

**Human Rights Council**  
**Twenty-first session**  
**Agenda item 3**

**Resolution on the Safety of Journalists – adopted at the 21<sup>st</sup> session of the UN Human Rights Council on 27 September 2012**

*The Human Rights Council,*

*Guided by* the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations,

*Reaffirming* the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and recalling relevant international human rights treaties, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, as well as the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the Additional Protocols thereto of 8 June 1977,

*Recalling* all relevant resolutions of the Commission on Human Rights and the Human Rights Council on the right to freedom of opinion and expression, in particular Council resolution 12/16 of 2 October 2009, as well as Council resolutions 13/24 of 26 March 2010 and 20/8 of 5 July 2012,

*Mindful* that the right to freedom of opinion and expression is a human right guaranteed to all in accordance with articles 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and that it constitutes one of the essential foundations of a democratic society and one of the basic conditions for its progress and development,

*Reaffirming* that everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person,

*Recognizing* the importance of all forms of the media, including the printed media, radio, television and the internet, in the exercise, promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression

*Acknowledging* the particular role of journalists on matters of public interest, including by raising awareness for human rights,

*Underlining* the importance of voluntary professional principles and ethics developed and observed by the media,

*Recognizing* that their work often puts journalists at specific risk of intimidation, harassment, and violence,

*Acknowledging* the specific risks faced by women journalists in the exercise of their work and *underlining*, in this context, the importance of taking a gender-sensitive approach when considering measures to address the safety of journalists,

*Taking note* of good practices from different countries aiming at the protection of journalists, as well as, *inter alia*, those designed for the protection of human rights defenders, which can, where applicable, be relevant for the protection of journalists,

*Underlining* the important role of regional and sub-regional organizations on the safety of journalists,

*Welcoming* the important work of UNESCO on the safety of journalists,

*Taking note* of the International Conference for the Protection of Journalists in Dangerous Situations that took place on January 22-23 2012 in Doha, Qatar,

*OP 1 Reaffirms* the rights contained in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, in particular Article 19 which states that (1) Everyone shall have the right to hold opinions without interference; (2) Everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of his choice; (3) The exercise of the rights provided for in paragraph 2 of this article carries with it special duties and responsibilities. It may therefore be subject to certain restrictions, but these shall only be such as are provided by law and are necessary: (a) For respect of the rights or reputations of others; (b) For the protection of national security or of public order (ordre public), or of public health or morals;

*OP 2 Takes note* of the reports of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression and the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, presented at the twentieth session of the Human Rights Council, and the interactive dialogue thereon;

*OP 3 Expresses* its concern that violations of the right to freedom of opinion and expression continue to occur, including increased attacks against, and killings of, journalists and media workers, and stressing the need to ensure greater protection for all media professionals and for journalistic sources;

*OP 4 Condemns* in the strongest term all attacks and violence against journalists, such as torture, extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances and arbitrary detention, as well as intimidation and harassment;

*OP 5 Also expresses* its concern that there is a growing threat to the safety of journalists posed by non-state actors, including terrorist groups and criminal organizations;

*OP 6 Calls on* all parties to armed conflict to respect their obligations under international human rights law and international humanitarian law, including their obligations under the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 and, where applicable, the Additional Protocols thereto of 8 June 1977, the provisions of which extend protection to journalists in situations of armed conflict, and to allow, within the framework of applicable rules and procedures, media access and coverage, as appropriate, in situations of international and non-international armed conflict;

*OP 7 Also expresses* its concern that attacks against journalists often occur with impunity, and *calls upon* States to ensure accountability through the conduct of impartial, speedy and effective investigations into such acts falling within their jurisdiction, and to bring to justice those responsible, as well as to ensure that victims have access to appropriate remedies;

*OP 8 Calls upon* States to promote a safe and enabling environment for journalists to perform their work independently and without undue interference including through (i) legislative measures, (ii) awareness-raising among the judiciary, law enforcement officers and military personnel as well as journalists and civil society regarding international human rights and humanitarian law obligations and commitments relating to the safety of journalists,

(iii) monitoring and reporting of attacks against journalists (iv) publicly condemning, as well as, (v) dedicating necessary resources to investigate and prosecute such attacks;

*OP 9 Encourages* States to put in place voluntary protection programs for journalists, based on local needs and challenges, including protection measures taking into account individual circumstances of the persons at risk, as well as, where applicable, good practices from different countries;

*OP 10 Invites* relevant special procedures of the Council, as appropriate, in the framework of their mandates, to continue to address the relevant aspects of the safety of journalists in their work;

*OP 11 Stresses* the need to ensure better cooperation and coordination at the international level on the safety of journalists, including with regional organizations, and invites UN agencies, funds and programs, other international and regional organizations, Member States and all relevant stakeholders, when applicable and in the scope of their mandates, to further cooperate in the implementation of the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity elaborated by UNESCO and endorsed by the UN Chief Executives Board;

*OP 12 Requests* the Office of the High Commissioner in collaboration with the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, to prepare, working in consultation with States and other relevant stakeholders, a compilation of good practices regarding the protection of journalists, the prevention of attacks, and the fight against impunity for attacks committed against journalists and to present the compilation in a report to the Council at its 24<sup>th</sup> session.