



# General Assembly

GA/RES/004  
19-20 February 2019

---

## RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### **Regarding Press Freedom**

*The General Assembly,*

*Guided by* the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations,

*Deeply concerned* by the killing and imprisonment of members of the global press, counting 259 journalists imprisoned and 79 killed in 2017 alone,

*Recognizing* transparency and accountability of government as crucial to democracy, and that lack of accountability allows governments to ignore popular opinion and removes essential checks on power,

*Alarmed* by increasing attacks and limits placed on mainstream media by global leaders that serve to deepen hate for the press and often precede murder and imprisonment,

*Recalling*, the murder of Jamal Khashoggi, a Saudi journalist, whilst inside the Saudi consulate in Istanbul as evidence of this,

*Noting with appreciation* the United Nations Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity which invites agencies, funds, and programmes of the United Nations to work with Member States towards free and open environments for journalists and media workers in both conflict and non-conflict situations;

*Recalling also* the many relevant reports and resolutions of the United Nations Human Rights Council with regard to the protection of the safety of journalists and to human rights on the Internet,

*Underlining* the right to freedom of opinion and expression as a human right accorded to all, in accordance with article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and that this is foundational to the development and sustainment of democratic society,

*Stresses* that laws, statutory regulation, intimidation, fines, highly concentrated ownership by politicians or others with conflicting interests can all limit the freedom to acquire and access information or lead to threats to freedom of and after expression,

*Alarmed by* the rise in the criminalisation of expression and in the use of defamation, blasphemy, and libel laws to imprison and censor journalists,

1. *Unequivocally condemns* the killing and imprisonment of journalists deriving from their exercising of their human right to expression;
2. *Calls for* international cooperation ensuring the timely and unconditional release of all journalists who have been imprisoned for practicing their profession;
3. *Decides* to prioritize press freedom to report on issues otherwise considered by States to be of concern to national security without fear of prosecution;
4. *Emphasises* the importance of encryption and anonymity tools for many journalists to exercise and enjoy their human rights, including to secure their communications and to protect the confidentiality of their sources, and calls upon States to not interfere with the use of such technologies;
5. *Further calls for* the creation of legislation by Member States granting greater protection to local and international journalists in order to combat the pervasive impunity for crimes against journalists present in our societies;
6. *Demands* sanctions against nations who do not follow the above practices.

**Submitter:** Switzerland  
**Seconder:** Netherlands  
**Negator:** Syria