

VOICES FOR JUSTICE

Journalism is a public good and a cornerstone of democratic societies. When journalists are attacked, threatened, silenced, or killed, it is not only individuals who are harmed, but the public's right to know, to scrutinise power, and to participate meaningfully in democratic life.

Across Europe and globally, impunity for crimes against journalists is increasing. Physical attacks, judicial harassment, online abuse, surveillance, and restrictions on access to information are becoming normalised; often encouraged, implicitly or explicitly, by authoritarian and illiberal political actors, including within democratic states.

This initiative affirms that protecting journalists is not about granting privileges to a profession. It is about safeguarding society's right to information.

In this Declaration we affirm that:

Journalism and democracy are inseparable.

Free, independent, and safe journalism is essential for accountability, transparency, and informed public debate. Without journalists able to work safely, democracy is weakened and citizens are deprived of their right to know.

Impunity fuels violence against journalists.

When crimes against journalists go uninvestigated and unpunished, threats and attacks multiply. Ending impunity is a legal obligation of states and a democratic necessity.

Journalist safety protects the public, not a profession.

Ensuring the safety of journalists is not a demand for special status. It is a necessary condition for guaranteeing access to reliable information for people and communities.

Authoritarian rhetoric and practices legitimise attacks on the media.

Political discourse that delegitimises journalism, labels reporters as enemies, or tolerates violence against the press creates an environment in which attacks become acceptable; including in countries that claim to uphold democratic values.

Shared responsibility requires coordinated action.

States must uphold international obligations to protect journalists and combat impunity. Media organisations must adopt and enforce robust safety standards, including risk assessment, hostile environment training, digital security and psychosocial support. International institutions, civil society, press freedom NGOs, journalists' associations and trade unions must act collectively when journalists are under threat, ensuring rapid response mechanisms, legal support, and sustained advocacy.

WE CALL FOR:

- Independent, effective and timely investigations into all crimes against journalists, with full accountability for perpetrators and those who order such crimes.
- Stronger legal safeguards and full implementation of existing international standards on journalist protection.
- Protection against strategic lawsuits, surveillance abuse, online harassment and other forms of intimidation.
- Clear political commitment at European and national levels to defend press freedom and the public's right to access information.
- States to strengthen international cooperation to fight impunity, including through judicial collaboration, information sharing, and coordinated investigative efforts.
- Sustained international solidarity and coordinated action among media, public service media, civil society and democratic institutions.

**PROTECTING JOURNALISTS MEANS
PROTECTING DEMOCRACY.**

**DEFENDING JOURNALIST SAFETY MEANS
DEFENDING THE PUBLIC'S RIGHT TO KNOW.**

Committee to Protect Journalists, Daphne Caruana Galizia Foundation,
European Centre for Press and Media Freedom, European Federation of Journalists,
International Press Institute, Reporters Without Borders.