# United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)

*Research Report*
*The Question of:*
*Safeguarding Media Professionals*

# Introduction

Media is the largest platform and its core function to society is for people to be informed, become aware and acquainted. Just like any other industry, in media, there are professionals who specialize in the area. Media professionals have a key role for people to be informed since they are the ones who gather the information by research, interviews and many more sources in order to present to the public. Although, in media, there is always controversy regarding the sensitive contents which cause commotion, such as: politics, economy and many more. In this case, media professionals who express their opinions and perspectives about the controversial issues are the ones who face abuse and neglect.

Any criticism or opposed view to a political party, current governmental system or economic situation of a country can be considered as sensitive and any news that is presented in that area by media professionals may bring commotion into society. Because of their freedom of expression which is a fundamental human right, media professionals face abuse and neglect. In countries such as: Afghanistan, United States, Syria and many more, abuse and neglect to the media professionals can be observed very clearly whereas in the last 30 years 48 journalists were killed in Afghanistan. There are various examples of the abuse of journalists all over the world from heart-breaking stories to cruel murders. Although the main question is: what has been done to protect those media professionals' right to live in safety and free from abuse and neglect? Which is the exact definition of safeguarding? How can the safeguarding of media professionals be improved or implemented? Where does the United Nations stand on safeguarding media professionals? This research report will be routed from these questions in order to provide delegates the sufficient information and guide them to start their research and preparation to solve the issue of safeguarding media professionals.

# The Committee

UNESCO is the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. It seeks to build peace through international cooperation in Education, the Sciences and Culture. UNESCO's programmes contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals defined in Agenda 2030, adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2015. UNESCO's vision is to provide lasting and sincere support among people. Also, in order to provide this sincerity and support, it is stated that peace must be founded upon dialogue and mutual understanding and must be built upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of humanity. UNESCO has ongoing projects to ensure peace and help people live as global citizens free of hate and intolerance.

In Leiden Model United Nations, in the UNESCO committee, we expect delegates to prepare resolutions whilst considering the vision and principles of UNESCO and the Universal

Declaration of Human Rights. The rules of procedure of the committee is the standard MUN procedure with lobbying, submission of resolutions, then debate about the agenda issues. Since UNESCO is a committee that aims to ensure peace through international cooperation, the decisions made in the committee and new implementations should be routed from their vision, in peaceful and cooperatively manners.

# Key Terms

**Media Professionals:** People who have degree in formal communication programs or work in the area; such as: Journalism, Advertising, Radio and TV or Public Relations.

**Safeguarding:** It is an extensive term that can be examined in several sub-sections along with some principles. Definitions of safeguarding for adults and safeguarding for children differ from each other that's why it is suitable to state that, safeguarding has two sub-sections.

Since, the agenda item refers to media professionals, in this case adults, our main focus will be the concept of safeguarding for adults. Safeguarding for adults is defined as***:*** *protecting an adult's right to live in safety and free from abuse and neglect.*

**Empowerment:** It is one of the principles of safeguarding outlined in the 2014 Care Act*. People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent. It is about giving individuals as much freedom and power over decisions made about themselves as is reasonably possible. It is also about giving people the confidence to make those mentioned decisions.

**Prevention:** It is one of the principles of safeguarding outlined in the 2014 Care Act. Taking action before harm occurs. *Preventing* neglect, harm and abuse is the key function of safeguarding so that makes this term the most important principle amongst the others.

**Proportionality:** It is one of the principles of safeguarding outlined in the 2014 Care Act. The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented. Proportionality means that every case of abuse is dealt individually with all the required facts without excessive intrusion.

**Protection:** It is one of the principles of safeguarding outlined in the 2014 Care Act. Support and representation for those in greatest need who are suffering from types of abuse such as physical or psychological.

**Partnership:** It is one of the principles of safeguarding outlined in the 2014 Care Act. Local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.

**Accountability:** It is one of the principles of safeguarding outlined in the 2014 Care Act. It briefly means that anyone relevant should be accountable for the role they play in safeguarding.

**Abuse:** It is a term when someone is bullied or there is an action where a person is hurt, upset or scared. It is treating someone cruelly or violently. There are several types of abuse.

**Physical Abuse:** It is a term when someone is damaged physically, physical abuse can be formed of kicking, hitting or any similar actions. It may lead to visible damages such as scars and bruises.

**Emotional Abuse:** It is a term when someone is teased, threatened or bullied which upsets the person who is emotionally abused. It does not have a visible effect such as bruises, scars unlike the effects which can be caused by physical abuse.

**Neglect:** It is about not giving enough care or attention to people or things that are your responsibility.

**Non-Governmental Organization (NGO):** is any non-profit, voluntary citizens' group that is organized on a local, national or international level. NGOs perform a variety of service and humanitarian functions and bring citizen concerns to governments. Their relationship with offices and agencies of the United Nations system differs depending on their goals, their venue and the mandate of a particular institution.

***Please keep in mind that aforementioned (six) principles of safeguarding are not given in their dictionary definitions but with brief explanations about their relevance to safeguarding.**

***2014 Care Act:** Further information can be found at the end of this report, in the 'Further Reading' section.

***In order to grasp the term of safeguarding and its principles, for further research, I advise the delegates to look at the end of this report, to the 'Further Reading' section.**

# General Overview

Media is the largest platform and its core function to society is for people to be informed, become aware and acquainted. Just like any other industry, in media, there are professionals who specialize in the area who are called *media professionals*. Mainly, journalists and people who have degree in the areas of Advertising, Public Relations, Radio and TV are considered as media professionals. Media professionals have a key role for people to be informed since they are the ones who gather the information by research, interviews and many more sources in order to present to the public.

Although, in media there is always controversy regarding the sensitive contents which cause commotion, such as: politics, economy and many more. In this case, media professionals who express their opinions and perspectives about the controversial issues are the ones who face abuse and neglect. Any criticism or opposed view to a political party, current governmental system or economic situation of a country can be considered as sensitive and any news that are presented in that area by media professionals may bring commotion into the society. Because of the fact that they freely express their opinions (according Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 19, freedom of expression is considered as a human right) they face abuse and neglect.

The abuse and neglect that media professionals face can be examined extensively. The abuse can be composed of threats, imprisonment for wrongful causes and physical damage. On the other hand, considering the media industry's obligations towards their employees (media professionals), such as supporting and protecting them in several ways. This support and protection can be provided by assessing the level of danger to the media professionals in question, providing security arrangements to the ones working on sensitive cases or dangerous missions and observing the social and labour rights of them. If the aforementioned requirements are not provided to media professionals that would form a situation of neglect.

There are several examples of abuse and neglect that they face in many countries such as: Afghanistan, Syria, India, Mexico, the United States and many more. Unfortunately, media professionals not only suffer from abuse, but they are also cruelly murdered because of their freedom of expression. For instance, an example which was quite controversial was the murder of Jamal Khashoggi. Jamal Khashoggi was a Saudi journalist who was respected by everyone in his community. However, after being critical of the Saudi prince, he was tortured and then he was murdered.

Jamal Khashoggi was one of the many journalists who were abused then murdered. Hundreds of examples like Jamal can be observed in several countries across the world. How can those media professionals like Jamal, live in safety and free from abuse and neglect? This question sheds the light on *the necessity of safeguarding media professionals*. In order to prevent media professionals to suffer from abuse and neglect, it is essential to safeguard them. In the name of

safeguarding media professionals, there were some actions which were taken by several Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and the United Nations. Even though, those actions were the start to safeguard them and protect their right to freedom of expression, considering the current state of media professionals and ongoing abuses towards them, more implementations should be made. *I encourage delegates to focus on the deficiencies of those actions in order to find more efficient ideas.*

Throughout the years, abuse on media professionals has decreased but it is still undeniable that they are still abused both physically, emotionally and even murdered considering the data from the 2018 UNESCO Director-General's Report on Safety of Journalists and the Danger of Impunity. In order to examine the history of actions regarding safeguarding media professionals, the most important document is certainly the resolution adopted on 12 November 1997. The resolution of "Condemnation of Violence against Journalists" was adopted in UNESCO's General Conference in order to condemn assassination and any physical violence against journalists as a crime against society, since this curtails freedom of expression and, as a consequence, the other rights and freedoms set forth in international human rights instruments and to urge that the competent authorities discharge their duty of preventing, investigating and punishing such crimes and remedying their consequences. This resolution covers the several principles of safeguarding since it aims to **prevent** harm and **protect** journalists.

"The Resolution of Condemnation of Violence against Journalists" was the first step into safeguarding media professionals but also after the resolution many actions were taken in order to solve the issue. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) play a vital role in the name of safeguarding media professionals. NGOs monitor the cases of abuse, violence and threats, demand answers and results from authorities and others concerned and also create a public consensus of understanding for the role of journalism and media in modern society among with many more actions. Their actions are mainly routed from the aforementioned resolution and the values that it carries: protection of media professionals from abuse and neglect. Many NGOs have ongoing projects regarding the mentioned duties and to safeguard media professionals. Also, many of them have already accomplished to safeguard a certain amount of media professionals. More information about their accomplishments and aims can be found in the "Major Parties Involved" and "Further Reading" sections of the report.

Not only do NGOs have a huge role in the name of safeguarding media professionals, but most importantly, UNESCO as a sub-body of the United Nations, has significant accomplishments in the issues' history. UNESCO's International Program for the Development of Communication (IPDC) which is the only multilateral forum in the UN system which is designed to mobilize the international community to discuss media development. IPDC also aims to counter hate speech which is a form of abuse, in media and social media along with other aims that provide support to media professionals. At the 26$^{th}$ session of the IPDC in March 2008, the Director-General was requested to provide an analytical report on the basis of responses received from Member States concerned, including updated information on the Director-General's condemnations of the killing of journalists since 2006, and make this report widely available. After that, since 2008, such reports have been prepared every two years in order to shed light on the abuse on media professionals and solutions to safeguard them.

The most recent report of UNESCO Director-General's Report on Safety of Journalists and the Danger of Impunity was published in 2018 and it provides comparisons of the numbers of media professionals killed to previous years and among countries. In addition, the report also contains updates on investigations regarding the abuse on journalists since 2006 and categorized information about the status of judicial inquiries for the reported period about the murders, those categories being: "no information received so far", "ongoing/unresolved", "resolved". The report can be found in the "Further Reading" section of the report. Also, I encourage delegates to read the report and find possible ways to strengthen it, which will help them to find efficient solutions regarding the issue that can be used in a resolution.

Another significant action in the history of safeguarding media professionals was the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity. This plan of action aims to create a free and safe environment for media professionals both in conflict and non-conflict situations, with a view to strengthening peace, democracy and development worldwide. Its measures include the establishment of a coordinated inter-agency mechanism to handle issues related to the safety of journalists as well as assisting countries to develop legislation and mechanisms favourable to freedom of expression and information, and supporting their efforts to implement existing international rules and principles. UN Plan of Action also recommends working cooperatively with governments, media houses, professional associations and NGOs to conduct awareness-raising campaigns about the emerging threats to media professionals. UN Plan of Action's successes, challenges, lessons learnt and the way forward are gathered in a report which can be found in the "Further Reading" section of this report for further research. Considering the outcome from the report and plan of action itself, it is suitable to state that UN Plan have significant effects to safeguard media professionals since because of the plan, killings, assaults, kidnappings, intimidation and online attack on media professionals have decreased.

All in all, safeguarding of media professionals is a serious issue in the last few decades. Abuse and neglect of media professionals should not be tolerated. Any kind of harassment, assault or intimidation towards a human being is not ethical or fair. Their profession does not change the value of their lives and abuse and neglect of media professionals are violations of fundamental human rights. On the other hand, it is undeniable that because of the tremendous efforts made by United Nations and various NGOs, media professionals are protected more and more each year but it is also undeniable that hundreds of media professionals are still abused and murdered. In order to stop this abuse and neglect and safeguard media professionals' new innovative solutions which will make a significant difference should be implemented.

# Major Parties Involved

**Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ)**

Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) is one of the most important NGOs in the world in the name of safeguarding media professionals. CPJ's work is based on its research, which provides a global snapshot of obstructions to a free press worldwide. CPJ's research staff documents hundreds of attacks on the press each year. In order to safeguard media professionals and have a free media, CPJ denounces press freedom violations, meets with heads of state and high-ranking officials and works with other organizations to ensure that justice prevails when journalists are imprisoned or killed.

**European Federation of Journalists (EFJ)**

European Federation of Journalists (EFJ) is a NGO aiming to strengthen the craft of journalism and promote it in media through education, training and publications. It has several ongoing projects to decrease the abuse of journalists. For instance, "Media Against Hate" project is a Europe-wide campaign led by the organization. It aims to counter hate speech and discrimination in the media by promoting ethical standards, while maintaining respect for freedom of expression.

**Afghanistan**

Afghanistan is a country located in Asia which is in a conflict zone in the last few years. Afghanistan can be considered as a major party regarding the issue since according to the data of the 2018 UNESCO Director-General's Report on Safety of Journalists and the Danger of Impunity, in 2016, 13 journalists were murdered and in the following year 11 journalists were murdered in the country. In 2016, Afghanistan was listed on the top of the list regarding the comparisons among other countries about the murders of journalists. In 2017, Afghanistan was listed just below Mexico, in the second place. Considering the facts, it is obvious that not only journalists are murdered in the country, but they are also abused. Because of the level of abuse towards media professionals in Afghanistan, it is one of the countries whereas the safeguarding of media professionals must be improved.

**Mexico**

Mexico as a country located in South America is one of the countries where media professionals face abuse and neglect. Mexico can be considered as a major party regarding the issue since according to the data of the 2018 UNESCO Director-General's Report on Safety of Journalists and the Danger of Impunity, in 2016, 13 journalists were murdered and in the following year 13 journalists were murdered in the country as well. All in all, the level of abuse and neglect in the country is really high along with murders of media professionals and because of that, the safeguarding of them should be improved in the country.

# Timeline of Events

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| **12 November 1997** | UNESCO's General Conference adopted the Resolution of "Condemnation of Violence Against Journalists. |
| **March 2008** | Intergovernmental Council of the International Program for Development and Communication (IPDC) was in its 26th session about the condemnations of the killings of journalists. The Director-General was requested to provide an analytical report on the basis of the responses received from Member States concerned at the session of IPDC. |
| **March 2010** | IPDC is in its 27th session and includes action-oriented approach to the safety of media professionals. UN Plan of Action began as a result of IPDC's session. |
| **September 2011** | The UN Plan of Action was prepared during the first UN Inter-Agency Meeting. |
| **March 2012** | IPDC is in its 28th session. (Documents about the session can be found in the "Further Reading" section of the report.) |
| **November 2012** | Second UN Inter-Agency meeting took place where a comprehensive implementation Strategy was adopted. |
| **March 2014** | IPDC is in its 29th session and includes more initiative solutions regarding the safety of media professionals. |
| **November 2014** | Third UN Inter-Agency meeting took place. The meeting reviewed the implementation of UN Plan of Action from 2013 to 2014 including its successes, challenges, lessons learnt and the way forward. |
| **March 2016** | IPDC is in its 30th session. (Documents about the session can be found in the "Further Reading" section of the report.) |
| **June 2017** | Multi-Stakeholder Consultation on Strengthening the Implementation of the UN Plan of Action took place. |
| **March 2018** | 2018 UNESCO Director-General's Report on Safety of Journalists and the Danger of Impunity's published. It is one of the most important documents regarding our agenda item. |

# Previous attempts to solve the issue

**UN Plan of Action**

United Nations Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity is one of the most significant attempts to solve the issue. UN Plan of Action aims to create a free and safe environment for media professionals. The plan of action's measures contains assisting countries to develop legislation and mechanisms favourable to freedom of expression and information, and supporting media professionals' efforts to implement existing international rules and principles. In addition, it also aims to strengthen the safety of media professionals in conflict zones which is one of the essential guidelines of safeguarding: protection. UN Plan of Action's successes, challenges, lessons learnt and the way forward are gathered in a report which can be found in the "Further Reading" section of this research report. In order to evaluate the attempts' success, if the report regarding the plan of action is considered, it would be an accurate evaluation that it has significant effects on safeguarding media professionals.

**International Program for the Development of Communication (IPDC)**

UNESCO's International Program for the Development of Communication (IPDC) which is the only multilateral forum in the UN system which is designed to mobilize the international community to discuss media development. IPDC's missions include: countering hate speech (emotional abuse) in media with other innovative actions that will support media professionals. IPDC has sessions every two years whereas issues regarding media professionals and their protection are discussed. After every session, the Director-General is requested to provide an analytical report about updates and concerns. The reports published by the Director-General are available to the public and increase awareness regarding the safeguarding of media professionals.

# The Future

In the future, IPDC's sessions will probably continue every two years which will hopefully, improve the conditions of media professionals with their new and improved resolutions by member states.

Also, since the UN Plan of Action recommends working cooperatively with governments, media houses, professional associations and NGOs to conduct awareness-raising campaigns about the emerging threats to media professionals; and the number of these organisations are increasing day by day due to the fact that, the awareness about the issue is increasing, new and more efficient actions will be implemented.

In addition, situation of member states regarding the issue, will probably change in a positive way. Since awareness about the abuses on media professionals are increasing, especially in the countries whereas abuse is commonly encountered, more action to safeguard media professionals will be made.

# Questions a Resolution Must Answer (Q.A.R.M.A.)

In this section of the report, certain questions a resolution must answer are mentioned. I suggest delegates to consider these questions while writing a resolution. Although, I would also like to remind delegates that, they shouldn't limit themselves to the questions that are written in the report. Mentioned questions are only the *key points* that delegates should consider, not every point of the issue.

- How could the UN Plan of Action be strengthened? (Can be used for possible clauses in the resolution)
- How could the report of Director-General be strengthened? (Can be used for possible clauses in the resolution)
- What are the deficiencies of the past actions which can be improved in the resolution?
- Is the right of freedom of expression violated in the resolution?
- Is there any co-operation with existing NGOs in the resolution?
- Is the resolution appropriate to the guidelines of The Resolution of Condemnation of Violence against Journalists?

# Further Reading

**About safeguarding and 2014 Care Act:**
https://www.scie.org.uk/publications/guides/guide15/legislation/otherlegislation/vulnerablepeoplelegislation.asp

**About the 2014 Care Act, I advise the delegates to look at the headlines which are related to the agenda item, individually:** http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/contents/enacted

**About the six principles of safeguarding:**
https://www.virtual-college.co.uk/news/safeguarding/2018/12/what-are-the-6-principles-of-safeguarding

**About Jamal Khashoggi:**
https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2018/10/23/jamal-khashoggi-killing-investigation/1736644002/

**About Protection of Journalists from Violence:** https://rm.coe.int/16806daac6

**About Past Actions Regarding the Agenda Item:**
https://www.osce.org/representative-on-freedom-of-media/413552?download=true

**About CPJ:** https://cpj.org/about/ **About EFJ:** https://europeanjournalists.org

**About Past Resolutions by the EFJ, I advise the delegates to look at all resolutions:**
https://europeanjournalists.org/about-efj/resolutions/

**More information about the Council of Europe's stand on the issue:**
https://www.coe.int/en/web/media-freedom/the-platform

**About Safety of Journalists:**
http://www.unesco.org/new/en/unesco/events/prizes-and-celebrations/celebrations/international-days/world-press-freedom-day/previous-celebrations/worldpressfreedomday2009000/themes/safety-of-journalists/

**The 2018 UNESCO Director- General's Report on the Safety of Journalists and the Danger of Impunity:**
https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/unesco_dg_report_2018_highlights_en.pdf

**About the Director-General's Report:**
https://ifex.org/what-you-need-to-know-about-unescos-report-on-journalists-safety-and-impunity/

**IPDC's sessions and relevant documents:**
https://en.unesco.org/themes/safety-journalists/dgreport

**Report regarding the last 5 years of the UN Plan of Actions' successes, challenges and more:** https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/report_-_multi-stakeholder_consultation.pdf

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https://www.leeds.gov.uk/saferleeds/Documents/What%20is%20Safeguarding.pdf

https://www.virtual-college.co.uk/news/safeguarding/2018/12/what-are-the-6-principles-of-safeguarding

https://www.virtual-college.co.uk/news/safeguarding/2018/01/what-is-safeguarding

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https://dictionary.cambridge.org/tr/sözlük/ingilizce/neglect

https://dictionary.cambridge.org/tr/sözlük/ingilizce/abuse

https://cpj.org/about/

https://www.forbes.com/sites/niallmccarthy/2018/12/19/the-deadliest-countries-for-journalists-in-2018-infographic/#7d9ccab32af5

https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2018/10/23/jamal-khashoggi-killing-investigation/1736644002/

https://europeanjournalists.org/about-efj/resolutions/

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http://www.safeguardingmatters.co.uk/uk-safeguarding-approach/isa-barring/

https://www.scie.org.uk/publications/guides/guide15/legislation/otherlegislation/vulnerablepeoplelegislation.asp

https://www.article19.org/issue/safety-of-journalists-and-human-rights-defenders/

https://en.unesco.org/programme/ipdc/

https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/unesco_dg_report_2018_highlights_en.pdf

https://en.unesco.org/themes/safety-journalists/dgreport

https://en.unesco.org/news/un-mobilizes-improve-safety-journalists-and-fight-impunity

https://en.unesco.org/un-plan-action-safety-journalists

https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/report_-_multi-stakeholder_consultation.pdf

http://www.ngo.org/ngoinfo/define.html

https://en.unesco.org/programme/ipdc/