

The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), the world's largest organisation of journalists with over 600.000 members in 140 countries, presents its compliments to the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and United Nations and has the pleasure to contribute to the present report on the safety of women journalists.

1. Women journalists face a wide range of gender-specific obstacles and human rights violations, including discrimination, sexual harassment and assaults. While the campaign waged by the IFJ and its affiliates to fight against gender discrimination has achieved considerable progress, women are still suffering from an unequal access to employment in the media industry. There also remains the challenge of reducing the pay gap between men and women at the workplace. Furthermore, women are more likely to be victims of serious forms of violence such as sexual harassment and rape.
2. The IFJ publishes since 1990 annual reports on journalists and media staff filled in work-related incidents. These publications, based on our on-going monitoring and on information provided by our affiliates and other credible sources, feature a section dedicated to women who are victims of violence. The IFJ also campaigns for reporting violence against journalists, particularly women.
3. The IFJ has taken a decision to set up a Gender Council charged with ensuring that challenges to women journalists feature in the IFJ policy agenda. The Gender Council helps mainstream gender concerns across all IFJ programmes through proposals on policy and strategy. Some of them concerned campaigns and publications on the issue. To this end, the IFJ has many publications on the needs of women journalists, including the 'Getting the balance right' which focused on fight against discrimination in media. The Federation has also published guidelines on reporting violence against women (<http://colombia.ifj.org/en/contents/ifj-guidelines-for-reporting-on-violence-against-women>) and contributed to the ILO campaign against gender based violence. These initiatives differ from those adopted for the safety of journalists in general in so far as they are tailor made to specific needs of female journalists and encourage their male colleagues to support and promote them. The fact that both female and male journalists share the ownership of these measures makes policies across IFJ activities much more inclusive. It also provides much needed support to women journalists in their organisations and at their workplace.
4. The approach, as discussed earlier, consists of making gender mainstreaming in all IFJ activities, including campaigns, trainings and publications.
5. There are provisions of the laws and policies which are helpful in these areas. However, there is a need to further promote them so that more women journalists are aware and can take advantage of the protection they afford. That is why the IFJ co-published with WACC guidelines on policy against sexual harassment. The IFJ's publication on reporting gender based violence is another tool to

raise awareness of the issue and hopefully bring it to the attention of the authorities for remedial action.

6. While international humanitarian law would apply to women journalists as civilians in situation of armed conflict, there are could well be acts against the dignity of women as human beings which may be construed as breaches of the law. There are indeed frequent trainings of army personnel on the provisions of international humanitarian law, such as the attitude towards civilians including journalists. Unfortunately, these training opportunities are not available to security forces that are in regular contact with journalists, male and female alike.
7. The IFJ produces safety media advisories to journalists, including specific needs of women covering armed conflict. We also provide protection equipment ( flak jackets) free of charge as well as secure communications means for those most exposed to keep contact. The Federation has also a partnership with the International Committee of the Red Cross to facilitate journalists' access to its Hotline when they need emergency assistance. They can also apply for emergency relief to the IFJ International Safety Fund to help with travel and medical costs.
8. There is a number of barriers to women seeking remedies against redress against violations of their rights, including lack of critical mass journalism and lack of access to leadership positions to make a difference. The absence of or poor - union representation is also a challenge for collective action.
9. The IFJ major publication on the preparation for war reporting, *Live News*, contains tips for women during dangerous assignments. There are additional safety guidelines in 'Getting the balance right'

Please feel free to contact us if you require further clarification or more details on the present submission.

Kind regards



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