

International Federation of Journalists says Gaza is biggest journalism catastrophe in 100 years



Dominique Pradalié

President, International Federation of Journalists

By Alireza Hashemi

Brussels, October 17 (RHC)-- The Gaza Strip is facing what the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) has termed the most severe journalism catastrophe in its century-long history.

The organization's president has issued a call for urgent international intervention to address the escalating crisis, highlighting the perilous conditions under which journalists are operating in the besieged Palestinian territory.

Dominique Pradalié, who leads the largest representative body of journalists globally—with approximately 600,000 journalists and media workers across 146 countries—told the Press TV Website that the Israeli regime's primary objective is to suppress testimonies regarding the genocide of Palestinians.

She highlighted that the Israeli regime has imposed a ban on all international media from entering Gaza, a restriction that has persisted for over a year since the onset of the war.

During this period, Israel has done its best to further silence all independent voices, exemplified by its recent decision to shut down the office of Al Jazeera in the occupied territories and, more recently in the West Bank.

Within Gaza, the Israeli regime has systematically targeted and destroyed media buildings, including those belonging to international organizations such as Agence France Presse (AFP).

And around 140 Palestinian journalists have been killed in the area, according to the IFJ's tally, most of them “willingly targeted” by the Israeli regime, Pradalié said.

Pradalié emphasized that this level of violence against journalists is unparalleled in any other war. “In the Ukraine war, fewer than 20 journalists have been killed since February 2023. And a critical point here is that most of those killed journalists have been specifically targeted by Israeli soldiers,” she stated.

In an effort to stifle the remaining Palestinian voices advocating for their people, the Israeli regime has sought to discredit information published by Palestinian sources while employing extensive propaganda to disseminate false narratives about the atrocities occurring in Gaza.

Pradalié noted that the high casualty rate among Palestinian journalists has serious implications for journalism worldwide. “The very high casualties among Palestinian journalists represent a terrible negative example for countries run by dictatorial governments! It has a chilling effect on all journalists now and in the future in conflict areas,” she said.

The IFJ president urged the international community to take action against Israeli attacks on journalists in Gaza.

“The international community sends a terrible message to all: impunity,” she noted. “If the UN does not strongly react to this hécatombe, if the UN General Assembly does not adopt the International Convention against impunity that the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) is proposing, within a few years true and honest journalism will disappear,” she concluded.

Gaza officials say around 180 journalists have so far lost their lives in over a year of Israeli attacks on the besieged territory.

Israel's targeting of journalists is not a recent development tied solely to the current war in Gaza.

For over seven decades, Palestinian and pro-Palestinian journalists have consistently faced attacks for covering the occupation of Palestine. A particularly notable case is the murder of Palestinian-American journalist Shireen Abu Akleh on May 11, 2022, in Jenin, West Bank.

[SOURCE: PRESS TV]

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