

United Nations reports that one journalist is killed every four days in 2022-23, most cases unpunished



Media workers hold posters bearing the pictures of journalists killed in an Israeli strike in

southern Lebanon, at a sit-in in Sidon, on October 26, 2024 [Mahmoud Zayyat/AFP]

United Nations, November 3 (RHC)-- The killing of journalists worldwide surged in 2022-23 compared with the previous two years, with a majority of cases unsolved, the United Nations has said.

On average, one journalist was killed every four days, the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) said in a report released on Saturday.

At 162 deaths, the number of journalists killed while working leaped 38 percent, the report found, calling the increase “alarming.” “In 2022 and 2023, a journalist was killed every four days simply for doing their vital job to pursue truth,” UNESCO Director-General Audrey Azoulay said in a statement. She urged countries to “do more to ensure that these crimes never go unpunished”.

The largest number of killings was in Latin America and the Caribbean, at 61 over the two years, while the least deadly global region for journalists was North America and Western Europe with six killings.

For the first time since 2017, a majority of journalists were killed in conflict zones in 2023, with 44 deaths accounting for 59 percent of the year’s total – a shift from a years-long decline in conflict-related fatalities.

During the 2022-23 period, local journalists made up 86 percent of those killed while covering conflicts, the report said. In 2023, Palestine recorded the highest number of cases, with 24 journalists dying in the line of work.

While the report does not include deaths in 2024, since October last year the number of journalists killed in Gaza, Israel and Lebanon has jumped to more than 135, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ). Journalists have faced unprecedented danger while covering Israel’s wars in Gaza and Lebanon.

Israeli authorities have repeatedly killed and threatened Al Jazeera journalists in Gaza, whom they accused of being Hamas affiliates. The network has denied and condemned the claims.

This week, the Al Jazeera Media Network condemned the “systematic targeting” of journalists in the Palestinian territory and the region, saying the attacks “constitute a calculated campaign to silence those who dare to document the realities of war and devastation”.

INTERACTIVE-JOURNALISTS_KILLED_ISRAEL-GAZA-WAR-SEPTEMBER30_2024

The UNESCO report said other media workers were targeted for covering organised crime, corruption or while reporting on public demonstrations.

Among the journalists killed in 2022-23, 14 were women – nine percent of the total – while at least five were in the 15-24 age range.

Impunity

The report highlighted the impunity around the killing of journalists, as 85 percent of cases identified by UNESCO since 2006 are still unsolved or have been abandoned, according to responses individual countries sent the body.

That marked some improvement on the 89 percent non-resolution rate in 2018 and 95 percent in 2012.

But of 75 countries the UN agency contacted for updates on open cases, 17 did not respond at all and nine did no more than acknowledge the request.

Even in the 210 cases where journalists' killings were resolved, the median time this took stood at four years. "Justice delayed is justice denied," the report authors wrote.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Friday called on governments to "take urgent steps" to protect journalists, and investigate and prosecute crimes against media workers worldwide. "Impunity breeds further violence," said Guterres in a post on the social media platform X.

<https://www.radiohc.cu/en/noticias/internacionales/368916-united-nations-reports-that-one-journalist-is-killed-every-four-days-in-2022-23-most-cases-unpunished>



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