

In the Shadow of Violence

Journalists and
Media Staff
Killed in 2018



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In the Shadow of Violence

IFJ General Secretary's Introduction



**ANTHONY
BELLANGER**
IFJ GENERAL
SECRETARY

The brutal murder of Jamal Khashoggi made headlines around the world. Rightly so. As gruesome details of him being tortured and his body dismembered emerged, his murder made front page news.

The shocking fact is Jamal was not the only journalist murdered that week. Zaki Al-Saqaldi was killed in Yemen – one of 9 to die in the country in 2018.

And Jamal and Zaki were not the only journalists to be killed that month – another 7 were murdered in Afghanistan, Bulgaria, India, Mexico and Somalia.

And while evidence in the Khashoggi case pointed to high level involvement in planning the murder and governments around the world issued statements, those widely-believed to be ultimately responsible for the crime went unpunished.

Jamal's is far from the only case where the intellectual author of the crime remains unpunished.

2018 saw 95 journalists and media professionals lose their lives in targeted killings, bomb attacks or crossfire incidents. Yemen, India, Mexico, Afghanistan and Syria witnessed the most devastating toll.

And whilst South Asia is now the world's most dangerous region for journalists, no part of the globe was left unscathed by those who seek to silence the message by killing the messenger.

The rise in killings takes place in the context of an increasing polarization of views across the world with the rise of dangerous nationalist and populist forces in many countries and the stigmatization of journalists and media by politicians and the enemies of media freedom.

That is why the IFJ continues to prioritise the safety and protection of journalists –providing urgent material support via our Safety Fund, by carrying out training courses for journalists across the world including in some of the world's hotspots such as Syria, Iraq, Yemen and Somalia and negotiating landmark collective agreements covering the safety and security of media professionals in Tunisia and Palestine.

More than that, the IFJ continues to call all those who kill, jail, threat-

en and harass journalists to be held accountable. From demanding answers via the Council of Europe's online *Platform for the Protection of Journalism and the Safety of Journalists* to meetings with Mexico's *Special Prosecutor for Crimes against Freedom of Expression* (FEADLE), the IFJ and its affiliates are at the forefront of demanding an end to impunity.

That commitment to demand the international community act to halt the killings of journalists and to bring the killers – including the material architects of such crimes - to justice was reinforced by the launch of a draft *Convention on the Safety and Independence of Journalists and Other Media Professionals* by the IFJ, alongside a broad-based coalition of representative organisations of media workers and owners, senior editors and public broadcasters.

***“Together we can
make a difference.”***

As the rise in the numbers of killings this year shows – and the fact that rates of impunity have remained at around 90% for more than a decade – words are no longer enough: it is time for action!

The Convention would address important weaknesses in the international legal regime and provide a dedicated instrument specific to the situation of journalists to ensure more effective implementation of international law. Every time a journalist is killed it is not just the individual, the family, the media which suffers. Society is increasingly denied its right to the free flow of information and views as journalists – fearful for their lives – are silenced by the assassin's gun.

Achieving such a Convention is a long and difficult road – but we cannot shirk from such challenges.

The IFJ and its affiliates have met with governments, lobbied delegations and missions at the United Nations and taken the argument for stronger action by the international community to every available forum.

We do so not for us, not just to honour the lives of all those who have been killed in the pursuit of the truth, carrying out their professional duties, but because attacks on journalists' life or physical integrity have a detrimental impact on the public's right to information, contribute to a decline in democratic control and have a chilling effect on everyone's freedom.

It is not just our fight – it is for all those who believe in such rights. You can help by donating to our safety fund by signing up support the campaign for a UN Convention and by getting involved in your journalists' union or association

Together we can make a difference.

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We remember ...

Gender Council Statement



MINDY RAN
CO-CHAIR
IFJ GENDER
COUNCIL

As we begin each year, we must first look back: to record and mourn those of our sisters and brothers that have lost their lives in the line of work over the past year. It is important to record these deaths as all must be acknowledged, but also to inform and strengthen our work to combat impunity for all forms of violence against journalists in this most serious of threats to press freedom.

With this in mind, the IFJ and its Gender Council have been investigating and recording acts of violence against women journalists for the past several years, including recording the deaths of our sister journalists.

This year we mourn the deaths of six of our sister journalists and media workers, killed in 2018:

On 30 April, in Kabul Afghanistan, a total of nine journalists were slain by a targeted suicide bomber, including *Radio Azadi* correspondent **Moharram Durrani**. Two suicide bombs were detonated that day, 20 minutes apart. It was the second blast that killed Durrani when she and her colleagues had gathered to cover the first bomb. The bomber had disguised himself as a journalist to target them.

On 28 May, in Nuevo León state in Mexico, **Alicia Díaz González** was found murdered of stab wounds in her home by her children. The 52-year-old reporter worked for *El Financiero* newspaper and covered local business, which is not usually considered 'sensitive'.

On 28 June, in Annapolis Maryland USA, a gunman stormed the offices of the *Capital Gazette*, killing five and injuring two, including journalist **Wendi Winters** and sales assistant **Rebecca Smith**. The gunman had had a long running dispute with the paper. At the time, IFJ General Secretary Anthony Bellanger said: "This odious act reminds us that journalists are not safe anywhere, whether in a country at war, in a conflict zone or in a democracy".

A woman holds a copy of the Capital Gazette during a candlelight vigil to honor the five people who were killed inside the Capital Gazette newspaper the day before in Annapolis, Maryland, U.S. June 29, 2018. REUTERS/Leah Millis



“This odious act reminds us that journalists are not safe anywhere, whether in a country at war, in a conflict zone or in a democracy.”

On 29 September, in Egypt, journalist for *Al-Tahrir* **Hindi Musa** died in a tragic accident.

On 6 October, in Ruse Bulgaria, regional TV channel TVN journalist **Victoria Marinova** was found brutally murdered. According to local media reports, her body was found near the Danube river bank having been raped, beaten and then strangled. She was beaten with such violence that her face was unrecognisable. Marinova had just interviewed Bulgarian journalist Dimitar Stoyanov and Romanian journalist Attila Biro, both of whom had been arrested the previous month while investigating corrupt practices by a private road construction company suspected of carrying out scams with European funds.

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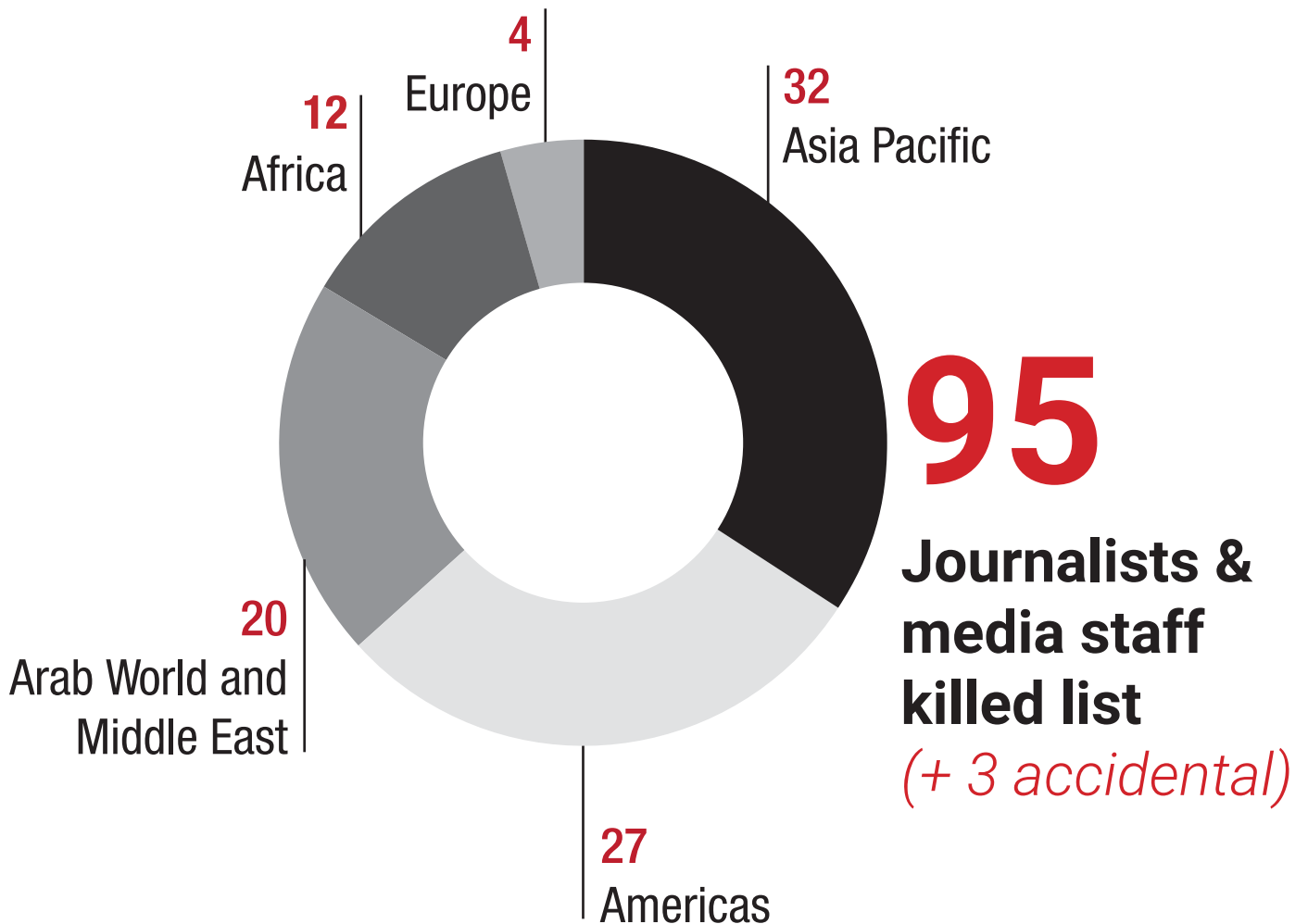
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Targeted, Bomb Attacks and Cross Fire Killings

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COUNTRY	NAME	POSITION	EMPLOYER	DATE
Afghanistan	Abdul Manan Arghand	Journalist	Kaboul News	26/04/2018
	Kabul Shah Marai	Chief Photographer	Agence France-Presse (AFP)	30/04/2018
	Yar Mohammad Tokhi	Cameraman	Tolo News	30/04/2018
	Abadullah Hananzai	Correspondent	Radio Azadi	30/04/2018
	Moharram Durrani	Correspondent	Radio Azadi	30/04/2018
	Sabawoon Kakar	Correspondent	Radio Azadi	30/04/2018
	Ghazi Rasooli	Reporter	1TV	30/04/2018
	Nowroz Ali Rajabi	Cameraman	1TV	30/04/2018
	Salim Talash	Reporter	Mashal TV	30/04/2018
	Ali Salimi	Cameraman	Mashal TV	30/04/2018
	Ahmad Shah	Reporter	BBC	30/04/2018
	Mohammad Akhtar	Driver	Agence France-Presse (AFP)	25/07/2018
	Mohammad Dawood	Media technician	Ghazni TV and Radio	13/08/2018
	Samim Faramarz	Journalist	Tolo News	21/09/2018
	Ramiz Ahmadi	Cameraman	Tolo News	21/09/2018
Mohammad Salim Angaar	Journalist	Radio Television Afghanistan (RTA)	18/10/2018	
Bangladesh	Shahjahan Bachchu	Editor	<i>Aamder Bikrampur</i>	11/06/2018
Brazil	Jefferson Pureza Lopes	Journalist	Beira Rio FM	24/01/2018
	Jairo Sousa	Presenter	<i>Rádio Pérola FM</i>	28/06/2018
	Marlon de Carvalho Araújo	Journalist	Radio Gazeta and Jacuípe	30/08/2018
Bulgaria	Victoria Marinova	Journalist	Channel TVN	08/10/2018
Central African Republic	Alexander Rastorguyev	Editor	Investigation Control Center (TsUR)	13/08/2018
	Orkhan Dzhemal	Reporter	Investigation Control Center (TsUR)	13/08/2018
	Kirill Radchenko	Cameraman	Investigation Control Center (TsUR)	13/08/2018
Colombia	Valentín Rúa Tezada	Presenter		13/08/2018
	Jairo Alberto Calderón Plazas	Editor	<i>Contacto</i>	13/08/2018
Ecuador	Javier Ortega	Journalist	El Comercio	16/04/2018
	Paul Rivas	Photojournalist	El Comercio	16/04/2018
	Efrain Segarra	Driver	El Comercio	16/04/2018
France	Antonio Megalizzi	Journalist	Süd Tirol	14/12/2018
Guatemala	Laurent Ángel Castillo Cifuentes	Correspondent	Medio Nuestro Diario	06/02/2018
	Luis Alfredo de León Miranda	Journalist	Radio Coaltepec	06/02/2018
India	Sandeep Sharma	Investigative Journalist	News World	27/03/2018
	Naveen Nishchal	Journalist	<i>Dainik Bhaskar</i>	27/03/2018
	Shujaat Bukhari	Editor	<i>Rising Kashmir</i>	15/06/2018
	Abdul Hamid Tunch	Protection Officer		15/06/2018
	Mumtaz Awan	Protection Officer		15/06/2018
	Achyutananda Sahu	Cameraman	Doordarshan TV	30/10/2018
	Chandan Tiwari	Journalist	<i>Aaj News</i>	30/10/2018
Iraq	Saad Hadi Al-Mashrafawi	Photojournalist	Al-Shabab news agency	16/01/2018
Liberia	Tyron Brown	Reporter	Super FM and TV	19/04/2018
Lybia	Moussa Abdel Karim	Journalist	Fasania	31/07/2018
Mexico	Carlos Domínguez	Journalist	<i>El Diario de Nuevo Laredo</i>	16/01/2018
	Leobardo Vázquez	Freelance Journalist		22/03/2018
	Juan Carlos Huerta	TV Presenter	Tabasco radio station	16/05/2018
	Alicia Díaz González	Reporter	<i>El Financiero</i>	28/05/2018
	Hector Gonzalez Antonio	Correspondent	<i>Excelsior</i>	30/05/2018
	Jose Guadalupe Chan	Correspondent	<i>Playa News</i>	02/07/2018
	Javier Enrique Rodriguez Valladares	Cameraman	Canal 10	30/08/2018
	Rubén Pat	Director	<i>Playa News</i>	27/09/2018
	Gabriel Soriano	Producer	Radio and TV Guerrero (RTG)	24/10/2018
	Jesús Alejandro Márquez Jiménez	Editor	<i>Orión Informativo</i>	02/12/2018
Diego García Corona	Reporter	<i>Morelos</i>	05/12/2018	

Nicaragua	Ángel Eduardo Gahona	Correspondent	Canal 6 de Nicaragua	25/04/2018	
Pakistan	Anjum Muneer Raja	Sub-editor	<i>Qaumi Pukaar</i>	08/03/2018	
	Muhammad Abid	Correspondent		27/08/2018	
	Sohail Khan	Journalist		18/10/2018	
	Noor ul Hassan	Journalist	Royal News TV	03/12/2018	
	Zeeshan Ashraf Butt	Journalist	Nawa-i-Waqt	27/03/2018	
Palestine	Yasir Murtaja	Photojournalist	Ain Media News Agency	16/04/2018	
	Ahmad Abu Hussein	Photojournalist	Sawt Al Shaab Radio	26/04/2018	
Philippines	Edmund Sestoso	Broadcaster	dyGB 91.7 FM	03/05/2018	
	Dennis Denora	Columnist	<i>Trends and Times</i>	11/06/2018	
	Joey Llama	Presenter	dwZR Radio	25/07/2018	
Slovakia	Jan Kuciak	Reporter	<i>Aktuality.sk</i>	26/02/2018	
Somalia	Abdirisak Qasim Iman	Cameraman	Somali Broadcasting Services (SBS)	26/07/2018	
	Sa'id Osman	Reporter	Radio Voice of Peace	19/09/2018	
	Abdullahi Mire Hashi	Radio Producer	Darul Sunnah	27/10/2018	
	Awil Dahir Salad	Anchor	Universal TV	22/12/2018	
	Abdiqadir Hassan Yusuf	Driver	Universal TV	22/12/2018	
	Mohamed Dubad Gajaow	Security Officer	Universal TV	22/12/2018	
	Ibrahim Mohayadin Ahmed	Security Officer	Universal TV	22/12/2018	
	Syria	Bashar Al-Attar	Photojournalist	Arbin Media Office	22/03/2018
		Mustafa Salama	Journalist	Sama TV	25/07/2018
		Raed Mahmoud Fares	Journalist	Radio Fresh	23/11/2018
		Hamoud Ali Jneed	Photojournalist	Radio Fresh	23/11/2018
		Abdulrahman Al-Yassin	Reporter	Hamouriyeh Media Center	20/02/2018
		Obaida Abu Omar	Reporter	SMART, Damaski	21/03/2018
		Ahmad Mahmoud Aziza	Reporter	Alepp News Network	10/08/2018
		Ibrahim Al-Manjar	Journalist	Freelance	17/05/2018
Jamal Kashoggi		Columnist	<i>Washington Post</i>	02/10/2018	
Turkey		Wendi Winters	Editor	<i>Capital Gazette</i>	29/06/2018
	Robert Hiaasen	Assistant Editor	<i>Capital Gazette</i>	29/06/2018	
	Gerald Fischman	Editorial Writer	<i>Capital Gazette</i>	29/06/2018	
	John McNamara	Reporter	<i>Capital Gazette</i>	29/06/2018	
	Rebecca Smith	Sales Assistant	<i>Capital Gazette</i>	29/06/2018	
United States	Mohammed Al-Qadasi	Photojournalist	Balqees TV	22/01/2018	
	Mohammed Naser Al-Washalin	Producer	Yemen TV	16/04/2018	
	Abdullah Al-Najjar	Set Decorator	Yemen TV	16/04/2018	
	Abdullah Al Qadry	Photojournalist and Cameraman	Belquees TV and AFP	19/04/2018	
	Anwar Al-Rakan	Journalist		14/06/2018	
	Omar Azzi Mohammed	Technician	Yemeni al-Maraweah Radio	17/09/2018	
	Jamai Musayab	Security Officer	Yemeni al-Maraweah Radio	17/09/2018	
	Obeif Jamai	Security Officer	Yemeni al-Maraweah Radio	17/09/2018	
	Zaki Al-Saqaldi	Reporter	Al-Masdar	05/10/2018	

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Accidental Deaths

List 3

COUNTRY	NAME	POSITION	EMPLOYER	DATE
Egypt	Hind Musa	Journalist	<i>Al-Tahrir</i>	29/09/2018
United States	Mike McCormick	Reporter	WYFF TV	29/05/2018
	Aaron Smeltzer	Reporter	WYFF TV	29/05/2018

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The African continent is still grappling with the issue of impunity for killings of journalists as a cruel means to silencing them by people wielding political and economic power in an attempt to suppress independent reporting. Civil unrest and violence from extremists also continue to represent a risk to lives of media professionals in a country.

This situation has resulted in eight killings of journalists and other support staff in Central African Republic, Liberia, Libya and Somalia in 2018. They include three members of a Russian investigative team killed in mysterious circumstances while they were on a reporting assignment in the war-torn Central African Republic. In Somalia, another country still in the grip of terrorist violence and total breakdown of law and order, three journalists, a driver and two security officers were killed in targeted killings and bomb attacks. Media professionals in the country continue to face the brunt of the Al-Shabaab militia who remains a mortal threat to the media and journalists, in particular.

These are serious restrictions on press freedom in Africa where their safety remains elusive as impunity for attacks on journalists remains the main hurdle to achieving accountability. It has sadly become a norm on the continent for those who kill journalists or perpetrate other attacks against them to routinely escape justice. This has a considerably negative effect on quality journalism as a significant number of journalists on the continent, under the chilling effect of these levels of violence, are forced into self-censorship.

However, there was one notable development which is unique enough to report in Somalia, when police in Puntland detained four suspects in connection with the murder of Abdirizaaq Said Osman, one of the journalists killed in Somalia during 2018. It remains to be seen what will come out of these arrests and whether this is a sign that the Somali authorities are beginning to take seriously the issue of impunity for crime against journalists in the country.

“It has sadly become a norm on the continent for those who kill journalists or perpetrate other attacks against them to routinely escape justice.”

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Africa

Narrative

Targeted, bomb attacks and cross fire killings

APRIL 19 – LIBERIA

Tyron Brown, the reporter, camera operator and video editor for Super FM and TV was found dead on Duport Road, a suburb of the capital, Monrovia. According to a press release issued by the Press Union of Liberia (PUL), an IFJ affiliate, Brown's death came in the wake of an escalation of threats and intimidation against journalists and the independent media by some government's officials.



JULY 26 - SOMALIA

Abdirisac Qasim Iman, the cameraman working for privately owned Somali Broadcasting Services (SBS), was shot dead by a police officer in the country's capital city, Mogadishu.

According to local media reports quoting Iman's colleagues, the journalist was a passenger on a motorbike on his way back home from work when a police officer ordered at a check-point on Via Liberia street stopped them and ordered them to take another direction while pointing an AK-47 rifle at Iman and his media equipment.

Iman complained and asked the police officer to stop pointing at him and his camera. The officer reportedly told him he could blow his head off and shot him two times in the head, killing him instantly.

JULY 31 – LIBYA

Moussa Abdel Karim, the journalist for the *Fasania* newspaper was abducted by criminal gangs and later murdered. His body, found near the health centre in Sebha, had 13 gunshot wounds and showed clear signs of torture. Sebha has been at the centre of a conflict between military groups and criminal gangs and journalists reporting on it had been facing growing dangers. Abdel Karim and his colleagues at *Fasania* had been frequently threatened for reporting in the troubled city.



REUTERS
Maxim Shemetov

AUGUST 13 – CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Alexander Rastorguyev, Orkhan Dzhemal, Kirill Radchenko, the three Russian media professionals were killed in what the local authorities described as an ambush by an unidentified group of armed men near the village of Sibuti. Director Alexander Rastorguyev, reporter Orkhan Dzhemal and cameraman Kirill Radchenko, who worked for Russian on-line news organisation Investigation Control Center (TsUR), were slain on the spot while their driver survived the attack.

According to TsUR, the three journalists were in the war-torn country to work on a documentary about the activities of the Wagner Group, a paramilitary mercenary company which has ties with the Kremlin and has carried out clandestine combat missions on its behalf in eastern Ukraine and Syria, according to Reuters' sources. The Russian authorities denied the alleged link to the group.

SEPTEMBER 19 – SOMALIA

Sa'id Osman, the 30-year-old radio reporter working for privately owned Voice of Peace Radio in the Somali city of Galkayo, was slashed in the back and heart when he was leaving the radio station, the National Union of Somali Journalists (NUSOJ) said in a statement. After the attack, a passer-by saw the journalist lying unconscious on the ground and rushed him quickly to Mudug Regional Hospital.

Radio Voice of Peace chief editor Ahmed Mohamed Ali reportedly said that Osman underwent an emergency operation to save his life but sadly passed away shortly afterwards. The killing followed Osman's reporting on the insecurity in Galkayo city due to the activities of jihadist group Al-Shabbaab and NUSOJ believes that Omar's reporting was the motive behind the crime.

OCTOBER 27 – SOMALIA

Abdullahi Mire Hashi, the radio producer at Darul Sunnah, a privately owned radio station, was shot and killed by unidentified gunmen in the town of Elasha Biyaha, some 17 kilometers from the capital Mogadishu. Abdullahi had initially received death threats on his phone prior to his killing which, according to local media reports, were most likely to come from the militant group Al-Shabaab but the group did not claim responsibility for his death. No one has been arrested for his death.

DECEMBER 22 – SOMALIA

Awil Dahir Salad, the anchor of popular Universal TV station's show **Dood Wadaag**, his driver **Abdiqadir Hassan Yusuf** and his two bodyguards **Mohamed Dubad Gajaow** and **Ibrahim Mohayadin Ahmed** were among the 16 people killed in the car bomb which went off at military check point in Mogadishu, near Somalia's presidential palace on 22 December. 20 others were wounded in the double blast caused by a minivan driver who detonated explosives packed in the car.

SEPTEMBER 29 – EGYPT

Hind Musa, the journalist for the *Al-Tahrir* newspaper died in a car accident while she was on her way back from covering El-Gouna Film Festival.

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2018 was not a good year for Journalists in Latin America and Caribbean. The region was one of the most dangerous for the practice of journalism in the world, with journalists being threatened, murdered and censured while others disappear across the breadth and length the region.

22 journalists and media staff were killed in Latin America and Caribbean, with seven more colleagues who lost their lives in North America. The death toll in 2018, markedly up from 16 last year, is a cause of alarm for journalists who risk their lives as they exercise their freedom of expression and their right to receive information.

Eleven out of the 22 killings recorded in Latin America during 2018 occurred in Mexico, where journalists are in the sights of organised crime groups and those with power who seek to silence the press in an atmosphere of widespread violence and impunity. In this regard, these killings were not isolated cases but added to hundreds others which took place since 2000 and remain by and large unaddressed.

The leadership President Enrique Peña Nieto has exacerbated this situation. In addition to the increase in the number of journalists killed, the government cut by 50% the budget allocated to the protection mechanisms for journalists, such as the Prosecutor's Office for the prevention of Crimes against Freedom of Expression (FEADLE) in the two years of his administration.

The situation is similar across the region in which, despite often varying realities, journalists and media staff operate in an environment marked by social inequality and the exclusion of wide sections of the people. These traits are linked to a socioeconomic model of modern capitalism which has had a negative impact, increasing levels of inequality and benefiting powerful minorities. The profession of journalism is not spared and is affected by these realities which lead to attacks by the security forces, harassment and persecution by criminal gangs and political as well as economical elites.

Candles representing the slain journalists of Capital Gazette sit on display during a candlelight vigil held near the Capital Gazette, the day after a gunman killed five people inside the newspaper's building in Annapolis, Maryland, U.S., June 29, 2018. REUTERS/Leah Millis



Relatives and friends hold pictures of Ecuadorean photojournalist Paul Rivas (L), journalist Javier Ortega (C) and their driver Efrain Segarra, who were kidnapped near the Colombian border, during a protest march to demand for their release, in Quito, Ecuador April 1, 2018. The sign at the back reads: "We want them free." REUTERS/Daniel Tapia



Despite the absence of civil war or conventional armed conflict in the region, Latin America and Caribbean zone accounts for the third of all journalists killed in the world during 2018. Indeed, more journalists were killed in Mexico than in Syria, Iraq or Yemen.

The lack of political will and the failure by governments to act on the situation perpetuate the impunity, which is as high as 98% in most countries. This makes a mockery of the right to freedom of expression and access to information of Latin American societies and endangers their democratic integrity.

The violent incidents of 2018 including murders, kidnappings and disappearances added to threats of jail through repressive legislation which criminalises defamation in several countries of the continent. The situation is made worse by public officials and the judiciary seeking to override the confidentiality of journalists' sources as well as repeated cases of cyberbullying against women journalists.

There is, unfortunately, little to report which offers hope for the situation to change as long as the region remains in the grip of the culture of impunity for those who commit violence against our colleagues, with only less than 10% of those responsible likely to be held accountable.

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The Americas

Narrative

Targeted, bomb attacks and cross fire killings



JANUARY 16 – MEXICO

Carlos Domínguez, the independent journalist and political columnist for *El Diario de Nuevo Laredo* since 2016 was shot dead in the city of Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas state. The city is considered one of the most dangerous places in Mexico, reports said. In his last column, Domínguez had denounced the impunity for crime over the last 18 years in Mexico during which those behind the killings had never been identified. According to the Sindicato Nacional de Redactores de la Prensa (SNRP), an IFJ affiliate, Domínguez was the first killed journalist to be killed since the start of 2018.

JANUARY 24 – BRAZIL

Jefferson Pureza Lopes, the journalist working for radio Beira Rio FM, a local station in the state of Goiás, was shot dead at his home by two gunmen on motorbikes who forced their way into his house and killed him. According to reports quoting police and colleagues, Lopez had received multiple threats for denouncing the local administration on his radio programme. The radio station was also attacked last November and set on fire but the attackers have not been identified.

FEBRUARY 6 – GUATEMALA

The lifeless bodies of the two media professionals were found in the municipality of Mazatenango with torture signs and their hands and feet tied after they went missing on 28 January.

According to media reports, **Castillo Cifuentes** who was the correspondent for *Medio Nuestro Diario* newspaper based in the department of Quetzaltenango left home to cover the Mazatenango carnival. **Luis Alfredo de León Miranda**, who worked at Radio Coaltepec in the same location, went with Castillo to the same event. Local sources close to Castillo's family reportedly told media that the journalist had been receiving blackmailing calls.



MARCH 22 – MEXICO

Leobardo Vázquez, the journalist, who contributed to various media outlets, was gunned down by unidentified assailants while he was at home in the locality of Gutierrez Zamora, Veracruz state.

According to his colleagues, Vázquez who also edited a website which published reports on the region of Totonacapan in Veracruz state, had received threats but la Comisión Estatal de Atención y Protección de Periodistas (CEAPP) said that the journalist had not requested official protection.

APRIL 25 – NICARAGUA

Ángel Eduardo Gahona, the correspondent for Canal 6 de Nicaragua was shot dead during the violent protests against social security reforms in the country. According to reports, the journalist was doing a live transmission via Facebook on the protests near the city hall in Bluefields, a coastal town of the Central American country, when he was hit by a single bullet to the head and killed on the spot.



MAY 16 – MEXICO

Juan Carlos Huerta, the TV host and Director of Tabasco radio station was gunned down as he left his home in Villahermosa, the capital of southern Tabasco state. Media reports quoted the state governor Arturo Núñez as saying that the killing was not a robbery and appeared to be related to Huerta's work as a journalist. "They apparently went to execute him," he said.



MAY 28 – MEXICO

Alicia Díaz González, the 52-year-old reporter for *El Financiero* newspaper was found dead in her home with stabs wounds. According to reports quoting officials, the body of Ms González, who lived in the town of norteña de Monterrey, Nuevo León state, was found by her children who were upstairs at the time and called for help. They reportedly told the authorities that they heard no noise. Colleagues of the journalists quoted by the AFP said that she reported on local business, which is not considered 'sensitive'.



MAY 30 – MEXICO

Hector Gonzalez Antonio, the 40-year-old correspondent for the *Excelsior*, a national daily newspaper and contributor to local radio and TV stations, was found beaten to death in the state of Tamaulipas of the US border, according to prosecutors quoted in media reports.

The journalist, who covered politics and general news in a state which is in the grip of turf wars among rival drug cartels, was left on a narrow dirty road on the outskirts of Ciudad Victoria one day after he was abducted, media reports added. His body was bloodied, shirtless and missing one shoe.

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Colombian journalists gather in front of the Ecuadorean embassy to protest against the murder of journalist Javier Ortega, photographer Paul Rivas and their driver Efrain Segarra, in Bogota, Colombia April 16, 2018. REUTERS/Jaime Saldarriaga



REUTERS
Nelson Rios

JUNE 26 – ECUADOR

Javier Ortega, Paul Rivas, Efrain Segarra, the bodies of three Ecuadorian media professionals who had been abducted on March on the border with Colombia were found in a jungle, according to Colombian authorities. The authorities said that 32-year-old reporter **Javier Ortega**, 45-year old photographer **Paul Rivas** and their 60-year old driver **Efrain Segarra** had been killed after being held hostage.

The trio who worked for the Ecuador's influential *El Comercio* newspaper had gone to report on violence on the remote border with Colombia when they were kidnapped by suspected renegades of the former Colombian guerilla movement, FARC.

JUNE 28 – BRAZIL

Jairo Sousa, the radio presenter at Rádio Pérola FM was gunned down by an unidentified armed man on a motorbike who shot him in the back as he arrived at the radio studio located in the state of Pára in northern Brazil for his morning show, Show da Peróla. According to family sources, Jairo Sousa who was known for his outspoken criticism against corruption and organised crime, had received threatening calls shortly before his killing.



Dec 11, 2018; College Park, MD, USA; A memorial for Capital Gazette journalist John McNamara, who was killed in a mass shooting in a news room earlier this year, sits on press room before the game between the Maryland Terrapins and the Loyola (Md) Greyhounds at XFINITY Center. Mandatory Credit: Tommy Gilligan-USA TODAY Sports

JUNE 29 – UNITED STATES

Four media professionals and one staff member of the Capital Gazette, a daily published in Annapolis, the capital of Maryland state were shot dead by a gunman in what police described as a ‘targeted attack.’

The paper named the victims as editor and community reporter **Wendi Winters** (65), Sales assistant **Rebecca Smith** (34), assistant editor and columnist **Robert Hiaasen** (59), editorial writer **Gerald Fischman** (61) and reporter and editor **John McNamara** (56). Two more people were injured in the shooting, according to media reports.

The paper’s crime reporter Phil Davis told media that the gunman, named as Jarrod Ramos “*shot through the glass door to the office*” before opening fire on employees. He was later arrested by police at the scene and taken into custody. The suspect had lost a defamation case against the newspaper in 2012, media reports added.

JULY 2 – MEXICO



Jose Guadalupe Chan, the 35-year old correspondent for *Playa News*, a website based in Riviera Maya, close to the popular tourist city of Cancun in the state of Quintana, was shot dead by a gunman while he was at a bar in the indigenous community of Felipe Carrillo Puerto, according to the AFP. His colleague Ruben Pat at Playa News told AFP that Chan had received deaths threats and had asked for protection from the authorities but did not receive a response.

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AUGUST 13 – COLOMBIA

Valentín Rúa Tezada, the 15-year veteran presenter was shot dead in the town of Suárez, Cauca. According to local authorities, the journalist received a call on his mobile phone on the evening of his killing and went out to meet someone. It was then that he was killed by a single shot to the head.

AUGUST 13 – COLOMBIA

Jairo Alberto Calderón Plazas, the journalist and editor of *Contacto* magazine, was gunned down by an unidentified assailant on a motorbike in the region of Tulúa, Valle de Cauca. According to local media, the journalist was shot as he was with his parents and died while he was being transported to the nearest hospital. The authorities also indicated that, while Plazas had not received any threats, a person he did not know had come to his home, hours before he was killed.

AUGUST 30 – MEXICO

Javier Enrique Rodríguez Valladares, the cameraman for the private TV channel, Canal 10, in the resort city of Cancun in the state of Quintana Roo, was shot dead along with another man while the two were walking in the city centre. In a statement, Canal 10 said that Rodríguez Valladares also conducted interviews and features on political issues, media reports said.

AUGUST 30 – BRAZIL

Marlon de Carvalho Araújo, the journalist who contributed to two radio stations, *Gazeta* and *Jacuípe*, where he focused on corruption reporting which he also posted on social media, was shot dead in the area of Chapada of the Riachão do Jacuípe town, Bahia state. According to local media reports, four gunmen burst into his home in early hours and shot him. Araújo was well known for his publications on corruption involving officials at various levels of the Administration in his region.



SEPTEMBER 27 – MEXICO

Rubén Pat, the director of the weekly *Playa News*, was gunned down in the tourist city of Quintana Roo. According to local press reports, Pat was shot at least six times outside a bar in the city centre. He had denounced threats and assaults against him back in January 2017, following his investigation which linked some administration officials to organised crime groups. He had also been detained and tortured by local police because of this investigation, local sources added.



OCTOBER 24 – MEXICO

Gabriel Soriano, the producer at public radio and TV Guerrero (RTG), was shot dead as he was returning home from work in Puerto Marqués, Acapulco. According to local press reports, four gunmen opened fire on a RTG van with the company's logo in which Soriano was travelling along with other work colleagues. He was killed as he tried to escape from the van but was hit by a bullet when he descended from the vehicle.

A man hold a picture of cameraman Javier Rodriguez Valladares during a protest to demand justice for his killing in Cancun, Mexico August 31, 2018. Banner reads "I'm not a criminal I'm a journalist". REUTERS/Israel Leal



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DECEMBER 2 – MEXICO

The body of **Jesús Alejandro Márquez Jiménez**, who lived in the district of Tuxpan of Western state of Nayarit, was found with gunshot wounds near the state's capital airport. He had left home on his motorbike after receiving a phone call and was never seen alive again. According to police sources, he was reported missing after he failed to return home. Márquez Jiménez was known for his hard hitting reporting and as a founder of "Orión Informativo" News outlet.

DECEMBER 5 – MEXICO

Diego García Corona, the 35-year-old reporter for *Morelos*, a weekly, was gunned down while driving in Ecatepec, Mexico. According to local press reports, the journalist was shot by two unidentified gunmen who immediately fled the scene after the attack.

MAY 29 – UNITED STATES

Accidental Deaths



Mike McCormick and **Aaron Smeltzer**, reporters working for WYFF, a local television in North Carolina, died when a falling tree crushed their car as they drove down a highway during an assignment to cover extreme weather conditions in the area. According to media reports, the heavy rainfall had waterlogged the soil, which might have contributed to the tree's fall.



Asia Pacific

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Targeted,
bomb attacks
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In early June outside at a hotel in Kathmandu, Nepal, a group of journalists, activists and union leaders stood together in a dark huddle, lit only by the dim glow of candlelight. Silently, we paid our respects and gave quiet tribute to one of our colleagues, Kashmiri journalist Shuuajat Bukhari.

The 50-year-old editor of the feisty and seminal *Kashmir Daily* had been gunned down only days before outside his office in Srinagar, the capital of the Indian-administered part of Kashmir.

Shuuajat didn't stand a chance. Shot multiple times in the abdomen and head by unidentified assailants on a motorcycle, he was killed instantly. Even a bodyguard couldn't shield him. He also died.

And so we mourned. We mourned the loss of a comrade and colleague. But we also mourned the loss for the people of Kashmir. Who would tell the stories that needed so desperately to be told?

In a tribute in *The New York Times*, his close friend Sameer Yasir beautifully summed up his invaluable contribution: "Mr Bukhari's unflinching optimism was always something we aspired to, and it kept us going. If he could remain hopeful after decades covering one of the world's most grueling conflicts, we all could."

He covered every cease-fire between India and Pakistan with optimism, even though they all inevitably failed. He wrote about the tens of thousands of civilians who have been killed in Kashmir's violence, the many mass graves that fill our countryside, the protests and the rare glimmers of hope."

Shuuajat was a great fighter for truth, an incredible voice and an amazing mentor to many in Kashmir and beyond. It's not just a hole he leaves, it's a gaping chasm.

His is just one of 32 stories of loss we have in the Asia-Pacific, the highest number of deaths recorded by the IFJ since 2014. They were journalists, editors, drivers, camera operators, television reporters and

broadcasters. With each come pain and more questions than there are answers.

South Asia is now again the world's deadliest region with 29 media workers killed. But the numbers only tell a part of the story. All of them died in countries which boast democracy, or some version of it.

In India there was a disturbing trend of targeted attacks by vehicles, with four media workers killed. News World TV correspondent Sandeep Sharma was riding his motorbike when he aggressively hit and killed by a truck in Madhya Pradesh. Sharma, who had previously reported on police involvement in illegal sand mining activities, received threats against his life. His case, however, was filed by police as an "accident". CCTV footage of the horrific incident tells it differently.

Including Shujat, 15 journalists lost their lives in targeted shootings or were lethally caught in the crossfire. Another 12 died as a result of being in the wrong place, when car bombs detonated or suicide bombers unleashed.

"Who would tell the stories that needed so desperately to be told?"

Afghanistan is by far the region's blackest spot. On one single horrific day in April, nine journalists died in the capital, Kabul, in back-to-back suicide attacks. The killer, disguised as a journalist, detonated himself in the middle of the gathered media scrum.

The same day in Eastern Khost province, 29-year-old BBC reporter Ahmad Shah was on his way home when armed men on a motorbike opened fire and shot him dead. In all, 15 journalists died this year doing their job in Afghanistan. Deathly explosions were more often than not the weapon of choice by those seeking to unseat stability and order in the troubled nation.

In Pakistan and the Philippines, there were more shootings. Five journalists were directly targeted and shot in Pakistan. And despite the ongoing criticisms of the Philippine government's efforts to stem the tide of journalist killings, there has been no letup. Another three broadcasters were shot dead.

As National Union of Journalists chair Nonoy Espina, put it: "Under the current president, Rodrigo Duterte, 12 journalists have been murdered since mid-2016 . . . Eleven of the 12 killings happened before Duterte marked his second year in office, the highest number of journalist murders in the first two years of any Philippines president."

The influence of politicians in the bloodbath has to be told, he says. But that's another story.

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Targeted, bomb attacks and cross fire killings

MARCH 8 – PAKISTAN

Anjum Muneer Raja, the 40-year-old sub-editor with Islamabad-based Urdu daily *Qaumi Pukaar*, was shot dead by unknown assailants on Bank Road, the high-security area near the Pakistan Army's national headquarters while he was returning home after work late in the evening. The motorcycle-borne gunmen intercepted Raja's motorcycle before firing six bullets, killing him on the spot.

MARCH 27 – INDIA

Naveen Nishchal, the 35-year-old journalist who worked for *Dainik Bhaskar* daily in Bihar state in eastern India and his friend Vijay Singh were killed. The pair were riding a motorbike when they were hit by a car driven by a former village head, who had several criminal cases against him. Locals set the vehicle on fire after the incident.

MARCH 27 – INDIA

Sandeep Sharma, the 35-year-old investigative journalist in Madhya Pradesh state in central India, was mowed down by a truck on a road in Bhind district and died at the local hospital. Sharma had two "sting" investigations about sand mafia for a regional TV station, *News World*, and alleged the involvement of police officials in the illegal sand-mining mafia operations in the state.

Sharma had reportedly sought police protection following the publication of the reports, but Shailendra Singh Khushwaha, the deputy inspector at the Bhind police station confirmed that the protection hadn't been provided. The driver of the truck was arrested and the truck was seized by police, as the investigation continued. In CCTV footage of the incident, the truck can be seen making a sudden swerve and crushing Sharma on a motorbike.

MARCH 27 – PAKISTAN

Zeeshan Ashraf Butt, the 29-year-old journalist with Urdu daily *Nawa-i-Waqt* and former chairperson of the Sambrial Press Club, was shot dead by Imran Cheema, chairperson of the Begowala Union Council on March 27 in Sialkot. An argument broke out over a monetary dispute when Butt asked Cheema tough questions, and Cheema opened fire on Butt. He died at the scene.

APRIL 26 – AFGHANISTAN

Abdul Manan Arghand, the Kabul News TV journalist was shot dead by two unidentified gunmen at Yarana Market on the outskirts of Kandahar city, Afghanistan. Arghand was in his car when two gunmen on a motorbike intercepted him and opened fire at him, killing him on the spot. He had reportedly received threats and had notified security authorities about the threats. He worked as a journalist for 13 years and was associated with private TV station, Kabul News and Chinese news agency, *Xinhua*.

APRIL 30 – AFGHANISTAN

Nine journalists, including a female journalist, were killed in Kabul, Afghanistan in back-to-back suicide attacks, the second of which targeted the journalists who had gathered on the site of the first blast near the Afghan Intelligence services headquarters.

Agence France-Presse (AFP) chief photographer in Kabul **Shah Marai**, Tolo News cameraman **Yar Mohammad Tokhi**, Radio Azadi correspondents **Abadullah Hananzai**, **Moharram Durrani** and **Sabawoon Kakar**, 1TV reporter **Ghazi Rasooli** and cameraman **Nowroz Ali Rajabi**, Mashal TV reporter **Salim Talash** and cameraman **Ali Salimi** were killed in the second blast when a suicide bomber disguised as a journalist detonated himself among the journalists who had gathered to cover the first attack.

The two suicide attacks hit central Kabul, on 30th April. The first bomb was detonated by an assailant on a motorcycle and the second was detonated 20 minutes later among those who had come to rescue those targeted in the first attack, including a group of journalists.



Policemen help Afghan journalists, victims of a second blast, in Kabul, Afghanistan April 30, 2018. REUTERS/Omar Sobhani

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People carry the body of Syed Shujaat Bukhari, the editor-in-chief of local newspaper "Rising Kashmir", who according to local media was killed by unidentified gunmen outside his office in Srinagar, during his funeral in Kreeri, north of Srinagar, June 15, 2018. REUTERS/Danish Ismail



APRIL 30 – AFGHANISTAN

Ahmad Shah, the 29-year-old BBC reporter was killed in a separate attack in Eastern Khost province, near the border with Pakistan. Ahmad Shah was on his way when armed men on a motorbike opened fire and shot him dead. The journalist was the tenth journalist killed in Afghanistan on the deadliest day, following the twin blast in central Kabul which claimed nine journalists.

MAY 3 – PHILIPPINES

Edmund Sestoso, the broadcaster on dyGB 91.7 FM where he presented Tug-anan, a daily programme, was on his way home after his programme when he was shot multiple times. The gunmen also shot the tires of the pedicab which was going to take Sestoso to hospital. Sestoso was fatally injured and died the following day.

JUNE 11 – BANGLADESH

Shahjahan Bachchu, the acting editor of weekly *Aamder Bikrampur*, had gone to a pharmacy near his village of Kakaldi when at least four motorcycle borne youths wearing hoods exploded a bomb outside the pharmacy, creating panic while Shahjahan was dragged outside the shop. The assailants shot him point blank in the chest and fled. He died on the spot.

JUNE 11 – PHILIPPINES

Dennis Denora, the publisher and columnist of the community paper, *Trends and Times*, was shot by unidentified persons near the wet market of Panabo City in Davao del Norte. Denora's colleagues acknowledged that he was 'fearless' in his commentaries in broadcast and print, which might have led to the brazen attack on him.

JUNE 15 – INDIA

Shujaat Bukhari, the prominent journalist and editor of Rising Kashmir daily, was shot dead outside his newspaper office in Srinagar, India by unidentified gunmen. Bukhari was attacked in his car outside his office and received multiple bullets in his head and abdomen. The attackers fled the scene firing indiscriminately at him, his guard and the driver. He was declared dead at the hospital. His security guard was also killed in the attack while the driver needed treatment.

Bukhari had worked as a journalist for more than 25 years. He established Rising Kashmir daily in March, 2008 after having served The Hindu daily for 15 years. He had survived a couple of murder attempts and was provided police protection since 2010 when he was last attacked. Two protection officers who were assigned to his security, **Abdul Hamid Tunch** and **Mumtaz Awan**, were also killed in the shooting.

JULY 25 – AFGHANISTAN

Mohammad Akhtar, the AFP Kabul driver, was killed in a suicide bombing attack in the Afghan capital while he was on his way to the AFP bureau for his night shift and was changing public transport near the airport when the suicide bomber blew himself up. Media reports said that the attack was aimed at Vice President Abdul Rashid Dostum who had returned from exile and was greeted by his supporters at the capital's international airport. But the former war lord's armoured vehicle had already whisked him away. Akhtar was among 23 people killed in the attack for which the so-called Islamic State claimed responsibility.

JULY 25 – PHILIPPINES

Joey Llana, the blocktimer for dwZR radio station, was leaving his home at 4am on Friday morning, on his way to host his program at 5.30am. According to local reports, he was shot 14 times by the unidentified assailants.

AUGUST 13 – AFGHANISTAN

Mohammad Dawood, the media technician for a local radio and television station in Ghazni province, 148 km southwest of the capital Kabul, was killed in a raid of the Taliban militants who torched the station during their clashes with government's forces.

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An Afghan journalist working for Tolo News lights candles in front of pictures of his colleagues who were killed in a suicide attack Kabul, Afghanistan September 7, 2018. Picture taken September 7, 2018. REUTERS/Omar Sobhani



News photographers light candles to pay tribute to Afghan journalists, who were killed in a blast on Monday in Kabul, in Kolkata, India, May 2, 2018. REUTERS/Rupak De Chowdhuri

AUGUST 23 – PAKISTAN

Muhammad Abid, the 25-year-old local correspondent in Dewan Sahib, was allegedly attacked by two men, Tahir Hussain and Muhammad Imran, on the evening of 22 August who left him seriously injured. According to the Pakistani Federal Union of Journalists (PFUJ), Abid had exposed some alleged wrongdoings by his two assailants. He died at the hospital the following day on 23 August.

SEPTEMBER 21 – AFGHANISTAN

Samim Faramarz, Ramiz Ahmadi, the Tolo News journalist and cameraman respectively, were killed when a car bomb went off just metres away from the stand where Faramarz had just finished a live report in capital Kabul. Both were killed on the scene.

OCTOBER 18 – AFGHANISTAN

Mohammad Salim Angaar, the TV journalist Mohammad for TV Radio Television Afghanistan (RTA), was killed in the shooting at a meeting in the governor's compound in Kandahar city in which the region's police chief Gen Abdul Raziq, the provincial spy agency chief Abdulmomin Hassankhil and a senior Afghan National Army officer were shot dead. According to Afghanistan Journalists Center, Angaar was covering the meeting when gunfire broke out at the end of the meeting as the Resolute Support/Nato commander Gen. Austin Scott Miller and other officials were heading to a helipad at the governor's residence.

OCTOBER 18 – PAKISTAN

Sohail Khan, the journalist was shot and killed, days after filing a story about drug mafia. Sohail had just left the District Police Office (DPO) in Haripur district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa when he was shot at several times. He died at the scene. He was at the DPO filing an application for protection after receiving multiple death threats following his report on drug mafia in Pakistan. According to the IFJ affiliate in the country, the Pakistani Federal Union of Journalists (PFUJ) and local news outlets, members of the drug mafia killed Sohail in retaliation for his reporting.

OCTOBER 30 – INDIA

Achyutananda Sahu, the cameraman for government-run Doordarshan was killed as he was covering the campaign for upcoming state elections in Chhattisgarh. Sahu was part of a media team embedded with local police when the group came under attack by a Maoist militant group. He died in the crossfire while his two Doordarshan colleagues were uninjured in the attack.

In a separate incident, **Chandan Tiwari**, a journalist with Aaj News was last seen on Monday, October 29 in the Chatra district of Jharkhand. Early on Tuesday, Tiwari was found unconscious in the jungle, with injuries from blunt objects. He was rushed to hospital where he was declared deceased. According to investigations Tiwari had lodged two police complaints over threats he had received with police.

DECEMBER 3 – PAKISTAN

Noor ul Hassan, the journalist for Royal News TV, was shot and injured by two gunmen on motorcycle in Peshawar of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. The gunmen opened fire on the car he was travelling in with his cameraman Sabir who was also injured. The victims were taken to hospital where Hassan later died of his injuries.



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Europe

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Targeted,
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After the car bomb attack which killed Maltese journalist Daphne Caruana Galizia in 2017, there was another high profile killing of a journalist in Europe in 2018; the brutal assassination of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi, in Istanbul, Turkey on 2 October.

The number of journalists murdered in Europe has slightly decreased, compared to the previous year (4 cases recorded in 2018, compared to 5 cases in 2017). But the profile of the victims clearly shows that investigative journalists and those who criticise the powerful are the prime target of killers.

Khashoggi, a US-based Saudi national who wrote for the Washington Post and was a prominent critic of the Saudi government, was killed in the Saudi consulate in Istanbul on 2 October, 2018. After denying Khashoggi's killing, Saudi prosecutors claimed he was murdered in a "rogue" operation by agents sent to persuade him to return to the kingdom. In mid-November, Turkey said it had shared audio recordings of the killing with Saudi Arabia, US, UK, Germany and France. According to US media reports, the CIA - whose boss Gina Haspell has heard the tapes - concluded that Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman was behind the killing.

Like on other continents, impunity for crime targeting media professionals is growing in Europe. To date, the European Federation of Journalists (EFJ) has recorded 17 individual cases of impunity for the murders of journalists.

Six of those murders took place in the Russian Federation, five in Ukraine, two in Turkey, two in Azerbaijan, one in Montenegro, and one in Serbia. In addition, the EFJ has identified 14 other cases of killings, kidnappings and disappearances of Serbian and Albanian journalists between 1988 and 2005 that remain unresolved and which require renewed and independent investigations by the relevant state authorities.

Flowers and candles are seen in the Rue des Orfevres street in tribute to the victims of the deadly shooting in Strasbourg, France, December 13, 2018. REUTERS/Vincent Kessler



The EFJ is especially alarmed by the lack of progress in bringing to justice the masterminds of recent murders and suspected murderers of journalists in Europe. They include the killings of Jamal Khashoggi in Turkey, Ján Kuciak and his fiancée Martina Kušnírová in Slovakia killed in 2018, Daphne Caruana Galizia in Malta murdered in 2017 and Pavel Sheremet in Ukraine who died a car bomb attack in 2016.

Furthermore, the EFJ is concerned over the credibility of the investigations into two other deadly incidents which occurred in 2018; the killing of Victoria Marinova in Bulgaria and the death of Russian journalist Maksim Borodin in Russia, which police ruled it was a suicide.

Terrorism also continues to claim lives in the profession in Europe. On 13 December, Antonio Megalizzi, an Italian journalist who had been seriously hurt in the head during the gun attack on the Christmas market in Strasbourg (France), died after falling into a coma for a few days. 28-year-old Megalizzi was in Strasbourg as a voluntary journalist for Europhonica, a shared radio show aiming to give voice to independent students and university media interested in Europe.

The EFJ and the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) are closely monitoring the progress of the investigations related to these killings, through the Council of Europe online Platform for the Protection of Journalism and the Safety of Journalists. Since 2015, the Platform has recorded 24 murders of journalists in Europe.

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Europe

Narrative

Targeted, bomb attacks and cross fire killings



REUTERS
Radovan Stoklasa

FEBRUARY 26 – SLOVAKIA

Jan Kuciak, the body of the 27-year-old Slovakian reporter working for “Aktuality.sk” news portal was found alongside that of his partner Martina Kusnirova at their home in Velka Maca, some 65 kilometres from the capital Bratislava. Slovakian police launched a murder probe on Monday 26 February 2018 and Police Commissioner Tibor Gaspard told reporters that the murder was “most likely related to the investigative work of the journalists.”

Kuciak’s reporting focused mainly on allegations of tax evasion and fraud involving high-ranking officials and tycoons. According to media reports, Kuciak’s reporting focused mainly of tax evasion and fraud involving high-ranking officials and tycoons. The last story he published was about Marian Kocner, a real estate businessman known for insulting and threatening journalists. He allegedly threatened to expose “any dirt” he could find on Kuciak or his family, according to an article by Kuciak’s editor-in-chief Peter Bardy published in September 2017.



OCTOBER 2 – TURKEY

Jamal Kashoggi, the Saudi columnist for the *Washington Post* disappeared after he went to the consulate of Saudi Arabia in Istanbul, Turkey to arrange paperwork for his marriage. After a fortnight and following reports that he had been killed inside, Saudi authorities confirmed the news of his killing, blaming the crime on rogue agents who allegedly acted without the approval or knowledge of the rulers of the oil-rich kingdom.

Demonstrators attend a protest rally in reaction to the murder of Slovak investigative reporter Jan Kuciak and his fiancée Martina Kusnirova, in Bratislava, Slovakia, March 16, 2018. REUTERS/David W. Cerny



The picture of killed Bulgarian journalist Viktoria Marinova and a condolence book are seen before her funeral service in Holy Trinity Cathedral in Ruse, Bulgaria, October 12, 2018. REUTERS/Stoyan Nenov



OCTOBER 8 – BULGARIA

Victoria Marinova, the 30-year-old Bulgarian journalist working for regional TV channel TVN was found dead in a park in the city of Ruse, located in the north of the country. According to local media reports, her body was found in an area of difficult access, near the Danube river bank with signs of rape, beating and then strangulation. She was beaten with such violence that her face was unrecognizable and she could not be identified immediately, reports added.

Journalists in Bulgaria voiced concern that Marinova might have been targeted on account of her TV appearances. They pointed out that on 30 September 2018 she had presented an investigative programme called 'Detector' on the private regional TV channel TVN, which featured interviews by another colleague with two well-known Bulgarian and Romanian journalists about their investigation into the alleged misappropriation of EU funds by politicians and businessmen. The owner of the investigative journalism website Bivol.bg, Asen Yordanov, was quoted by media as saying that the journalists who appeared on the TV programme were in danger because of their investigation into the issue, which had for some time been the focus of fierce controversy.

DECEMBER 14 – FRANCE

Antonio Megalizzi, the 28-year-old journalist for Süd Tirol station, a community radio in Italy was among the victims of the terrorist attack in Strasbourg which killed at least five people. He died of injuries he had sustained in the shooting in the French city, where he was working on a shared radio show of students' community radios from all over Europe broadcasting from the European Parliament in Strasbourg since 2015.

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Middle East and Arab World

Regional overview

20 Targeted,
bomb attacks
and cross
fire killings

With most countries in the region categorized as countries in transition, including six going through active armed conflicts and few others in the grip of political impasse or civil strife, violence against journalists, including physical violence remains the single biggest threat facing the journalist community in the region.

Although the number of journalists and media staff killed in the region in 2018 dropped to 20, down from 25 last year, the perception among the journalists' community in the region is that the situation got worst this year. This can be explained by the geographical spread of the cases of targeted killings of journalists to include Palestine (Israeli army), Syria, Yemen, Libya and Saudi Arabia/Turkey.

The biggest welcome change is the sharp fall in the number of journalists' killings in Iraq with just one killing recorded during the year, the lowest since the US led invasion of the country in 2003. According to the records of the Iraqi Journalists Syndicate, over 480 journalists and media workers lost their lives during the last 15 years. One casualty (one is too much!) sound like a sea change from the dark years when Iraq was a killing field for journalists in 2006 (69 killed) and 2007 (65 killed) and Iraqi casualties used to account for over a third of all journalists and media staff killed globally. However, it should not be assumed that Iraqi journalists are out of danger. With the fragile peace, persisting political impasse threatening to plunge the country into another cycle of violence on the one hand and the emergence of new sources of threats on the other, the Iraqi journalists and their unions remain on guard.

During 2018, the IFJ worked with journalists' unions to protect their members and empower them in the face of violence through providing safety training, campaigning and negotiating collective agreements. Journalists in Iraq, Palestine, Tunisia and Yemen had the chance to

receive professional safety training; including training a new group of safety trainers in Yemen. The IFJ supported journalists' unions in Palestine and Yemen in their demands to investigate the killings and attacks against journalists, including through lobbying at the international level. In Tunisia and Palestine, the unions successfully negotiated landmark collective safety agreements with the national broadcasters recognising the employers' duty of care, including providing relevant training, equipment and insurance.

During 2019, the IFJ will continue its support for the professional safety training programmes across the region, the support to more unions in negotiating collective safety agreements in more countries and across the whole media sector. It will also support unions in fighting impunity for killings of journalists, including through establishing national mechanisms for the protection of journalists and media workers.

“The perception among the journalists’ community in the region is that the situation got worst this year.”

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Middle East and Arab World Narrative

Targeted, bomb attacks and cross fire killings

JANUARY 16 – IRAQ

Saad Hadi Al-Mashrafawi, the photojournalist for Al-Shabab news agency who also contributed to Souq Al-Shuyoukh website, was killed in a car explosion in the Matibijah area. According to the Iraqi Journalists Syndicate (OJS), an IFJ affiliate, **Al-Mashrafawi** was injured while covering fighting between the Iraqi security forces and militants of the so-called Islamic State (IS) in an area between the governorates of Salahiddin and Diyala. He was severely injured and admitted at the Al-Nasiriya hospital where he died of his wounds.



JANUARY 22 – YEMEN

Mohammed Al-Qadasi, the photojournalist for Balqees TV, died when the Houthis rebels launched a mortar attack on a passing out ceremony of new security forces and a military parade in Al-Khayami, which he was covering.

FEBRUARY 20 – SYRIA

Abdulahman Al-Yassin, the reporter for Hamouriye Media Center, died of injuries sustained in the shelling by the Syria regime of Eastern Al-Ghouta in rural Damascus where he was covering the bombing.

MARCH 21 – SYRIA

Obaida Abu Omar, the reporter for SMART, who also contributed to Damaski and other media agencies, was killed as a result of a Russian airstrike on Eastern Al-Ghouta in rural Damascus while covering the events there.

MARCH 22 – SYRIA

Bashar Al-Attar, the photojournalist, who worked for the Arbin Media Office, was fatally injured while covering air strikes in the town of Arbin, eastern Ghouta on 12 March, according to a statement of UNESCO Director General Audrey Azoulay. Al-Attar died two days later on 14 March from his injuries, the UNESCO statement added.

APRIL 16 – YEMEN

Mohammed Naser Al-Washalin, producer at Yemen TV and the station's set decorator **Abdullah Al-Najjar** were both killed in an airstrike by the Saudi Coalition in Bajil area of Al-Hudaydah governorate (west Yemen) while filming a drama TV series.

APRIL 16 – PALESTINE

Yasir Murtaja, the 31-year-old photojournalist, who was working for the Gaza-based news agency Ain Media, died of wounds sustained from a gunshot by an Israeli sniper while covering the March of Return rally in the east of Gaza.

APRIL 19 – YEMEN

Abdullah Al Qadry, the photographer and camera operator working for Belquees TV and AFP news agency was killed, after a rocket fired by the Houthi group set his vehicle on fire. During the incident, journalists Waleed Al-Ga'ouir and Ziyab Al-Shater, who were also in the car, were injured, the Yemeni Journalists' Syndicate added.

APRIL 26 – PALESTINE

Ahmad Abu Hussein, the 24-year-old photojournalist for the Sawt Al Shaab Radio, who was shot on 13 April by Israeli snipers while covering mass protests near Jabalia in northern Gaza, succumbed to his wounds. Hussein was the second journalist killed by Israeli forces in one month while covering the "March of Return" protests following the killing of fellow journalist Yasser Murtaja earlier in the same month. He was shot in the stomach, according to media reports quoting the Health Ministry in Gaza.

MAY 17 – SYRIA

Ibrahim Al-Manjar, the freelance journalist who contributed to various media organisations, including Sham News Network, Anadolu Agency and Reuters was deliberately shot dead outside his home in rural Daraa by unknown armed men.

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JUNE 14 – YEMEN

Anwar Al-Rakan, the journalist died just two days after his release from a Houthi prison and his family said that Al-Rakan died due to the torture that he claimed he had faced, according to his statements shortly before his death and to the report by the physician who examined him after he was freed. Al-Rakan had been detained in Al-Saleh city detention facility located in Taiz, Yemen for unknown reasons.



JULY 25 – SYRIA

Mustafa Salama, the journalist who worked for Sama TV, a pro-Syrian regime station, was killed while covering fighting between government forces and rebels in the southern province of Quneitra. According to media reports, Salama died from injuries he had sustained in the shelling of the Masshara area.



AUGUST 10 – SYRIA

Ahmad Mahmoud Aziza, the reporter and photographer for Aleppo News Network, was killed while covering the Russian airstrike on Urum Al-Kubra town of in the west of Aleppo.

SEPTEMBER 17 – YEMEN

Technician **Omar Azzi** and security guards **Jamai Musayab** and **Obeif Jamai**, all working for the Yemeni al-Maraweah radio station, were killed in the bombing of the station's premises by warplanes from the Saudi-led military coalition, which destroyed the transmission tower and a warehouse.

NOVEMBER 23 – SYRIA

Raed Fares and **Hamoud Jneed**, respectively presenter and photographer at Radio Fresh founded by Fares, were gunned down by unidentified attackers as they left the station, media reports said.

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INTERNATIONAL **safety** **FUND**

When a journalist is helped to overcome intimidation and violence, it strikes a blow for press freedom and our rights which are of benefit to the whole community.

2018 was another year in which assistance from the International Safety Fund was in great demand to help journalists and media staff as well as their family members from the four corners of the globe to meet multiple needs. The IFJ International Safety Fund paid out a total of more than **92.152, 24 Euros** in relief to help them relocate to safety, receive medical treatment or pay for secure accommodation.

Fortunately, the year also continued support from IFJ affiliates to the Safety Fund which raised **7375 Euro** in donations. These generous contributions enable the Fund to continue its unique model of solidarity among journalists, since its inception in 1992, with the Fund paying over **three million euros** in humanitarian and emergency assistance and making the Safety Fund a vital lifeline for journalists.

The IFJ Safety Fund is made up of money raised by individual journalists and IFJ unions. It has taken up cases all over the world and intervened to provide special support for the media victims of natural disasters and accidents.

The IFJ International Safety Fund covers the following areas of assistance:

The IFJ Safety Fund is designed primarily to provide assistance for journalists and media staff who are injured in the line of duty, often in the so-called "hot-spots" of the world and in cases where the media employing the journalist/media staffer are unable to cover such costs. This assistance can be in the form of travel, medical or subsistence costs.

The Safety Fund can also be used on a case by-case limited basis to assist in legal fees for journalists/media staff that again cannot find sufficient support from their employer.

Finally, the Safety Fund can provide immediate assistance for the families of journalists and media staff whose 'bread-winner' has been killed and who have no means to sustain themselves.

Whenever the IFJ gives assistance there is a monitoring and reporting process to ensure that the money goes to where it is intended. In 2010 the IFJ revised the Safety Fund rules. These are available on request from the IFJ secretariat.

Over the years the IFJ Safety Fund has been used to produce publications as part of the IFJ Safety Programme. These have included the IFJ Safety Fund brochures produced in English, French Japanese and Spanish and the IFJ Safety Manual, Live News for journalists travelling to conflict areas.

Live News has been produced in Albanian, Arabic, Bulgarian, Chinese, English, French, Italian, Japanese, Macedonian, Romanian, Russian, Serbian and Spanish. These publications provide basic guidelines on the dangers which may occur, and what measures journalists can take to minimise risks. They are distributed to journalists, free of charge.

When a journalist is attacked, everyone in journalism is affected. When a journalist is helped to overcome intimidation and violence, it strikes a blow for press freedom and our rights which are of benefit to the whole community.

The Safety Fund is not just a practical source of aid and comfort; it is also a symbol of international goodwill that encourages journalists to carry on even in times of struggle and distress.

The type of relief provided by the IFJ Safety Fund, the speed with which it can be used, and the flexibility built into the system means that it is a unique source of solidarity for journalists.

The IFJ does not try to duplicate work that is being done by others. We are in regular contact with other organisations working in the field of journalists' safety and freedom of expression. These include the Committee to Protect Journalists, the International Press Institute, Reporters Without Borders, the Canadian Journalists for Free Expression, the Writers in Prison Committee, the Rory Peck Trust and the World Association of Newspapers.

Information is exchanged, and, where necessary, an individual may receive coordinated assistance from more than one source.

Nonetheless, without the IFJ Fund, many would have gone unaided. Some may have suffered unnecessarily, others might have died.

The IFJ Safety Fund can only continue to assist journalists if its future is secured. In order to go out, money must come in. But, most importantly, it is a Fund that must provide help to those who need it most. Since the launch of the IFJ safety dedicated website, it is now possible to make secure online donations.

***“You are not alone
– the IFJ Safety fund is here to help.”***

Please visit <http://ifj-safety.org/en> and donate to ensure that we get the message out to those who have suffered and face a bleak future: you are not alone – the IFJ Safety fund is here to help.

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Solidarity in Action

AFRICA

ALGERIA:

The IFJ International Safety Fund awarded financial relief to a journalist who had fled into exile for living expenses.

ANGOLA:

Another journalist also forced into exile received financial assistance for living expenses.

BURUNDI:

The Safety Fund gave financial assistance to a journalist who had fled into exile and needed help for living expenses. The widow of another journalist who was killed received assistance with her settlement in exile.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO:

The Safety Fund provided financial assistance to an exiled Congolese journalist for living expenses. Another journalist who settled into exile was granted humanitarian assistance for living expenses.

ETHIOPIA:

An exiled journalist who fled persecution received assistance for living expenses in the country of asylum.

RWANDA:

The Safety Fund provided financial assistance to two journalists seeking protection in exile for living expenses.

SENEGAL:

A Senegalese journalist received assistance for legal representation in his unfair dismissal case from the IFJ Safety Fund.

SOMALIA:

A Somali TV journalist who had been abducted and suffered back injury received assistance. Another journalist seeking political asylum received help with living expenses while another colleague and fellow Somali was also provided assistance for urgent medical operation.

SOUTH SUDAN:

The Safety Fund provided assistance to two journalists seeking political asylum with their families for living expenses.

SUDAN:

Another journalist who escaped threats of arrest received assistance for living expenses in exile.

AMERICAS

GUATEMALA:

The Safety Fund contributed to the cost for monitoring a trial of a case involving people charged with torture and harassment of a journalist.

VENEZUELA:

The Safety Fund provided assistance for medical treatment to a journalist, amid mayhem and unrest in the country. Another journalist in exile also received financial relief for accommodation and living expenses.

ASIA PACIFIC

CAMBODIA:

The IFJ Safety Fund provided financial for family support to a journalist who fled into exile and separated from his family who needed assistance.

EUROPE

FRANCE:

Another journalist was given financial help with medical care for emergency treatment for serious injuries suffered at work.

TURKEY:

The Safety Fund provided financial assistance to fifteen journalists, either living in Turkey or exiled abroad, towards of legal costs and family support amid the on-going the major crackdown on independent journalists following the failed attempt coup against President Erdogan.

UNITED KINGDOM:

The Safety Fund contributed to legal costs of a journalist who was seeking a legal review of an accreditation ban.

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MIDDLE EAST

IRAN:

The Safety Fund gave financial assistance for living expenses to a journalist who fled with the family into exile.

IRAQ:

A journalist from the Kurdistan region of Iraq who fled into exile received assistance for living expenses while another from the same region of Iraq was provided with financial family support. The Fund also helped another journalist with legal costs in the procedure to get residence in the country of refuge.

PALESTINE:

The IFJ Safety Fund provided financial assistance for living expenses to a journalist living in exile.

SYRIA:

The IFJ Safety Fund provided humanitarian assistance to three journalists to help with living expenses and medical treatment.

YEMEN:

The Safety Fund provided assistance to eleven journalists, living both in the country and in exile to help meet needs covering living expenses, family support travel costs and accommodation after losing homes to fighting in the country.

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International Code of Practice for the Safe Conduct of Journalism

With these considerations in mind, the IFJ calls on journalists groups, media organisations and all relevant public authorities to respect the following International Code of Practice for the Safe Conduct of Journalism:

- 1.** Journalists and other media staff shall be properly equipped for all assignments including the provision of first-aid materials, communication tools, adequate transport facilities and, where necessary, protective clothing;
- 2.** Media organisations and, where appropriate, state authorities shall provide risk awareness training for those journalists and media workers who are likely to be involved in assignments where dangerous conditions prevail or may be reasonably expected;
- 3.** Public authorities shall inform their personnel of the need to respect the rights of journalists and shall instruct them to respect the physical integrity of journalists and media staff while at work;
- 4.** Media organisations shall provide social protection for all staff engaged in journalistic activity outside the normal place of work, including life insurance;
- 5.** Media organisations shall provide, free of charge, medical treatment and health care, including costs of recuperation and convalescence, for journalists and media workers who are the victims of injury or illness as a result of their work outside the normal place of work;
- 6.** Media organisations shall protect freelance or part-time employees. They must receive, on an equal basis, the same social protection and access to training and equipment as that made available to fully employed staff.

The dangers posed to journalists and media staff working in dangerous situations and conflict zones are the subject of extensive record. The IFJ has recorded the deaths of more than 1000 journalists and media staff over the past ten years.

“People Must Keep Their Hands Off Media.”

Many journalists are killed, injured or harassed in war zones, either targeted by one side or another or caught in the crossfire of violence. Others are the victims of premeditated assault and intimidation either by criminals, terrorists or by agencies of the state – the police, the military or the security forces – acting secretly and illegally.

Very often there is little that journalists or media organisations can do to avoid casualties. There will, inevitably, be accidents, no matter how much care is taken to provide protection and there is little one can do when those targeting media use ruthless and brutal methods to crush journalistic inquiry.

However, there are steps that journalists and media organisations should take to minimise the risks to staff. In particular, the following are vital considerations in providing protection:

- Adequate preparation, training and social protection. It is essential that journalists and media staff be in a state of readiness when difficulties arise. There should be a framework for providing individuals with health care and social protection.
- Media professionals must be informed and inform themselves about the political, physical, and social terrain in which they are working. They must not contribute to the uncertainty and insecurity of their conditions through ignorance or reckless behaviour.
- Media organisations must guard against risk-taking for competitive advantage, and should promote co-operation among journalists whenever conditions exist which are potentially hazardous.
- Governments must remove obstacles to journalism. They must not restrict unnecessarily the freedom of movement of journalists or compromise the right of news media to gather, produce and disseminate information in secure and safe conditions.
- People Must Keep Their Hands Off Media. Everyone should respect the physical integrity of journalists and media staff at work. Physical interference with filming or other journalistic work must be prohibited.

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It's the thought that counts

When people think of the IFJ Safety Fund, they remember to raise money for it. Hats only go round at conference where someone thought of the Fund. People only dig in their pockets because they know it exists. Someone has to start the ball rolling. Will you start it next time? Keep the IFJ Safety Fund in mind whenever union members get together.

HOW TO GIVE

There are three ways to make a donation:

- 1.** Please donate to the Safety Fund on the IFJ Safety website <http://ifj-safety.org/en>
- 2.** Please send donations to the IFJ member union in your country; the money will be forwarded in a lump sum and cut the administration costs of the Fund. If there is no IFJ member,
- 3.** Please send your donation to:

The Safety Fund

a/c BE64 2100 7857 0052
SWIFT CODE: GEBABEBB
BNP PARIBAS FORTIS BANK
Rond Point Schuman 10, 1040 Brussels

The Safety Fund for Media Translators
and Interpreters (SFMI)

a/c BE90 3630 4689 8732
SWIFT CODE: BBRU-BE-BB
ING Bank
Rond Point Schuman 8, 1040 Brussels

For more information, please contact:

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The IFJ is the world's largest organisation of journalists with members in more than 140 countries. Today the IFJ spans the world with a range of programmes and solidarity activities that help to strengthen journalists' trade unions. IFJ Offices around the world highlight the need for safety of journalists. The Federation had in the past offices in Afghanistan, Algeria, Colombia, the Philippines and Sri Lanka to provide local support for journalists most in need.



Find out more and about what you can do to help:

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