

African journalists demand justice for Israeli attacks on media workers

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Fire and smoke rises from the al-Jalaa Tower as it is destroyed in an Israeli airstrike on Gaza City, on May 15, 2021. (Photo by AFP)

Luanda, June 16 (RHC)-- African journalists have called on the African Union and governments to condemn Israel's deliberate targeting of Palestinian journalists, and hold the regime legally accountable for crimes against media workers.

The Federation of African Journalists (FAJ) denounced the “total impunity” that the Tel Aviv regime enjoys in its killing of journalists and destruction of media offices. The group cited the 11-story al-Jalaa building, housing international media offices including the Associated Press news agency bureau and Al Jazeera network in the Gaza Strip, that was demolished in an Israeli air raid on May 15.

The FAJ urged African governments “to stand on the right side of history” by unequivocally condemning the human rights violations committed by the Israeli regime.

It also pledged to renew its solidarity with Palestinian journalists and their union, the Palestinian Journalists Syndicate (PJS), saying it fully supports demands made by the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) to protect and obtain justice for Palestinian journalists.

Refaat Alareer says Israel’s bombing of a media tower in Gaza was a brazen attempt to create a “total media blackout” amid its relentless air raids. The destruction of the al-Jalaa building during the 11-day offensive on the Gaza Strip was widely regarded as a brazen attempt to silence journalists covering Israel’s military attacks. Israel bombed the offices of at least 18 media outlets in less than a week.

Earlier this month, Israeli forces assaulted Al Jazeera journalist Givara Budeiri during her arrest and destroyed equipment belonging to Al Jazeera cameraman Nabil Mazzawi.

Budeiri was reporting on a sit-in marking the 54th anniversary of the Naksa (setback), a term Palestinians use to describe the Israeli occupation of East Jerusalem, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in 1967.

According to Reporters Without Borders, at least 14 Palestinian journalists have been arrested and placed in administrative detention by Israeli forces in recent weeks.

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