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**Message from Ms Audrey Azoulay,**

**Director-General of UNESCO**

**on the occasion of the International Day to End Impunity  
for Crimes against Journalists**

**2 November 2019**

The statistics are sobering: in the last 10 years, at least 881 journalists have been killed around the world for simply telling the truth. Forty-four have died so far in 2019 alone. In almost nine out of 10 cases, these crimes have gone unpunished.

UNESCO seeks to prevent these tragedies by promoting a safe environment for journalists and media workers, notably through the United Nations Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity. However, when the worst happens, UNESCO calls for those responsible for journalist deaths to be held accountable. It fights impunity in the field, by training judges and members of the judiciary, cooperating with human rights courts and working with governments to create national prosecution mechanisms.

These actions are also supported by a new Global Media Defense Fund, which was created at the initiative of the United Kingdom and Canada and is administered by UNESCO. This Fund complements work already undertaken by UNESCO to fight impunity around the world, including through the Multi-Donor Programme on Freedom of Expression and Safety of Journalists and the International Programme for the Development of Communication. It will do this in particular by fostering legal cooperation and supporting the continuation of work by journalists who have been killed.

On 2 November, this year's *International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists*, is focused on local journalists. Through the campaign **#KeepTruthAlive**, it challenges the perception that murders only happen far from the public eye, primarily targeting foreign war correspondents. It shines the spotlight on local

journalists working on corruption and politics in non-conflict situations, who represented 93% of journalist deaths in the past decade.

UNESCO holds to account all those who put journalists at risk, all those who kill journalists, and all those who do nothing to stop this violence. The end of a journalist's life should never be the end of the quest for truth.