

UN Agencies mark International Day to End Impunity for Crimes Against Journalists 2 November 2022

[The International Day to End Impunity for Crimes Against Journalists](#) is observed on 2 November each year. This year marks 10 years of the [UN's Global Plan of Action](#) on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity which guides the UN's work on journalists' safety everywhere, including in Palestine.

While the UN's monitoring during this past decade has recorded increased awareness of the impact of attacks against freedom of expression, journalists around the world face many significant threats. Space for journalists in Palestine, including the right to freedom of expression, association and assembly is increasingly restricted by all duty-bearers. Social media is monitored, and journalists and activists are often harassed, arrested, detained and, in some cases, subjected to ill-treatment. Oftentimes, allegations of violations against journalists are not investigated by any of the Israeli, Palestinian nor de facto authorities. Substantial barriers to access to justice exist in all contexts.

New forms of controlling the media, and the increasingly central role of online platforms, present additional challenges for freedom of expression, the right to privacy and the safety of journalists, all of which are being addressed by the UN in its work.

These conditions can stifle journalists' work, ultimately impacting the quality of information we all receive and use to make critical decisions in our professional and personal lives.

The Palestinian Centre for Development and Media Freedoms (MADA) reported [247 violations](#) against journalists by Israeli and Palestinian authorities in the first half of 2022, including harassment (online and offline), confiscation of equipment, detention, attacks and killings. There is little evidence these crimes are investigated and prosecuted, contributing to a climate of fear amongst journalists who know they may face severe repercussions for telling the truth.

Ms. Noha Bawazir, Head of Office and UNESCO Representative to Palestine, said: "Progress has been made in Palestine in recent years on building foundations to enhance journalist safety. As the UN agency with a specific mandate to protect press freedom and freedom of expression, UNESCO has been working with partners to establish the Journalist Safety Network and the National Mechanism for Monitoring the Safety of Journalists. However, those who commit crimes against journalists must be held accountable if a truly safer environment for journalists is to be created."

Ms. Jane Anttila, Acting Head of the UN Human Rights Office in the occupied Palestinian territory, said: "The UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights calls on Israeli authorities to open a criminal investigation into the killing of journalist Shireen Abu Akleh's and into all other killings and serious injuries by Israeli forces of Palestinians in the occupied Palestinian territory."

Despite increased coordination between UN agencies, journalists, media outlets, governments, and civil society in protecting media workers, much work remains to be done to truly create a safe environment for journalists and media workers and ensure access to information for all.