



Secretary General Ban Ki-moon
United Nations
New York, NY 10017 USA
Email: ecu@un.org

Brussels, 24th November 2011

Re: International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women

Dear Mr. Ban Ki-Moon,

On the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, we are writing on behalf of the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), the world's largest organisation of journalists representing over 600.000 members in 134 countries in the world, to bring to your attention the extreme levels of violence women journalists face while carrying out their professional duties.

Every day women journalists across the globe risk their lives investigating and reporting the news. Far too often they face aggression, threats, political pressure, violence, rape and abuse, due either to their gender or simply for doing their job.

On this day, as on all others, we are seriously concerned by the rising number of sexual assaults, intimidations, death threats and killings that victimise women journalists on a daily basis.

It is particularly troubling to note that the majority of these crimes remain unsolved, and attackers or killers do not face justice. The climate of impunity for crimes against female journalists constitutes a serious threat to the most fundamental of free expression rights. This culture of impunity is further reinforced by that the authorities' attitude to such crimes which tends to deny that women journalists have been killed because of their work

as journalist. Instead, they claim that robbery or “personal issues” are motives of the media killings.

Furthermore, in some regions, it is still considered a taboo to report sexual assaults, which adds to suffering of the victim by putting the blame on her and making assault an effective way to silence and censor.

We welcome the UN campaign to combat violence against women and, in this regard, we request your personal involvement to help stop killings of women journalists. We therefore urge you to:

- Condemn all forms of violence against women journalists and all media workers and call for action on the cases outlined in the list below.
- Support the need for proper safety trainings for women journalists working in hostile environments and decent working conditions for women working in the news industry.
- Demand the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia and Puntland administration in northeastern regions of Somalia to carry out thorough investigations and bring to justice those suspected of carrying out serious attacks to Ms. Horriyo Abdulkadir
- Appeal to the Mexican authorities to conduct a full and uncompromising investigations into the murders of María Elizabeth Macías Castro, Yolanda Ordaz de la Cruz, Marcela Yarce Viveros and Rocío González Trápaga.
- Call on the Iranian authorities to end the culture of imprisonment threats and torture of journalists
- Ask Russian authorities to conduct serious investigations into the murders of Natalya Estemirova, Anna Politkovskaya, Nina Yefimova, Nadezhda Chaikova and Larisa Yudina and their other male colleagues and ensure that the culprits are prosecuted.
- Call on Philippines authorities to investigate into the murder of Maria Len Flores Somera and demand justice for the victims of the Ampatuan massacre which included 32 journalists and among them five women: Marife Montañón, Balita, Eleanor Dalmacio, Marites Cablitas and Gina De la Cruz.
- Ask Israeli authorities to release Palestinian journalist Salhab, Al-Sherif and all other journalists who remain in Israeli custody
- Call on Nepalese authorities to investigate into the murder of Uma Singh

Yours sincerely,

Beth Costa
IFJ Secretary General

Mindy Ran
Chair of IFJ Gender Council

C/C
Executive Director Michelle Bachelet
UN Women
304 East 45th Street
15th Floor
New York, NY 10017, USA

List of female journalists intimidated, attacked or killed in 2011

AFRICA

SOMALIA

Horriyo Abdulkadir, a 19 years old female news anchor for Radio Galkayo was hospitalized for gunshot wounds on Thursday 14 September 2011.

AMERICAS

COLOMBIA

Ana Maria Ferrer, journalist on the local TV programme on Channel 12, received death threats.

Mary Luz Avendaño, a correspondent for "El Espectador" newspaper, received death threats.

MÉXICO

María Elizabeth Macías Castro, freelance journalist and editor of the newspaper Primera Hora, was murdered on 24th September, 2011.

Yolanda Ordaz de la Cruz, veteran reporter of Diario Notiver, was found dead on 26th July 2011

Marcela Yarce Viveros, a founder of Contralinea news magazine, and **Rocío González Trápaga**, freelance journalist and a former reporter for Mexico's TV broadcaster Televisa, were found dead in Mexico City on 1 September 2011.

PERU

Ketty Vela, journalist, director of a news programme broadcast by Radio and TV San Juan in Tocache, became the target of assassin.

HONDURAS

Ethel Corea, a correspondent for the La Voz de Zacate Grande radio station in the Gulf of Fonseca, in southern Honduras received death threats by a group of armed civilians on 13th March.

ASIA

CHINA

Lim, journalist of China Central Television (CCTV), was seriously injured on 9th June 2011 in Haidian, Chaoyang District, Beijing.

PHILIPPINES

Maria Len Flores Somera, radio anchor with DZME radio station, died of a gunshot wound to the back of the head on 24th March 2011 in Malabon, a district of Manila.

ARAB WORLD and MIDDLE EAST

EGYPT

Lara Logan, CBS News correspondent, was the victim of a sexual assault on 11th February 2011 in Cairo.

LIBYA

Tracey Shelton, freelance Australian journalist, was brutally attacked in her hotel room in Benghazi on 11th August 2011.

OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES

Israa Salhab was arrested on 16th November and put in detention by the Israeli occupation authorities on 21st November without charge.

YEMEN

Samia el Aghbari was attacked by plain clothed security agents on 13 February 2011 and escaped a kidnapping attempt

**International Federation of Journalists, International Press Centre,
Résidence Palace, Block C, 155 Rue de la Loi, B1040 Brussels
Tel: +32 2 235 2200 Fax: +32 2 235 2219 E-mail: ifj@ifj.org**