 1:* First-hand accounts of violence and impunity; reflections on the causes and the severe chilling effect of impunity in conflict/non-conflict areas and situations
 - Moderator: Mr Salil Tripathi, Indian writer and journalist
 - Mr Kevin Sutcliffe, Head of News Programming EU, Vice News
 - Mr Peter Greste, Correspondent, Al Jazeera
 - Ms Emma Beals, Freelance Journalist reporting from Syria and other conflict areas
 - Mr Alaa Bayoumi, Senior Producer, Al Jazeera
 - *Other speakers to be announced*
- *Panel 2:* Focus on representative cases, shortcomings in state responses, justice systems and political accountability; suggested courses of action to combat and end impunity.
 - Moderator: Mr William Horsley, International Director, Centre for Freedom of the Media, University of Sheffield
 - Ms Joanna Evans, Barrister and Legal Director, European Human Rights Advocacy Centre (EHRAC) UK
 - Mr Thomas Hughes, Executive Director, Article 19
 - Mr Rob Fenn, Head of Human Rights and Democracy Department, Foreign Office, United Kingdom

Audience: Politicians, government officials, human rights lawyers, media representatives, journalists and journalism educators, and NGOs concerned with freedom of expression, journalists' safety and the rule of law.

Media contact: Mehdi Benchelah (m.benchelah@unesco.org)