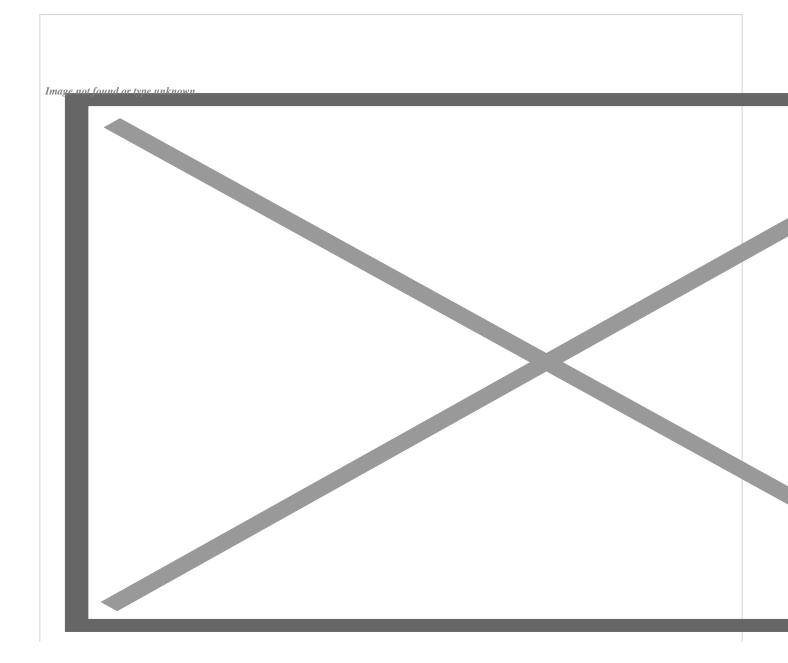# Press group demands international probe into Israeli killing of journalists in Gaza and Lebanon

A view of a damaged vehicle marked "press" at the site of an Israeli strike that killed some media staff at a guesthouse, where several other reporters were staying, in Hasbaya town, southern Lebanon, on October 25, 2024. (Photo by Reuters)

New York, October 31 (RHC)-- A U.S.-based journalists' rights group has called for an international investigation into Israel's pattern of targeting journalists amid its atrocities across Gaza and military offensives in Lebanon, saying the Tel Aviv regime is killing more of the people exposing its violence in West Asia to the world.

In a statement released on Tuesday, the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) raised alarm over the Zionist regime's violence against journalists, after an Israeli attack on October 25 on a compound housing media workers in southern Lebanon killed at least three journalists and wounded several others as they slept in guesthouses in Hasbaya town.

At the time, local media aired footage from the scene, showing collapsed buildings and cars marked "PRESS" covered in dust and rubble.

The victims were identified as cameraman Ghassan Najjar and engineer Mohamed Reda, who worked for the Lebanese television news channel al-Mayadeen. The Hezbollah-linked al-Manar television network said its camera operator Wissam Qassim was also killed.

"Journalists are civilians, and the international community has an obligation to protect them by making it clear to Israel that their long-standing record of aggression and impunity in journalist killings will not be tolerated," CPJ Program Director Carlos Martinez de la Serna said in the statement.

"International bodies must be given access to conduct independent investigations into these killings. Deadly attacks on journalists, who are protected under international humanitarian law, and obstructions to reporting must immediately stop," he added.

Journalists have been regularly targeted and faced unprecedented dangers while covering Israeli military's offensives in Gaza and Lebanon.

The killings have prompted an international outcry from press advocacy groups and the United Nations. Israel alleges it does not deliberately target journalists.

The CPJ has documented numerous incidents of Israeli attacks against journalists in Lebanon, including strikes on multiple news outlets' offices, forced displacement of journalists as part of the regime's vast evacuation orders, and attacks on and detention of journalists.

Moreover, journalists operating in the Gaza Strip are faced with increased dangers as they report on the conflict amidst Israeli ground assaults and airstrikes, disrupted communications, supply shortages, and power outages.

Israel launched the war on Gaza on October 7 last year, after Palestinian resistance groups carried out a surprise retaliatory operation into the occupied territories.

So far, Israel has killed at least 4,061 Palestinians, most of them women and children, and injured 101,223 others.

On Sunday, the Gaza-based Hamas resistance movement called for serious international action to stop Israeli crimes and acts of aggression against Palestinian journalists in Gaza, where at least 182 media workers are killed by the regime's military over the past year.

The resistance group said in a statement that Israeli crimes and acts of aggression against Palestinian journalists will neither intimidate nor prevent them from continuing their efforts to expose the real nature of the Zionist regime.

Gaza is currently experiencing what the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) describes as the most severe journalism catastrophe in its century-long history.

"Unprecedented crimes are being committed systematically and deliberately against journalists at the hands of Israeli forces in the Gaza Strip to terrorize them and deter them from conveying the truth about the brutal genocide taking place there," the statement said.

"Such crimes require serious measures by the international community and its institutions to stop them and hold the fascist Israeli administration accountable for targeting Palestinian journalists either through assassination or reprisal," it added.

The statement came after at least nine people, including a nine-year-old Palestinian girl and three journalists, were killed in an Israeli airstrike on a UN-run school sheltering displaced people in Gaza City.

The Gaza Media Office identified the slain journalists as Saed Radwan from Al-Aqsa TV, Hamza Abu Salmiya from Sanad News Agency, and Haneen Mahmoud Baroud, who used to work for al-Quds Foundation.

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