



WBU Call for Efforts to Combat Threats and Violence Against Journalists

• ABU

ASIA-PACIFIC BROADCASTING UNION
- Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

• ASBU

ARAB STATES BROADCASTING UNION
- Tunis, Tunisia

• AUB

AFRICAN UNION OF BROADCASTING
- Dakar, Senegal

• CBU

CARIBBEAN BROADCASTING UNION
- St. Michael, Barbados

• EBU

EUROPEAN BROADCASTING UNION
- Geneva, Switzerland

• IAB

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
BROADCASTING
- Montevideo, Uruguay

• NABA

NORTH AMERICAN
BROADCASTERS ASSOCIATION
- Toronto, Canada

Toronto, ON – July 19, 2021 – At their annual meeting, the World Broadcasting Unions (WBU) called for concerted efforts to combat threats and violence against journalists and other media professionals which constitute an attack on democracy.

The safety of journalists and other media professionals has deteriorated over recent years and the COVID-19 pandemic has aggravated the situation in many countries. Attacks are getting more severe and include online harassment and threats, but also physical violence.

Broadcasters' journalists and production crews are confronted with increasing hostility and violence when they are simply doing their job, reporting from important events, giving balanced information, and putting facts in context. This intimidation has a chilling effect on media freedom and the ability of journalists to support the public with trusted and reliable news and information which has been so vital during the pandemic.

Women journalists are particularly targeted. UNESCO research on [Online violence against women journalists](#) points to a sharp increase in online violence which often turns into offline attacks. 73% of women journalists who responded to the survey had experienced online violence, 25% had received threats of physical violence and 20% reported being attacked offline.

Numerous standard-setting statements and practices¹ adopted at international levels recognize off- and online threats and attacks as a serious danger to media freedom, which is a cornerstone of informed, healthy democracies. The intimidation of journalists can interfere with the right to freedom of expression and with the right of the public to receive information. These internationally agreed statements give guidance in areas of prevention, protection, prosecution, promotion of information, education and raising awareness of the potential threat to media freedom.

We call on the authorities to guarantee rights and put into practice international principles and measures to protect journalists online and in the field. We welcome initiatives such as the [Council of Europe's Platform for the Protection of Journalism and the Safety of Journalists](#), and the African version of the platform launched this year by UNESCO. Broadcasters across different regions are ready to support these initiatives as well as any other efforts to ensure journalists and other media professionals can continue to provide a critical service to society at all times.

About the World Broadcasting Unions (WBU)

The World Broadcasting Unions (WBU) is the coordinating body for broadcasting unions who represent broadcaster networks across the globe. It was established in 1992 as a coordinating body at the international broadcasting level. Since then, the WBU has provided global solutions on key issues for its member unions. The North American Broadcasters Association (NABA) acts as secretariat for the WBU. www.worldbroadcastingunions.org

1. On the occasion of the Conference of Ministers responsible for Media and Information Society, held on 10-11 June 2021, a [Resolution](#) on the safety of journalists was adopted. The Ministerial Council of the OSCE adopted recommendations in the 2018 [Decision](#) on the Safety of Journalists. Numerous UN and UNESCO texts deal with the safety of journalists and the issue of impunity, for example the UN General Assembly [Resolution](#) of 2019.