

CHANGING DYNAMICS OF INTERNATIONAL LAW IN CONTEMPORARY WORLD WITH RESPECT TO PROTECTION OF JOURNALISTS

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Abstract

A society that values open debate of facts and the pursuit of truth, rather than one built on rumors, prejudice, and the arbitrary exercise of power, is largely fostered by the work of journalists. Due to their central role, journalists require additional protection as they often find themselves in the line of fire. Globally, journalists confront numerous challenges that jeopardize their safety, freedom, and ability to report impartially. Key challenges encompass safety and physical violence, censorship and suppression, legal threats and judicial harassment, digital threats and surveillance, economic pressures, and psychological impacts, among others. The primary catalyst for persistent attacks on journalists is often attributed to impunity, a consequence of the politicization of journalistic operations. Collectively, these challenges undermine press freedom, impede the public's right to information, and hinder the role of journalism as a societal watchdog. The contemporary global landscape has witnessed a substantial transformation in the dynamics of international law, particularly concerning the protection of journalists. This paper explores the evolving role of international legal frameworks and mechanisms designed to ensure the protection of journalists in the face of the complex challenges they encounter in the modern world.

Key Words: Journalists, Press freedom, Impunity, International law, Challenges

I. Context

The heightened influence of information in the modern era has turned news and journalism into a fiercely competitive domain. Beyond coping with external pressures and censorship, journalists are now more frequently subjected to personal attacks. Journalists globally, along with their associates, frequently encounter physical threats, attempted or real assaults, abductions, disappearances, and, tragically, even fatalities.¹ The freedom of the media is compromised when deliberate attacks occur, and accountability is not enforced against those who harm journalists. The act of murdering a journalist represents the ultimate manifestation of censorship. Beyond silencing the individual journalist, such acts instill fear in other journalists and the public, resulting in widespread self-censorship known as the "chilling effect." Consequently, the open exchange of ideas and information is hindered, replaced by an ominous, silent warning of potential harm.

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¹ See CPJ, available at <http://www.cpj.org>; see also UNESCO, Safety of Journalists, available at:

<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/freedom-of-expression/safety-of-journalists/>; UNESCO, Press Freedom: Safety of Journalists and Impunity (2007), available at <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0015/001567/156773e.pdf>.

The Maguindanao Province in the Philippines witnessed one of the most severe incidents of journalist casualties on November 23, 2009. A tragic total of thirty-two journalists lost their lives in this incident, and to date, no one has been held responsible for these atrocities². In 2012, approximately 70 journalists lost their lives, marking it as one of the deadliest years for journalist killings ever recorded. The focus of this paper is to explore ways to enhance the protection of journalists and their associates by implementing legal and other preventive measures. The freedom of expression, coupled with the right to receive information, serves as "meta rights" that underpin the realization of numerous other rights.³ Furthermore, these rights serve as prerequisites for individuals and society to make well-informed decisions, forming the bedrock of democracy, good governance, and accountability. In a society where journalists face threats and powerful actions go unchecked, decisions are prone to being influenced by ignorance, superstition, and gossip. The role of journalists is also crucial in ensuring accountability and deterring human rights violations. The tragic events in the final days of the civil war in Sri Lanka in 2009 exemplify this, as the government expelled journalists from the entire Northeastern part of the country before allegedly causing the death of up to 40,000 people.⁴ Hence, when journalists are killed or attacked due to their work, it represents not only a personal tragedy but also a threat to society as a whole.

II. Protection of Journalists under International Law

There is no specific international agreement solely dedicated to safeguarding journalists from violent assaults. Rather, this role is collectively addressed by various components of the international system. Crucially, both Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights explicitly articulate the right to life as a fundamental principle of customary international law. This right is deemed inviolable even in times of emergency, such as during war, and may not be waived.⁵ Hence, the right to life is widely acknowledged as the "supreme right," and the deliberate act of taking a life is similarly considered the "supreme crime." A broader framework of rights is also pertinent to reinforcing the physical safety of journalists in the pursuit of their profession. These include the rights to physical integrity, freedom from torture or arbitrary detention, and the right not to be subjected to enforced disappearance, in addition to the rights to freedom of expression and information.⁶ A comprehensive plan should acknowledge that breaches of these rights often serve as early indicators that journalists' lives could be at risk. International human rights law mandates nations to uphold and safeguard the lives of all individuals within their jurisdiction, protecting them from attacks and threats and providing redress when such protection is lacking. This obligation

² See Press Release, Bob Dietz, CPJ Asia Program Coordinator, Third Witness to Maguindanao Massacre Killed, available at <http://cpj.org/blog/2012/06/third-witness-to-maguindanao-massacre-killed.php>

³ The notion of meta-rights was discussed in Amartya Sen, The Right not to be Hungry, in *The Right to Food* 70–71 (Philip Alston & Katarina Tomaševski eds., 1984).

⁴ United Nations, Report of the Secretary-General's Panel of Experts on Accountability in Sri Lanka (2011), available at http://www.un.org/News/dh/infocus/Sri_Lanka/POE_Report_Full.pdf

⁵ Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted 10 Dec. 1948, G.A. Res. 217A (III), Art. 3, U.N. Doc. A/RES/3/217A

⁶ ICCPR, Arts. 7, 9, 19; International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, adopted 20 Dec. 2006, G.A. Res. 61/177, U.N. GAOR, 61st Sess., U.N. Doc. A/Res/61/177 (2007)

extends globally and regionally. It not only demands that states and their agents abstain from arbitrary killings but also requires them to shield individuals from such threats posed by non-state actors.⁷

As previously noted, impunity stands out as a major factor contributing to the ongoing killing of journalists. Accountability for violations of the right to life constitutes a crucial aspect of addressing impunity. A fundamental element of the state's duty of care involves not only preventing threats but also thoroughly investigating them and subsequently taking appropriate action to hold accountable those responsible, ensuring justice for the victims of such threats. The Principles on the Effective Prevention and Investigation of Extra-legal, Arbitrary and Summary Executions emphasize that investigations into instances of extrajudicial executions should be "thorough, prompt, and impartial," conducted by independent bodies.⁸ Additionally, it is imperative for prosecutors to act promptly, impartially, and independently. States are obligated to grant prosecutors the necessary freedom and independence to execute their responsibilities, which may include ensuring their personal protection when required. Even if the commission of a criminal act is not conclusively proven, victims should still have access to civil remedies. The European Court of Human Rights has established that an investigation should be instigated by the state without external influence, possess independence, be effective, transparent to a reasonable extent for public scrutiny, conducted promptly, and involve the participation of the next of kin or family.⁹ As per the Court, "any deficiency in the investigation that hampers its capacity to identify the perpetrator or perpetrators will risk violating this standard."¹⁰ A corresponding body of legal precedents has been established by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights.¹¹ In essence, impunity can also amount to a violation of the right to life. The available mechanisms that can be invoked to safeguard these rights and raise the issue of journalists' well-being to a more prominent level of consideration will now be explored.

III. United Nations

There are a number of platforms available in the UN that have been used to deal with the issue of the safety of journalists, and that provide entry points for further action. The Secretary-General has condemned the killing of journalists on various occasions, as has the Human Rights Council in its resolutions, including in a comprehensive resolution on 27 September 2012.¹² The targeting of journalists in a number of countries has been addressed under the universal periodic review mechanism. The High Commissioner for Human Rights has also condemned attacks against journalists in specific countries. Different Special Procedures appointed by the Human Rights Council have dealt with the same issue.¹³ Special Procedures can move quickly, are mandated to apply to all nations (and not only those that have ratified specific human rights treaties), and do not call for the use of all available domestic remedies. As a means of encouraging accountability, they frequently send letters of allegation to jurisdictions where journalists have been killed. They also possess the authority to submit urgent pleas to nations

⁷ See General Comment No. 31 [80], The Nature of the General Legal Obligation Imposed on States Parties to the Covenant, CCPR HRC Res. 80/31, at 8, U.N. Doc. CCPR/C/21/Rev.1/Add.13 (2004).

⁸ U.N. ESCOR Res. 1989/65

⁹ See *Tanrikulu v. Turkey*, 1999-IV Eur. Ct. H.R. 457; *Osman v. United Kingdom*, 1998-VIII, No. 95 Eur. Ct. H.R 3124; *Ergi v. Turkey*, 1999-IV Eur. Ct. H.R.; *Nachova v. Bulgaria*, 2005-VII, Eur. Ct. H.R 1

¹⁰ *Ramsahai v. Netherlands* [GC], Eur. Ct. Hum. Rts., 324 (2007).

¹¹ *Mack Chang v. Guatemala*, Inter-Am. Ct. H.R. (Ser. C) No. 101 (25 Nov. 2003)

¹² H.R.C. Res. 21/3, at 1–3, U.N. Doc. A/HRC/21/L.6 (2012).

¹³ See Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of the Right to Freedom of Opinion and Expression, U.N. GAOR, 20th Sess., U.N. Doc. A/HRC/20/17/Add.1 (2012) (by Frank La Rue)

where journalists and others are threatened, pleading with such nations to defend the person in question. This ability is particularly significant in the context of prevention. It is a crucial access point that is not currently being used. In an important consideration of the applicable principles, the Human Rights Council adopted, without a vote, a resolution on the Safety of Journalists on 21 September 2012.

The Human Rights Committee has explicitly addressed the safety of journalists in General Comment No. 34 (2011) on the freedoms of opinion and expression. In *Afuson Njaru v. Cameroon*, the Committee found that the state had violated Article 9 of the ICCPR (right to security of the person) by failing to take measures against attacks on journalists.¹⁴ In recent years the Human Rights Committee, in its concluding observations, has expressed concern about intimidation, harassment, and threats against journalists. The Committee against Torture has also expressed similar concerns. It should be noted, from the perspective of prevention, that the Human Rights Committee has the power to inform a state party that interim measures are “desirable to avoid irreparable damage” with respect to a pending complaint.¹⁵ This can, in appropriate cases, be used as a tool for prevention with respect to journalists. Other treaty bodies with comparable competences in this context are the Committee against Torture, the Committee on Enforced Disappearances, and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.¹⁶ The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has taken a lead role in the UN system in regards to freedom of expression, including the safety of journalists. For example, in 1997 UNESCO adopted Resolution 29 on the condemnation of violence against journalists.¹⁷ On a regular basis, UNESCO publicly condemns the killing of journalists and exercises “quiet diplomacy;” it does so also with respect to threats. The Belgrade Declaration on Support to Media in Violent Conflict and Countries in Transition and the Medellín Declaration on Securing the Safety of Journalists and Combating Impunity inform the direction followed by UNESCO.¹⁸

UNESCO is now working on the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity, a significant interagency framework. This will incorporate pilot programmes in numerous nations. At its twenty-sixth session, in 2008, the Intergovernmental Council of the International Programme for the Development of Communication of UNESCO adopted its first Decision on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity, in which member states were urged “to inform the Director General of UNESCO, on a voluntary basis, of the actions taken to prevent the impunity of the perpetrators and to notify him of the status of the judicial inquiries conducted on each of the killings condemned by UNESCO.”¹⁹ However, it doesn't seem like the civil society is involved in this process to a significant extent. Non-governmental organizations could be able to create "shadow

¹⁴ Views of the Human Rights Commission Under Art. 5, 4, of the Optional Protocol to the Int'l Covenant on Civil and Political Rights., Communication No. 1353/2005: Cameroon. 05/14/2007, 12–30 Mar. 2007, U.N. GAOR, Hum. Rts. Comm., 89th Sess., 6.3, U.N. Doc. CCPR/C/89/D/1353/2005 (2007).

¹⁵ Rules of procedure of the Human Rights Committee, Rule 92, U.N. Doc. CCPR/C/3/ Rev.3 (1994).

¹⁶ Convention Against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, Rules of Procedure No. 114, Comm. Against Torture, U.N. Doc. CAT/C/3/ Rev.5 (2011); International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, adopted 20 Dec. 2006, G.A. Res. 61/177, U.N. GAOR, 61st Sess., Art. 30(3), 31(4), U.N. Doc. A/Res/61.177 (2007)

¹⁷ Resolution 29 “Condemnation of Violence Against Journalists,” UNESCO (Nov. 1997), available at http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/FIELD/Brussels/pdf/ipdc_resolution_29.pdf.

¹⁸ Medellín Declaration (2007), available at <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communicationandinformation/flagship-project-activities/world-press-freedom-day/previous-celebrations/worldpressfreedomday2009000/medellin-declaration/>.

¹⁹ UNESCO, Report by the Director-General to the Intergovernmental Council of the International Programme for the Development of Communication, CI-10/CONF.202/4/Bis 2, 30 (2010), available at <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001874/187491e.pdf>.

reports" that critique the assertions that nations make regarding things like accountability. While journalists do not yet have their own sectoral convention at the International Labour Organization acknowledging the hazardous conditions in which they operate, this may be an option in the future. The global and the regional systems have also joined forces to address the issue. For example, in June 2012 four global and regional mandates issued a "Joint declaration on crimes against freedom of expression."²⁰

IV. Regional Conventions

Individual cases relating to the rights protected by those systems, which include the right to life and physical integrity, may be brought before a regional court (and in two instances, commissions) under all three existing regional human rights systems—in Europe, the Americas, and Africa. On the accountability front, this means that lawsuits may be launched against state parties where there is a failure to adequately address threats to a journalist's life or when a journalist is killed and there is impunity. These courts have the authority to enforce their rulings. A number of decisions concerning the right to life of journalists have been handed down by the European Court of Human Rights. In *Dink v. Turkey*, the Court held that abandoning a charge against policemen for negligence in protecting journalist Hrant Dink was a failure by the state to protect the journalist.²¹ The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (COE) has adopted various resolutions and recommendations on the issue.²² The Council and its structures have supported journalists' freedom to withhold their sources, save very specific instances, in a number of different ways. This could serve to safeguard journalists from being targeted as a method to deter them from appearing as witnesses and should be adopted in other jurisdictions where it is not already the case. The Inter-American Court of Human Rights is currently considering a case concerning death threats as a potential violation of the right to life.²³ The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights has adopted resolutions on the issue and has established a Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression. For more than a decade, the protection of journalists has been highlighted in the annual reports under the mandate.

The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights has condemned violence against journalists in resolutions setting out the obligations of states, including the obligation to ensure accountability. In 2004, the Commission appointed the first Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information in Africa, and the mandate holders have done important work with respect to the safety of journalists on the continent.²⁴ The establishment of the Working Group on the Death Penalty and Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions by the Commission provides another welcomed entry point towards addressing this issue.²⁵ The Ghanaian government, led by President John Mahama, himself a trained journalist, reportedly pledged to table a draft resolution binding on member states of the African Union to protect and guarantee the safety of

²⁰ Article 19, Joint Declaration on Crimes Against Freedom available at <http://www.article19.org/resources.php/resource/3348/en/joint-declaration-on-crimes-against-freedom-of-expression>.

²¹ See Press Release, *Dink v. Turkey*, Media Law and Freedom of Expression (14 Sept. 2010), available at <http://www.mlfoe.org/Article/Detail.aspx?ArticleUid=1E58C6F4-734A-4D2A-B578-A24EAC22E7EE>.

²² See e.g., COE, Freedom of the Press and the Working Conditions of Journalists in Conflict Zones, Res. 1438 (2005), available at <http://assembly.coe.int/Main.asp?link=/Documents/AdoptedText/ta05/ERES1438.html>

²³ *Vélez Restrepo and Family v. Colombia*, Inter-Am. Ct. H.R. No. 12.658 at 4 (2 Mar. 2011), available at <http://www.cidh.oas.org/demandas/12.658Eng.pdf>.

²⁴ Resolution 71 on the Mandate and Appointment of a Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression in Africa, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights Meeting at its Thirty-sixth Ordinary Session, 23 Nov.–7 Dec. 2004, Dakar, Senegal.

²⁵ African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, Res. 227, available at <http://www.achpr.org/sessions/52nd/resolutions/227/>.

journalists in Africa. All three regional human rights courts have the authority to issue interim or provisional or preventative measures—legally binding orders to states to refrain from infringing rights, or to protect them. The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, as a quasi-judicial body, also has the power to order precautionary measures. It has done so with the specific aim of protecting the lives of journalists in two matters during 2011 and four matters during 2010, albeit with mixed success.²⁶ The Commission particularly instructed the relevant nations to take action in each of these cases to protect the lives of the journalists mentioned. Similar authority exists with the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, but no request has been made to utilize it to defend journalists. When journalists are in danger, they should take advantage of these temporary solutions more frequently.

Other regional inter-governmental organizations have also taken up initiatives with regard to the protection of journalists. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, for example, has made the safety of journalists one of its priorities.²⁷ There are a number of emerging regional human rights systems in the world, for example the Intergovernmental Human Rights Commission of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and initiatives being taken by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the League of Arab States.²⁸ It will be important to place the protection of the right to life of journalists on their agendas from an early stage. The provisions regarding the right to life in ASEAN's Human Rights Declaration to protect the right to life in general are not encouraging.

V. International Humanitarian Law

Human rights law is the *lex generalis* during armed conflict, whereas international humanitarian law is the *lex specialis*. Because of how these two bodies of law interact with regard to the right to life, in situations of armed conflict, the question of whether a killing is "arbitrary" or unlawful is typically decided by international humanitarian law. As is the case with troops or combatants in general, journalists who are serving members of the armed services may be the target of attacks. However, journalists who are not members of the armed forces are protected on the same basis as civilians and may not be deliberately targeted.²⁹ War correspondents, like other journalists, are not members of the armed forces and are protected against targeting. However, they are accredited to the armed forces and, as such, qualify for prisoner of war status should they be captured.³⁰ This protection that journalists and civilians enjoy is limited in a number of ways. Their proximity to military objectives means that their deaths in an attack could potentially be considered collateral damage provided the other conditions, such as proportionality, are met. Moreover, as is the case with civilians, the protection journalists enjoy ceases to apply when they directly participate in hostilities. "Direct" participation means acts of war which by their nature or purpose are likely to cause actual harm to the personnel and equipment of the enemy armed forces."³¹ Journalists

²⁶ There have been instances of journalists being killed after precautionary measures have been granted. For example, in March 2010, Nahúm Palacios, a Honduran journalist was murdered after the state had not properly implemented precautionary measures.

²⁷ See, e.g., William Horsley, OSCE Safety of Journalists Guidebook 5 (2012), available at <http://www.osce.org/fom/85777>

²⁸ See Arab League Online: An Independent View on the Arab World, available at <http://www.arableagueonline.org/>.

²⁹ Diplomatic Conference on the Reaffirmation and Development of International Humanitarian Law applicable in Armed Conflicts, Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 Aug. 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I), Art. 79, available at http://www.icrc.org/ihl.nsf/WebART/470_750102

³⁰ Geneva Convention (III) Relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War, 12 Aug. 1949, 6 U.S.T. 3316, 75 U.N.T.S. 135, Art. 4, 4 (entered into force 21 Oct. 1950) [hereinafter Geneva Convention (III)].

³¹ Claude Pilloud et al., Commentary on the Additional Protocols of 8 June 1977 to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, at 619 (1987).

using their radio transmitters to send military messages, for example, risk placing themselves in this category. The spreading of propaganda for the enemy in itself does not make a journalist a legitimate target, but incitement to commit grave breaches of international humanitarian law, acts of genocide, or violence is prohibited, and journalists spreading such messages open themselves up to being legitimate targets.³²

Embedded journalists tend to be equated with war correspondents as far as targeting is concerned. In its resolution 1738 (2006), the UN Security Council condemned attacks against journalists in conflict situations, and requested the Secretary-General to address, as an item in his reports to the Council, the issue of the safety and security of journalists. International humanitarian law is enforced through international and domestic criminal law. An intentional attack against civilians, including journalists, amounts to a grave breach of the Geneva Conventions and a war crime under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.³³ The primary duty, however, is on states to investigate and, if appropriate, prosecute offenders for war crimes that fall within the relevant state's jurisdiction. Where they are unable or unwilling to do so, the International Criminal Court has jurisdiction.

VI. Conclusion

The bedrock of a profession crucial for the well-being of societies lies in the impartiality, objectivity, and professionalism exhibited by journalists in the fulfillment of their duty to inform the world. While individual journalists may occasionally fall short of these standards and should be held accountable when they do, the field of journalism as a whole necessitates specific protection due to its vital role in societal health. It is crucial, however, not to condition professionalism as a prerequisite for safeguarding a journalist's right to life; even those who do not adhere to these standards have the right not to be arbitrarily harmed. The overarching strategy proposed in this paper suggests that, alongside local initiatives addressing the safety of journalists, the issue should be elevated to national or international attention. Given the constant risks journalists face, higher levels of authority must consistently acknowledge and respond to their situation. To ensure external scrutiny, their status should be brought to the national level and, when appropriate, to the international level. This can be achieved through various means, some focusing on the general plight of journalists and others on specific incidents. The primary challenge lies in implementing the existing normative framework at the international (including regional) and national levels. Significant alterations to the substantive legal provisions of international law regarding the protection of journalists are not deemed necessary. There appears to be no immediate need for a new global treaty specifically addressing the safety of journalists..³⁴

Despite being non-binding, a soft-law tool like a UN declaration or resolution could play a crucial role in bringing broader attention to the issue and capturing the interest of regional and global organizations and frameworks. Journalists in countries belonging to regional human rights systems or processes have

³² See Prosecutor v. Nahimana, Barayagwiza and Ngeze, Case No. ICTR-99-52-T, Judgment (3 Dec. 2003).

³³ Geneva Convention (I) for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces in the Field, 12 Aug. 1949, 6 U.S.T. 3114, 75 U.N.T.S. 31, Art. 50 (entered into force 21 Oct. 1950)

³⁴ One of the main proposals for a new instrument comes from the Press Emblem Campaign, who argues for a specific emblem which may be carried by journalists in time of war. See Joanne M. Lisosky & Jennifer Henrichsen, Don't Shoot the Messenger: Prospects for Protecting Journalists in Conflict Situations, 2 Media, War & Conflict 138 (2009). Some of the problems associated with this proposal include the fact that it may make it easier for journalists to be targeted, it could dilute the significance from existing emblems, such as those of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, and those who wish to have such an emblem can simply put a banner marked PRESS on their arms without treaty reform.

ample opportunities to address the problem, utilizing existing special procedures and, to some extent, interim measures. The same applies to UN processes applicable to all nations.

At a domestic level, national rather than local investigations, prosecutions, and protection programs may be necessary. Foreign correspondents and local journalists serve complementary, rather than necessarily competitive, roles. While foreign correspondents are often well-positioned to attract international attention to the issues they cover, journalists based in their home countries possess local credibility as commentators and can offer an insider's perspective. Foreign correspondents may be more challenging to silence in some cases, even though local journalists are often more vulnerable. In certain situations, foreign correspondents can continue to disseminate information and draw attention to the plight of their local colleagues. However, the risks faced by local journalists, who are often the most vulnerable, are frequently underestimated.

Merely conveying to governments and other stakeholders that journalists require protection is insufficient. It is crucial that they understand the necessity of this protection based on the vital social function that journalists serve. Continuous and effective advocacy, supported by data, is essential. Providing journalists and their families with access to efficient protection services, such as witness protection programs, that operate swiftly and effectively is important. To be effective, this may need to be implemented on a national scale rather than a local one. It's important to emphasize that safeguarding journalists' lives is not the sole concern; their safety is inherently tied to both the respect accorded to their profession in society and the upholding of other rights associated with it. The security of journalists should not be viewed solely in terms of their right to life. The recognition of other rights to bodily integrity, the existence of legislation enabling the protection of these rights, the prevalence of the rule of law, and the political will to protect journalists all play a role in the likelihood that a state will be successful in ensuring journalists' safety. In regions where freedom of expression is restricted, violence against journalists tends to be commonplace.