



EUROPEAN UNION

**OSCE Permanent Council No. 1540
Vienna, 6 November 2025**

EU Statement on the occasion of the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists

1. A free press is the heartbeat of democracy. Society depends on journalists who shine a light on injustice and hold those in power accountable. Yet across the world – including in the OSCE area – journalists and media actors continue to be killed, tortured, harassed, detained and forced into exile. Women journalists face particular threats, including in the digital space, which have a chilling effect on freedom of expression and the safety of journalists.
2. The OSCE comprehensive concept of security has human rights at its core. Media freedom and the safety of journalists are essential components and there can be no security, nor democracy, without it.
3. Violence against journalists and media actors is not only an attack against the individual journalists, but also against the very foundations of open, free and democratic societies. We are seriously concerned about the worsening situation for media freedom, as well as pressure and intimidation faced by journalists and media actors in the OSCE area.
4. International humanitarian law is clear: journalists are civilians and must be protected at all times. Every attack against them must be investigated promptly, independently, and effectively. All perpetrators must be held to account.
5. In the context of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, journalists and media actors continue to be at risk daily. Several reports, including under the OSCE Moscow Mechanism, indicate that journalists have been killed, arbitrarily detained and subjected to torture and enforced disappearances. Perpetrators must and will be held

accountable according to international law. We reiterate our call on Russia to respect international law and to protect journalists and media actors reporting from armed conflict, in accordance with international humanitarian and human rights law.

6. Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, enabled by the Lukashenka regime, starkly reminds us that internal repression and external aggression go hand in hand. In Russia, authorities continue to increase the systematic repression by cracking down on independent media, journalists and media actors, and other critical voices.
7. In Belarus, we strongly condemn the persecution and intimidation campaigns against all segments of society, including independent journalists and media actors, among many others.
8. We share the concerns expressed by the RFoM about the situation in Georgia, where we have seen a deterioration of the situation for media and journalists, including arbitrary arrests and increasing repression. Notwithstanding the EU's ongoing commitment to Georgia's security, we are concerned regarding the worsening political and human rights situation in the country.
9. We also share the RFoM's concerns about the cases of Abzas Media, Toplum TV, Meydan TV and imprisoned journalists which show that pressure on journalists in Azerbaijan is increasing. We call on the country to uphold its international obligations, including with respect to human rights and to take immediate steps to ensure a safe and enabling environment for all journalists and media workers.
10. In Türkiye, particularly worrisome is the continued systemic lack of independence and the many restrictions on freedom of expression, media freedom and dissemination of information.
11. The EU remains steadfast in its commitment to protect media freedom and pluralism in our global action and at home. We support independent journalism worldwide and provide protection to those at risk. We also work to address the growing threats in the digital sphere, where journalists increasingly face coordinated harassment, unlawful surveillance, and campaigns designed to discredit or intimidate them.

12. The European Media Freedom Act has put in place strong safeguards for media and journalists, ensuring they can carry out their work, without undue pressure. The European Commission continues to monitor developments related to media freedom and pluralism, including as regards the safety and protection of journalists in all EU Member States. On this International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists, we call on all States to uphold their obligations to protect journalists and to guarantee accountability.

13. We reiterate our full support for the RFoM's mandate, including its monitoring and early warning functions, as well as the support to participating States in abiding by their commitments. We encourage all participating States to make use of the tools and expertise offered by the RFoM, including in the field of safety of journalists and ending impunity for attacks against them.

Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Moldova (Republic of), Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, and San Marino align themselves with this statement.