



STATEMENT ON THE INTERNATIONAL DAY TO  
END IMPUNITY FOR CRIMES AGAINST JOURNALISTS

Delivered by chargé d’Affaires a.i. William Ekås Sæter at the Permanent Council  
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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr. Chair,

I am speaking on behalf of Andorra, Canada, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Mongolia, San Marino, Switzerland and Norway.

Tomorrow, 2 November, is the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists. Five years have passed since the UN General Assembly instituted this day while urging Member States to implement definite measures countering the culture of impunity for crimes against journalists.

On 27 September, the UN Human Rights Council unanimously adopted a resolution on the Safety of Journalists. Still, data from UNESCO suggests that the situation for journalists and media workers is not improving. Over the preceding two years, the world has seen a decline in killings of journalists. However, with 80 killings confirmed so far this year, 2018 is on track to break this trend.

The freedom of expression and its derivative, the freedom of the media, are cornerstones of all democratic freedoms. Attacks on journalists are attacks on these freedoms. Impunity enables continuing attacks and a more repressive environment. Ensuring accountability is a key component in preventing future attacks, and in securing a free and pluralistic press. While our region has the highest rate of resolution of cases of killings of journalists, numbers from UNESCO show that less than half of cases have been resolved since 2006. We must do more to eliminate impunity.

We have obligations to prevent violence against journalists and media workers. We must ensure accountability through the conduct of impartial, speedy, thorough, independent and effective investigations into all alleged violence. Perpetrators must be

brought to justice in accordance with the rule of law. Victims and their families must have access to appropriate remedies. We must ensure that the legal frameworks for protecting journalists and media workers are satisfactory.

We call on participating States, drawing on the expertise of the Representative on the Freedom of the Media, to take steps to promote a safe and enabling environment for journalists and media workers. Constituting the fourth pillar of democracy, these actors should be able to perform their work independently, without undue interference, and free from fear of violence and persecution.

Thank you.