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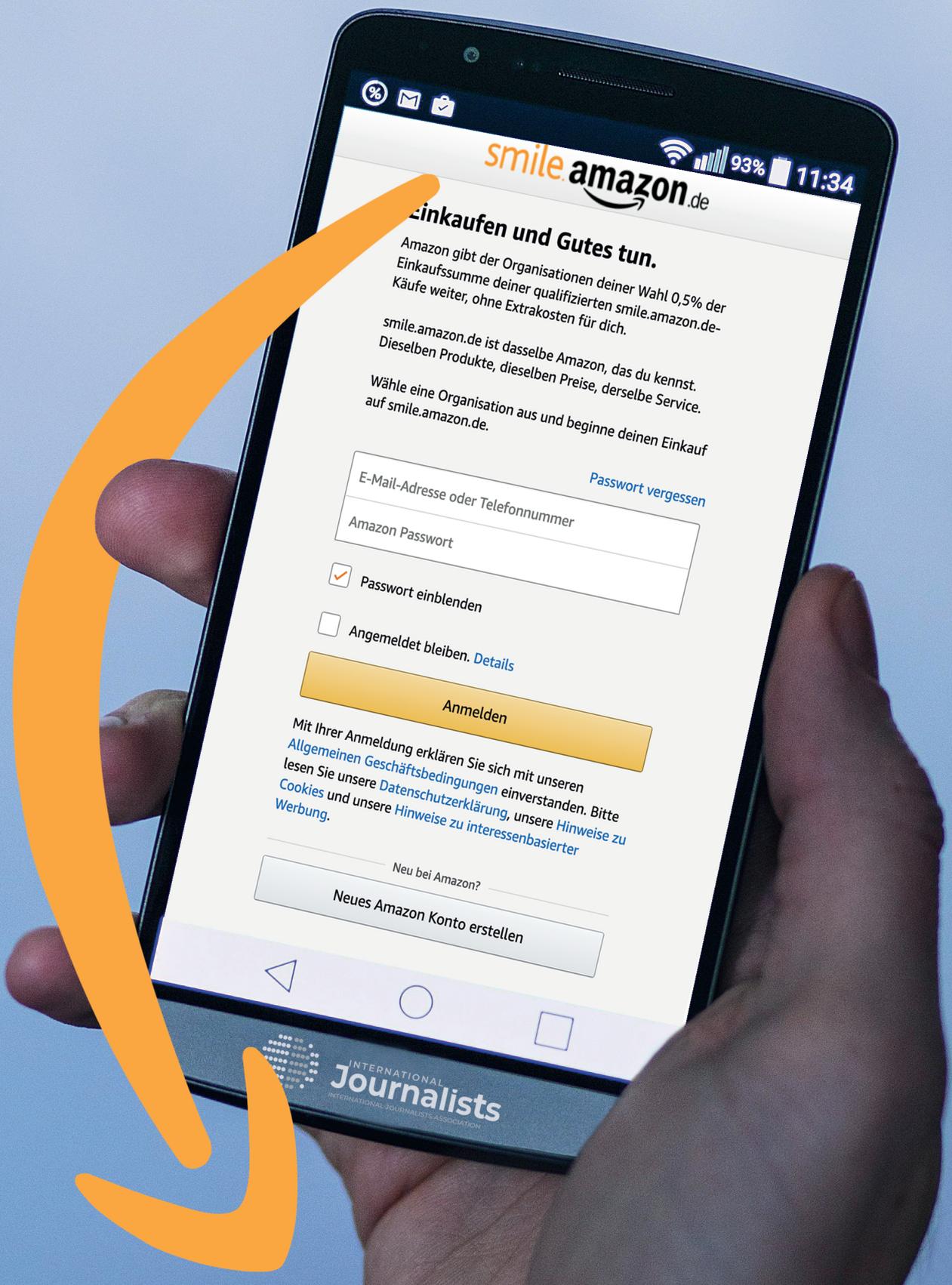
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UKRAINIAN SUPERSTAR AND DISPLACED JOURNALIST MASHA EFROSININA:

I AM A LIVING DEAD

I did not come here with the dream of building a better life. People think that we are in better conditions than Ukraine. But we are not. I lost everything I love and what I have, my achievements and my career. I lived a life of constant rising. We left a cherished life behind us. We did not live under bad and exploited conditions. **42**

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ART DIRECTOR:
ÖMER AKBULUT

DESIGN:
KEMAL KAHVECİ

COVER PHOTO BY:
BARBAROS KAYA

CONTACT INFORMATION:
Adres: Poststraße 2-4,
60329 Frankfurt am Main
Deutschland
Phone:+49 069 84846306
GSM:+49 179 1385035
E-Mail: journalistpost@
internationaljournalists.org
www.internationaljourna-
lists.org

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Long Arms Target Journalists



YÜKSEL DURGUT EDITOR

Rana Ayyub, an Indian writer of the Washington Post, has received about 8.5 million threats, including death threat messages, on Twitter in 27 months for criticizing Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his party, the BJP. This figure made her one of the most threatened journalists in the world.

Nobel Peace Prize laureate and CEO and co-founder of the news organization Rappler in the Philippines, Maria Ressa receives about 2 thousand messages every day on her Facebook page, ranging from insults to death threats, according to a report prepared by UNESCO. The report emphasizes that those who send these messages are all trolls. It's almost too difficult to get rid of these trolls, and their lies are spreading faster than the truth.

Journalist Jamal Khashoggi, who was killed at the Consulate General of Saudi Arabia in Istanbul, reveals a painful diagnosis about the Arab world in his last column published after his death. He wrote that most of those living in Arab countries are unaware or misinformed about political events around the world. He said that the people had not heard about the events that affected their lives, and that they were afraid to discuss them in public, and that the states were deceiving the people with false news.

The long arms that states use to silence their opponents beyond their borders is not a new phenomenon. The founder and commander of the Red Army, Leon Trotsky, an influential politician in the early Soviet years, was exiled from his country after Stalin. He was killed in a suspicious manner in 1940 in Mexico and became one of the earliest known cross-border operatives. Russia's most well-known overseas assassination is that of Russian asylum seeker Alexander Litvinenko, who was poisoned in the UK in 2006.

In the early 1980s, Libyan leader Muam-

mar Gaddafi likened his opponents to "stray dogs" and targeted his country's exile community until he was overthrown. After the revolution, Iran carried out 'waves of assassinations' against its citizens living in exile, especially in Europe, after the opponents fled the country.

Authoritarian regimes demand loyalty not only to the state, but also to the party and the leader. However, the wishes of these leaders are not done with consent, but with force for both in and abroad.

The image of helmeted war correspondents, protected by bulletproof vests, armed only with cameras and microphones, comes to mind. Physical threats against messengers are the most visible danger. Journalists and journalism itself are also grappling with other threats, such as censorship, political and economic pressure, intimidation, and attacks on the protection of news sources. Social media and digital photography enable anyone to publish information now and this subverts journalistic ethics.

According to the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, about two-thirds of those who consume news now use social networks or messaging apps. UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, Irene Khan argues the impact of media freedom and security in the digital age on human rights, democracy and development, and its creating danger to many journalists.

Khan advocates the creation of an international task force to prevent, investigate and prosecute attacks on journalists, saying that "Silencing journalists by killing them is the most terrible form of censorship."

In this issue, you will read the incredible stories of many of our journalist friends, especially Serhiy Tomilenko, the president of the Society of Journalists (NSJU) from Ukraine. You will be touched when you read how the war changed the lives of our colleagues and their new lives in neighboring countries, where they were forced to emigrate. Serhiy Tomilenko, in his article written for our magazine, says that they wish the support to Ukrainian journalists to continue.

Failing to protect our journalists is failing to protect the future of independent media. Confronting the harassment they face is a moral imperative and a common stance must be taken. ■



MONIQUE HOFMANN *

Free journalism on a Tightrope

Good working conditions for journalists are a prerequisite for the media to be able to live up to their responsibility for democracy.

Freelance journalists in Germany earned on average around 884 euros, less than their full-time permanent colleagues, resulted in a study on precarization in journalism at LMU Munich found last year. The gap has been increasing since 2014/2015. What is also frightening is the finding that the majority of freelance journalists, almost a third, earn only between 600 and 1200 euros a month. The situation is particularly dramatic for newspaper journalists, especially for those who work in the local area. 25 Cents per line, included online publication? Hardly unique. Anyone who protests and demands a reasonable fee will be dismissed: “We would like to refrain from further cooperation with you in the future,” is then said.

Therefore, only a few even dare to take the step of asserting their fee claims in court – despite considerable chances of success. Just like a freelance local journalist, whom the Landauer Zeitung had paid 14 cents per line and 5 euros per picture for years. The Higher Regional Court of Nuremberg awarded her an additional payment of over 70,000 euros in

2020. This decision was based on the Common Remuneration Rules (GVR) agreed by the trade unions and the Publishers’ Association for journalists at daily newspapers, which the court recognized as a guide, although they had been unilaterally terminated by the publishers in 2017. Also by means of collective struggle, in which the free unite in solidarity, improvements could already be achieved in the past. For example, at the “Esslinger Zeitung”, where the freelancers no longer accepted orders for two weeks in 2018 and in this way were able to achieve a noticeable increase in their fees and expense allowances.

However, these rare moments of success cannot obscure the worrying reality: a majority of freelance journalists need a second or even third reliance point in order to be able to pay their own rent at all. A growing number are even leaving the journalism industry altogether – with fatal consequences, especially for local journalism, where the democracy-promoting importance of the media is most clearly shown. Especially since other factors favor this development.

FINANCIAL AND SAFETY CHALLENGES FOR FREELANCE JOURNALISTS

Because the situation of freelance journalists is unstable not only from a financial point of view. For years, media professionals have been exposed to a growing number of attacks: threats in the digital platforms or on the street, hate campaigns on the internet, physical assaults, especially since the nationwide spread of anti-corona measures-protests by lateral thinking and other groups, also increasing legal attacks in the form of cease-and-desist requests or even lawsuits. Almost daily hostility of any kind is now part of everyday working life for many media representatives.

But while permanent journalists can rather count on the support of their publishing house or their broadcasting company, freelance journalists are defenseless in the front row. Especially if they are not employee-like freelancers, so-called permanent freelancers, or if they are journalists who even work without a media company's order at all. Having to read dozens of hate messages every day and check them for criminal relevance takes a lot of time and is psychologically stressful. The same applies to journalists who report a physical attack on them and want to ensure a fair punishment of the perpetrators. Anyone who has to defend themselves against legal attacks or even against so-called SLAPPs, strategic lawsuits against public participation, is quickly worn down by the time and cost required for this. It can even take on life-threatening extend.

To conclude, If the problematic structural conditions for freelance media work do not change, more and more freelance journalists who can no longer afford their jobs will migrate to other industries. And this will noticeably harm journalism as a constituent building block of democracy as a whole. So what to do? To start with, publishers do not take action on their own, therefore the legislator is called upon to take these into account. That is why we at ver.di demand, among other things, that the state press subsidies that are now being discussed, as well as any other direct or indirect subsidies, are only granted to companies that adhere to collective bargaining and social standards in the industry. Good working conditions for (freelance) journalists are a prerequisite for the media to be able to live up to their responsibility for democracy. ■

FREELANCE JOURNALISTS MAKE THE HIGH-QUALITY WORK

Freelance Journalists make the high-quality work
We do not know the current representative figures, but some indications suggest that journalism in Germany is now done by significantly more freelancers than permanent employees. For the journalistic product, this means that its quality largely depends on the work of the freelancers and that without their work, the media would no longer be able to depict events in business, politics and society in the way that is necessary for the fulfillment of their public mission. Free journalism is therefore fundamental for maintaining the democracy-relevant function of the media. As an apparent contradiction, it seems that freelance journalists have been exposed to increasing precarity for years, and not only with regard to their economic situation.

MONIQUE HOFMANN

In 2014, she was the director of the 'Europäische Bürgerinitiative für Medienvielfalt' (European People's Initiative for media diversity).

In 2015, he started to work in the media sector at Ver.di as the person responsible for communication and public relations.

Hofmann, who has been the director of the Deutsche Journalistinnen- und Journalisten-Union (German Journalists' Union) at ver.di since November 2020, represents the rights of all journalists organized in the ver.di union.

She organizes workshops for press workers and provides legal support. As the DJU manager she is also responsible for the press cards. Since 2016, she has been working as a freelance journalist on media issues for the media magazine "Menschen Machen Medien".

ERDOGAN'S LONG ARMS

ENCIRCLE EUROPE

Losing power and reveal of the corruption are Erdogan's biggest fear. This fear leads to unbelievable illegal practices. Some journalists are attacked in the middle of the street, private correspondences and photographs of some of them are shared. Some of them are targeted by spreading their home address.



İSMAİL SAĞIROĞLU

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan is most afraid of opposition journalists and writers. He resorts to all kinds of ways to turn down all the voices that reveal corruption and lawlessness.

For example, he provides various assistance to countries that are considered third-world or offers to give unmanned aerial vehicles produced by his son-in-law. He sometimes bargains, just as the case with Sweden and Finland's membership in NATO.

In strong countries where he cannot negotiate, such as Germany, he puts paramilitary structures working for him into operation. Such structures are called "long arms of Erdogan." These long arms have acted many times in Europe before. Journalist Erk Acarer was attacked in front of his house in Berlin. Journalist Abdullah Bozkurt was also hospitalized by people waiting right outside of his house in Stockholm. Again, journalist Ahmet Dönmez was stopped on his way to pick up his child from school in Sweden and attacked. He suffered a brain hemorrhage due to the attack. He was back from death's door. It is known that Erdogan has assigned a deputy named Metin Küllüncü to organize the Turkish in Europe. Küllüncü organizes Turkish groups living in Europe through some associations and uses them in such events. But, unfortunately, the lawsuits filed by the German authorities on this issue have not been concluded.

Erdogan's long arms have also reached out to journalists, who have recently reached millions of people via Youtube. For example, the account of Said Sefa, a journalist living in Canada, was hacked and his private information was shared. Sefa stated that he would

not give in to these threats and would continue his journalism.

Another targeted name is Cevheri Güven. Cevheri Güven, whose Youtube posts have been viewed millions of times and who is Turkey's most influential journalist despite not living in Turkey, was targeted on the first page by the Sabah newspaper, of which Erdogan is the "secret owner". His explicit address where he lives in Germany, photos of him and his child, the hours he walks around were published in the newspaper. All the details about his house, neighborhood, and family were shared. He was even photographed in the grocery store where he was shopping. The meaning of the message given is very clear, as Turkish journalists have been subjected to attacks with fists and sticks in cities in Europe that are considered safe. Güven is intended to be "scared" and "silence".

Journalist Güven expressed that he was targeted because he reported on the role of the Turkish National Intelligence Organization in the July 15 "coup" attempt, which Erdogan used to strengthen his own seat. "You will not be able to prevent the truth and journalism," said he showing that he would continue his publications without fear.

We are seeing a new version of the Saudi Arabian government's murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi, the Mullah regime ruling Iran and the Putin regime ruling Russia trying to track down and silence dissidents. If Erdogan's long arms are not stopped, Europe, which seems to be the stronghold of "democracy and freedom", will suffer greatly.

As Journalist Post, we asked Journalist Cevheri Güven about the incident and the difficult process he was going through.

PROTECTING EXILED JOURNALISTS IS NECESSARY TO PROTECT EUROPEAN DEMOCRACY



Erdogan-controlled Sabah Newspaper targeted journalist Cevheri Güven by publishing his home address, photos of his house and children on the headlines on September 22.

You had to emigrate because there is no free publishing in Turkey. How safe are you in the country you just moved to?

I am currently living in Germany, there are conditions under which I can exercise my freedom of expression. But that doesn't mean I don't have security issues. Recently, my exiled journalist friends from Turkey were attacked in Germany and Sweden. I am facing the same threat. I am comfortably exercising my freedom of expression. I am far from the danger of imprisonment, but I think that I am in danger from the point of view of life safety.

As an opposition journalist, you are constantly being targeted. How does this affect your work?

The regime has various methods to prevent me to do my profession. They are trying to keep me, my family, and my relatives in Turkey under constant pressure and stress. This is followed by discrediting with false information. Fighting them, of course, causes to a huge loss of time and energy. However, it does not break my determination to continue my profession.

Erdogan's long arms have previously carried out attacks in cities in Europe that are considered safe. For that matter, even the address of your home was clear-

ly published. How has this affected you and your family? Did you feel unsafe, Did you thought about making a plan b?

The publication of a photo of us walking with my son on the road, photos of my house and my address in a pro-government newspaper Sabah is of course a clear threat. In addition, the publication of my address aims to target fanatical Erdoğanists living in Europe. This is a very clear threat to my life safety. Seeing my home address, photos of my house in the newspaper; it is not an easy situation for my family to cope with, as well as for me.

Do the security agencies show the necessary sensitivity to ensure your safety in Germany, the country you now live in?

I would like to think that the German security service has shown the necessary sensitivity. I wouldn't know for sure. I have no intention of bringing the problems in Turkey to Germany. But Europe should see this: concessions to authoritarian regimes are returning to the Western world as higher bills to be paid. It is like the picture created by the concessions given to Putin in Ukraine. Protecting exiled journalists who are fighting authoritarian regimes is also necessary to protect European democracy. ►



NORDIC MONITOR EDITOR **LEVENT KENEZ:**

I HAVE NOT LOST FAITH THAT SWEDEN IS A STATE OF LAW

Journalist Levent Kenez is one of the names Erdogan wants from Sweden. Swedish courts had previously rejected Turkey's extradition request for Kenez. But Erdogan wants Kenez and journalists living in Sweden to be extradited again so that Sweden can be admitted to NATO.

As Journalist Post magazine, we asked journalist Levent Kenez about his request to be extradited and this difficult process he is going through.

Did you ever think that in the country where you took refuge, one day you could be made a subject of negotiation? What was your reaction when you first heard this news?

When Sweden's NATO membership came up, we joked with other opposition journalists living in Sweden and predicted that our names would definitely come up. Frankly, since I know Turkey's anti-democratic demands in the process of North Macedonia's NATO membership, it was not difficult to predict this. Since there is a court decision regarding the denial of my extradition, frankly, I did not have any concerns. But we should not deny the possibility that others might can be victims of a political bargain.

Pro-government newspapers have targeted you. Did you feel unsafe? Have you thought about making a new trip, moving to a more distant country? How has your family been affected by this situation?

I live with the possibility that security-related risks have always existed,

as threats and harassment have also occurred before the NATO process. Being targeted in government newspapers has increased this risk. I have not lost my faith that Sweden is a state of law, and I care that the court has decided to reject the extradition request. I didn't consider going to another country. It is an unpleasant situation for my family, but the regime in Turkey does not surprise them with such threats and risks.

What will happen to you if you are extradited to Turkey?

Arrest and subsequent conviction for crimes you never committed, long-term imprisonment. And, of course, the possibility of ill-treatment and torture. Reputation assassinations and harassment of my family members in the ruling media to present being brought from abroad as a victory.

Many Turkish journalists have been attacked in Europe. Does this structure, called the long arms of Erdogan, pose a threat to you in the country where you live? If so, what kind of measures are you taking to protect yourself?

As in all places where Turks live extensively, there are structures funded by supporters of the ruling party and the government in Sweden. Of course, for everyone demonized by the government, this is a threat. Two journalists, Abdullah Bozkurt and Ahmet Dönmez, have been attacked in Sweden in recent years. From this point of view, we cannot say that Sweden is a very safe country.

JEMIMAH STEINFELD *

THE LONG ARMS OF CHINA

The long arm of the Chinese government is reaching journalists as far away as Europe in order to control what is said about the country. We have seen this with non-Chinese journalists, especially during the early days of the pandemic when several incidences occurred of negative coverage on China resulting in a slapped wrist by the publication that ran it. But even more so we see it with Chinese journalists

who are exiled here, especially those from Hong Kong. The extra-territorial nature of the Hong Kong National Security Law means the Chinese government can punish people who criticise the Chinese government anywhere in the world. These are legal threats with implications for where these journalists can live and travel. They create a chilling effect and are often coupled by other forms of threats.

* Editor-in-chief Index on Censorship. Jemimah Steinfeld has lived and worked in both Shanghai and Beijing where she has written on a wide range of topics, with a particular focus on youth culture, gender and censorship. She is the author of the book *Little Emperors and Material Girls: Sex and Youth in Modern China*. Jemimah has freelanced for a variety of publications, including *The Guardian*, *The Telegraph*, *The Independent*, *Vice*, *CNN*, *Time Out* and *The Huffington Post*.



SALLA NAZARENKO *

Defending media freedom is everyone's job

At the time of writing I got more bad news. A colleague in Belarus had been arrested. He is a courageous guy and knew this could happen any day: still hearing the news of his detention made me very sad. And he is not the only one: during my career I have seen colleagues fleeing their home countries, even shot dead. These were people I shared many things with: profession, values, sense of humor, curiosity for life, a yearn for social justice. The only difference between me and them was the fact that for them, this job is very dangerous. For me it is not.

Let me get this straight. Finland is known as an open democracy that ranks very high in the statistics for freedom of speech. And this is true for most parts: most of my colleagues are not threatened or sued by the authorities. Some of them are, though. At the very moment three Helsingin Sanomat journalists are prosecuted for disclosure of a state secret. The process is under way and is likely to take years. The end result is yet to be seen.

Despite occasional setbacks, press freedom is a core value in our society. When Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan insisted that the “state televisions need to be controlled” in Finland and Sweden, because they show the interviews of “terrorist leaders”, the editor-in-chief of Finnish public broadcaster Yle Jouko Jokinen answered quite bluntly, calling Erdoğan’s statements “typical delusion of an autocrat that he thinks that the world gets better better by trying to control media and freedom of speech,” and continued by saying that “the fact that dictators get mad at us tells us that we are doing a good job.”

It's not that there are no tensions between politicians and media in Finland. Many of our politicians do not like the media. Prime Minister Sanna Marin's partying hit the headlines all over the world, and many journalists felt the attention was exaggerated. Cannot a young woman party? Yes she can, but at the same time: if the woman is Prime Minister, her partying will be covered by the press. The importance of the issue for us all is something we can debate, but the fact that her partying will be covered cannot be undermined. That is how a democracy works: heads of state are kept accountable – even for things that can seem irritating or mundane. The Council for Mass Media in Finland is dealing with several complaints concerning the leaked partying videos.

The decision on whether there were breaches of good professional practice is about to arrive in a few weeks.

In many countries of the world, presidents and state leaders have no understanding of a free press. Despite the fact that many, if not most constitutions guarantee free speech and few state leaders have publicly declared being against it, in practice press freedom requires a lot of work – also from our leaders. Press freedom means making decisions that promote it. Press freedom means access to public documents and well grounded reasons for any limitations to it. Press freedom means proactivity: answering the questions and enquiries of journalists. It also requires media policy: infrastructure that give people access to different media outlets. It means a functioning mail service, internet connections and more.

Also it is a two-way street. Professional journalists are self-regulated and take the ethical considerations very seriously. For instance, in many Finnish media outlets journalists cannot take any gifts from interviewees – even well-meaning hospitality gifts can be considered a risk to integrity. Journalists need to fact-check, use multiple sources, give their interviewees a fair account on where and when their interview shall be published.

Trust in media is declining in many societies. This is not true for Finland despite the fact that according to the latest Digital Media report by the Reuters institute for the study of journalism Finnish news remains the most highly trusted among the countries surveyed.

This trust is only earned by hard work every day. For journalists it means being open about journalistic processes, sources and angles. For authorities it means readiness for public scrutiny.

**Salla Nazarenko works as an international relations specialist at the Finnish Journalists' Union. She worked as a foreign correspondent for the Finnish media and took part in international organizations fighting for freedom of expression in Central Asia and the Caucasus. She completed her PhD on patriotism on Russian and Georgian television in August 2021 at the University of Tampere in Finland and she is a Rotary Peace Fellow at Oxford University's Reuters Institute and Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok.*



PHOTO: ENVAIO

ONE-MAN TARGETS

JOURNALISTS

HELLEN SCHULTZ FREE JOURNALIST

Tn its report 'Out of Sight, Not Out of Reach', Freedom House has enlisted 608 incidents of cross-border attacks by authoritarian regimes since 2014. Detentions, assaults, physical intimidation, illegal deportations, extraditions and suspected assassinations. The enlisted events are

just the tip of the iceberg. Every assassination, every detention creates a ripple effect in diaspora communities, they aim to silence much more than the targeted person.

One-man regimes take all kinds of steps to intimidate those in exile through physical threats and violence and prevent them from exercising their rights in democratic countries. At the beginning of the common tactics of deportation pressure, met-

We can only read about China's persecution of Uyghurs and Tibetans outside its borders in human rights reports. The people targeted by the countries where one-man regimes continue to exist have always been journalists.

hods such as threats via social media, harassment with spyware, and intimidation and imprisonment of the families of deportees are used.

It is the press workers who give their lives in the name of freedom of opinion and expression and try to be silenced with different methods in every environment. Threats to media freedom consist only of sending journalists behind bars, neither bullets nor iron bars. Some threats have become so common that journalists have begun to accept them as a normal part of their jobs.

As the followers of those living in exile increased after their publications, the methods of the regimes to silence these voices also increased. Today's Internet world has enabled journalists to reach millions. However, this method allowed the states to access intelligence information from thousands of kilometers away with the opportunities offered by the Internet.

Iranian journalist Ruhollah Zam, who was living as a well-known refugee journalist in France, was kidnapped and executed by the Iranian Revolutionary Guards in Iraq in 2019. Mamikhan Umarov, a blogger who criticized the regime of Chechen leader Ramazan Kadyrov and lived in exile in Vienna, was shot dead in a suburb.

The Rwandan government kidnapped Paul Rusesabagina, the real-life protagonist of the Oscar-nominated film "Hotel Rwanda," while he was traveling in the UAE. After being held in isolation for at least three days, he was put on trial for supporting terrorism.

We can only read about China's persecution of Uyghurs and Tibetans outside its borders in human rights reports. The people targeted by the countries where one-man regimes continue to exist have always been journalists. The most well-known of these is the journalist Jamal Khashoggi, who was murdered at the Saudi consulate in Istanbul.

These violent events are also shaping the lives of those in exile. As a result of intense depression, many people take a break from their struggle. "Although they don't kill your body, they kill your soul," says a Rwandan journalist living in exile.

Prison is another method of autocratic regimes to silence journalists who are fighting for democracy. In Turkey, more than 150 journalists were jailed after the alleged coup attempt on July 15, 2016, making the country the world's largest jailer of journalists. Mahmoud Hussein from Al Jazeera has been detained in Egypt for two years without trial. In the United Arab Emirates, Jordanian journalist Tayseer al-Najjar was sentenced to prison for failing to pay a fine of 136 thousand dollars imposed on him because of a post his family made on social media. The whole world knows very well that the Taliban are openly targeting journalists in Afghanistan.

They are harassed, intimidated, subjected to physical or legal threats. All these threats, big and small, happen every day. Before the news reaches the public, despotic regimes implement all the obstacles they can. This includes physical attacks, social media defamation, hacking of journalists' devices, theft of their equipment, blocking of websites, demonization and, most dramatically, fabricating the lie of a terrorist connection. Some leaders see journalists as "enemies" who write "fake news," imitating former US President Donald Trump.

According to the International Press Institute (IPI), the two biggest threats to media freedom are violence against journalists and the impunity of perpetrators.

Different methods are constantly being added to the silencing methods. Our colleagues were targeted because they only wrote articles on freedom of expression and thought in the last issue of the Journalist Post. It is a rare case that they put this as a shred of additional evidence to the file as if it were a crime before the court. It is only the method of one-man regimes to terrorize a magazine controlled under the law in another country and get an indictment prepared against them.

In the latest issue of Journalist Post, each of the journalists who took part in our "Journalism in spite of everything" cover article explained that they continue to pursue their professions under threat in other countries "after the isolation they have suffered in their countries. Exiled Journalist Alejandro Gutiérrez: Those who threatened me are in jail today But Alejandro lives far from his country because it is not safe.

Journalist Adem Yavuz Arslan also said, "Threats continue to come from the people of the Erdogan regime. Strange men wandered for days in front of the apartment building where I lived in the USA. They took photos of my wife, my children, and published them on the first page in all the media," he said in his statement. Iris Rohmann's news work was about Daphne Caruana Galizia, who was assassinated in Malta due to her investigations.

Any incident that prevents the safe conduct of journalism is a threat to media freedom and must be reported. There are many journalism platforms where these complaints are evaluated. These associations allow us to come together Decisively to demand changes, including better protection for journalists or legal reform that defends media freedom.

We all know that pointing sticks at media workers is a threat against democracy. There is no need to rephrase them, because such regimes are unlikely to perceive this. But we must protect the freedom of the media so that there is not only a darkness that is difficult for us to live in. But is it in the hands of journalists to change this radically? No, the help of each person is needed in this matter. ■

DESPITE THE PRESSURES, JOURNALISTS RESIST

“OUR PENS CONTINUE WRITING THE TRUTH”

The time is running out for the general elections to be held in Turkey in 2023. Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who has ruled the country for 20 years, is increasing his pressure on journalists he cannot silence in order to win a new election. He forces some of them to ‘flee’ abroad, and puts others forcibly behind bars. Although their numbers are very small, real journalists continue to resist despite all the pressures experienced.



ŞEMSİ AÇIKGÖZ

Turkey is experiencing perhaps the darkest period in its history regarding media independence. President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who has been in power for 20 years, has taken control of 95 percent of the media. He is also working to silence the remaining 5 percent group. Turkish journalists, who are trying to keep on with their professions by going abroad, are on their toes. They constantly receive death threats and are subjected to various attacks in the middle of Europe. Journalists who continue to carry out their duties in Turkey are either put in prisons or are tried to be silenced by opening lawsuits against them under various pretexts.

Finally, in June, the AKP Government arrested 16 Kurdish journalists, while the Journalist Post

Magazine also received its share of Erdogan’s anger. A list includes The Journalists Union of Turkey (TGS) Chairman Gökhan Durmuş, TGS Manager and European Federation of Journalists (EFJ) Vice President Mustafa Kuleli and Dicle-Fırat Journalists Association (DFG) Co-President Dicle Müftüoğlu, who wrote an article to our magazine from Turkey together with the editorial staff of Journalist Post were revealed throughout a police report about Dicle Müftüoğlu. Despite all these pressures, there is only one thing said by journalists who have been released, those who are in prison and journalists who go abroad; we will not take a step back from defending freedom of the press and opinion. We will continue to write the truths we know.



Serdar Altan is arrested in Diyarbakır Prison with 15 fellow journalists. Journalists still do not know why they were arrested and when the court will be.

ALTAN: THEY COULD NOT SILENCE US YESTERDAY AND THEY WILL NOT SUCCEED TODAY

We received the statements of 16 Kurdish journalists who were arrested through their lawyers and relatives. DFG Co-Chair Serdar Altan, who is currently in Diyarbakır Prison, stated that he made the statement on behalf of his journalist friends with whom he was in prison and said, “We have been unlawfully detained for more than 3 months (as of 16 September 2022) and we still do not know what we are accused of due to the confidentiality decision in our file. If the prosecutor’s office has any evidence, let us know about it. If they are seeking to create evidence or fabricate evidence, this is never acceptable.” said he.

Altan expressed that the arrests were a political operation aimed at silencing journalists and continues his words as follows: “Because they were not content with detaining us, they made the institutions we work in unable to carry on by raiding them. The AKP government wants to control all journalists. Just as they were unable to silence us yesterday despite intense attacks, bans and censorship, they will not be able to do so today.”

Altan emphasized that solidarity among journalists in prison is very important and said, “We have learned that journalists have been blacklisted with a secret document that has emerged in recent days. This document reveals the current government’s approach to journalists. The AKP-MHP government does not want anyone to speak or write, and they resort to various methods for this. All journalists, especially press professional organizations, should fight more effectively against lawlessness.”

NEŞE TOPRAK: I AM ARRESTED FOR MAKING ART NEWS

As a Kurdish artist and journalist, I used to bring art news to the people with the program called “Sanata Bakış”. While I was presenting art news from around the world, I was also reporting on the works of art created by artists, who somehow cling to life and put their efforts into art, despite the horrific picture experienced in regions where wars took place and people lost their lives. I am imprisoned for presenting stories about how art heals the devastations in the human psyche, but also how it affects daily life.

I was taken from my home at 05:00 on the morning of June 8, 2022 and detained with 22 of my friends for 8 days. I was arrested together with 15 of my friends without any concrete evidence. I have been under arrest for 4 months and my court date is still unknown. As 4 imprisoned women journalists, we are strong and resist to this unlawful arrest. Making art and journalism with free will is not a crime. (Diyarbakır Closed Women’s Prison)





SAFIYE ALAĞAŞ
JIN NEWS EDITORIAL

My pen is after the truth

I have experienced the heavy burden and difficulties of being a woman in this country. In addition to this, I also experience the difficulties of being a journalist. In my 14 years of journalism life, countless investigations were opened against me, and I was sometimes beaten and threatened during news coverage. Despite everything, my pen was after the truth. I am currently arrested. The corrupt system is constantly attacking people, socialists, democrats, women. In the case I am now on trial, various questions are asked from why I founded Jin News, who works there and the concepts we use, and these are considered crimes. I am imprisoned for drawing attention to women's struggle and problems.

REMZYİE TEMEL ACCOUNTANT

Thanks to those who are in solidarity with us

Being a journalist in a country where there is no freedom of the press and where journalism is considered a crime puts all kinds of pressure and obstacles in front of people. Despite all these pressures and obstacles, we will not stop bringing the truth to light. We know that oppression and arrests are a policy of intimidation. But we will continue to write at all times and under all circumstances. Thank you to everyone who are in solidarity with us.



ZEYNEL A. BULUT:

Those who want the truth to remain in the dark will not succeed

Zeynel A. Bulut, a letter from Diyarbakir, No. 2 High-security Penal Institution says that "We know very well what happened and why. We know how many journalists have been killed since the 1990s, how many of them were arrested and tortured without legal justification, how many media outlets have been shut down and after all, it was no surprise to us be arrested unlawfully. By practicing principled journalism, we have not remained silent about these crimes against humanity and inhuman policies performed on Kurdish people. Those who want to keep the truth in the dark by arresting us should know that no truth will remain in the dark.

The government could not silence us for

exposing their inhumane policies and threw us in prison. Since our arrests were political, we encountered a special practice from the first moment we were put in prison. For the first two months we were isolated and subjected to all kinds of rights violations. We believe that our colleagues will expose the dirty policies of the government and stop this and fight with social unity. Because all oppressed people, all excluded, marginalized groups should know well that all anti-democratic practices against them can only be corrected with social unity and common struggle.

Our duty is to be the voice of this rightful struggle. Our people must also protect journalists in order for the struggle to be successful.



ELİF ÜNGÜR JOURNALIST

"My body is in prison, but my heart and mind are free"

As a host of the "Culture" and "Ecology" program, I am a person who is responsible for presenting everything newsworthy anywhere in the world without marginalizing people. These pressures on us is actually to make news only for one group of people under single news language, under single point of view. We

are 16 journalists imprisoned for 4 months and we still do not know why we were arrested. Even our court date is unknown. Although the situation we live in is unfair and unacceptable, my faith and hope are always alive. My body is imprisoned, but my heart and mind are too free to remain locked behind doors.

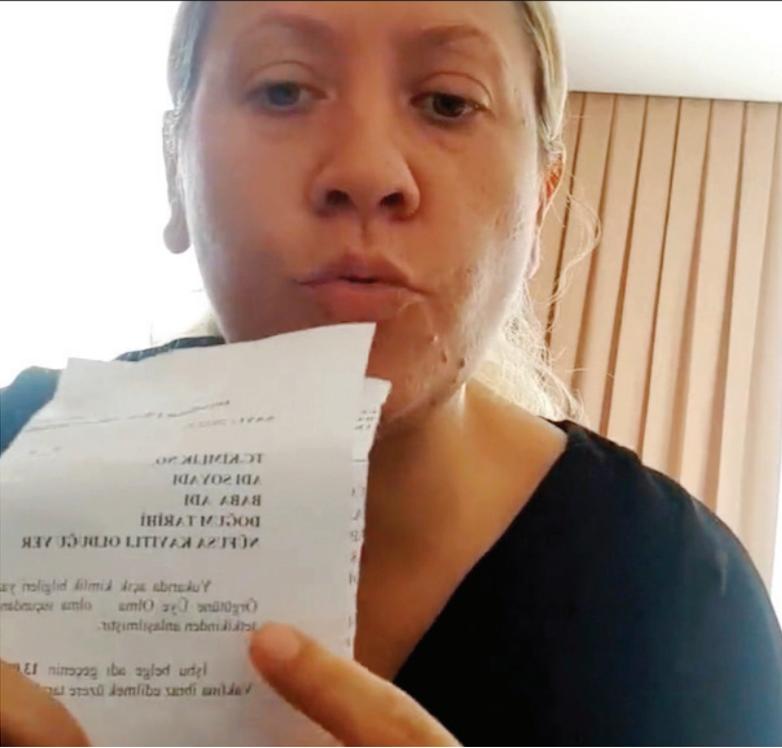
We should make a common voice to unlawful arrests



RAMAZAN GECIKEN
CAMERAMAN

Cameraman Ramazan Geciken stated that the biggest reason for their arrest was to prevent them from writing the facts during the upcoming election process, “We witnessed that these arrests took place not lawfully but with an order.” In prison, even our simplest rights are provided by delay. Our letters arrive after of 2 months. Although there is no banning order, the newspapers we request are not given to us. The government, which confiscated both our work and our cameras, is now trying to prevent us from communicating with our families in prison.”

Stating that the support for journalists should increase, Geciken continues his words as follows, “Because those who aim to silence our voice will do more if the silence deepens. The support of some journalists is very valuable. However, there is no guarantee that journalists who maintain their silence will not be targeted tomorrow.”



HÜLYA ORUÇ WIFE OF JAILED JOURNALIST AZIZ ORUÇ:

Our children are also being made targets

Hülya Oruç, the wife of Aziz Oruç, the Editor of the Mesopotamia News Agency, says that she and her children are also suffering the punishment of her husband's detention. Oruç describes her experiences as follows, “I have received documents from the prison to be given to various institutions and children's schools so that the families of detainees can benefit from some social rights. There is a statement in the document as follows: “He is in our Penitentiary Institution for the crime of being a member of an armed terrorist organization.” This is

deliberately targeting me and my children. How can I submit this document to my children's school or an official institution? We are trying to stand with the moral and material support of people. I am in a psychological battle and struggle with my two children. I want only one answer from the authorities: what is our fault? How can you label my 4 and 5-year-old children against society and make them targets? There are thousands of such children. I thought the crime was personal. Why are our children paying the price?”

List of journalists who have been in prison since June 16, 2022:

Aziz Oruç: Editor of the Mesopotamia News Agency. He was sentenced to up to 28 years in prison for the allegation of “making propaganda for a terrorist organization” and social media posts and was released to stand trial without arrest.

Safiye Alagaş: JinNews News Director. In 2011, she was awarded the international prize of Maria Grazia Cutuli. On the charge of “making propaganda for a terrorist organization”, she was sentenced to imprisonment for up to 8 years and 9 months. She was acquitted at the end of the trial.

Serdar Altan: DFG Co-Chair The media outlets he worked for were closed by the AKP Government. He was sentenced to up to 13 years in prison on charges of “making propaganda for a terrorist organization” and was acquitted.

Ömer Çelik: He was tried due to of his news and acquitted of some cases. A prison sentence of up to 15 years is demanded against him.

Lezgin Akdeniz: In October 2018, he was detained during a news investigation and spent three days in custody. He was tried on charges of “membership in an armed terrorist organization” and “Making propaganda for an organization”, and a prison sentence of up to 28 years was demanded.

Zeynel Abidin Bulut: Director of Dicle Fırat Journalists Association. Editor of the Xwebün Newspaper. He was detained many times, stayed in prison. He was sentenced to 10 months in prison for “propaganda of the terrorist organization” for participating in the 2020 commemoration of journalist Mazlum Erenci, who died in 2011.

Mehmet Şahin: Xwebun newspaper writer and Kurdish linguist. He was prosecuted for expressing his ideas about language and mother tongue in the meetings he attended. He was sentenced to 6 years and 3 months in prison on the charge of “membership of a terrorist organization”.

Mehmet Ali Ertaş: Xwebun Editor-in-Chief. On December 2017, he was sentenced 1 year 3 months in prison as he called October 10 Ankara Station attack a “massacre”.

Neşe Toprak: She was arrested for presenting culture and art programs at Pel Productions.

Elif Üngör: She was preparing and presenting culture and ecology programs at Pia Productions.

Suat Doğuhan: He worked as a cameraman in Sin ve Gün TV and Ari Productions.

İbrahim Koyuncu
Cameraman and video editor.

Abdurrahman Öncü
He worked as a cameraman at Gün, Sim TV and Pia Productions.

Ramazan Geciken
He was working as a cameraman at Pel Productions.

Mazlum Güler
He was making a documentary at Pia Productions.

Remziye Temel
She was working as a front accountant at Pia Productions. The reason of arrest is working there.



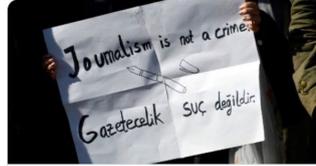
Solidarität mit unseren türkischen Kolleg*innen und unserer Schwestergewerkschaft @TGS_org_tr Umso deutlicher wird daran aber, wie wichtig die Arbeit von Medien wie der @journalist_post ist, die auch wir unterstützen. #JournalismsNotACrime



#Turkey: Solidarity with the 20 journalists blacklisted by the Turkish General Directorate of Security. Together with @TGS_org_tr & @MediaFreedomEU we denounce this attempt at intimidation. #JournalismsNotACrime europeanjournalists.org/blog/2022/09/0...



#Turkey: Solidarity with the 20 journalists blacklisted by the Turkish General Directorate of Security. Together with @TGS_org_tr & @MediaFreedomEU we denounce this attempt at intimidation. #JournalismsNotACrime



europeanjournalists.org Turkey: Twenty journalists including TGS leadership blacklisted... The European Federation of Journalists (EFJ) joined the partner organisations of the Media Freedom Rapid Response (MFRR) L...



ARTICLE 19 @article19org - Sep 12 Turkey: ARTICLE 19 alongside @MediaFreedomEU partners and @TGS_org_tr expresses solidarity with the 20 journalists blacklisted by the Turkish General Directorate of Security for their writing in an apparent attempt to intimidate journalists.



article19.org Turkey: Security unit blacklists 20 journalists including union leaders ... Turkish authorities have blacklisted 20 journalists, including union leaders, for their work on freedom of expression and press freedom.

Great reaction from international professional organizations to the Blacklisting

ARAŞTIRMA TUTANAĞI

Emniyet Genel Müdürlüğü Dış İlişkiler Başkanlığından alınan ve Terörle Mücadele Daire Başkanlığının05.2022 tarih ve 2022051815474983023 sayılı yazı ile bildirilen Bilgi Notunda; FETÖ/PDY Silahlı Terör Örgütünün faaliyetlerinin tespiti ve defisrine yönelik yapılan açık kaynak çalışmalar kapsamında; Almanya'da faaliyet gösteren ülkemiz aleyhinde kara propaganda üretmek, algı oluşturmaya çalışan International Journalist Association (Uluslararası Gazeteciler Derneği) isimli derneğin uluslararası ölçekte medya çalışanları arasında -sözde- diyalogu ve dayanışmayı sağlamaya yönelik destekleyici faaliyetlerde bulunma amacıyla 2019 yılında kurulduğu, derneğin @journalists_org isimli/rumuzlu twitter hesabı ve internationaljournalists.org internet sitesinin bulunduğu,

Dernek faaliyetleri kapsamında farklı erkeklerden gazeteci, yazar ve medya çalışanının medya özgürlüğü ve fikir hürriyetinde dair görüş ve düşüncelerinin paylaşılması amacıyla 2020 yılında -sözde- uluslararası dergi niteliğinde "Journalist Post" adı altında İngilizce, Almanca ve Türkçe dillerinde dergi yayınladıkları, (1.000) adet baskısı yapılan derginin yılda (2) defa yayımlanmasını planladığı, derginin oluşturulması için International Journalists Association (Uluslararası Gazeteciler Derneği) isimli derneğin bağlı topladığı, support@internationaljournalists.orgfomail adresine başvuru yapmak isteyenlerin bilgilerinin gönderilmesini istediği,

Journalist Post isimli derginin ilk sayısını Kasım 2020, ikinci sayısını Mayıs 2021, üçüncü sayısını Kasım 2021, dördüncü ve son sayısını ise Mayıs 2022 tarihlerinde yayınladığı, internationaljournalists.org isimli internet sitesinde derginin PDF versiyonunun da bulunduğu, anılan derginin yayın kurulunda FETÖ/PDY ilişkili şahıslara yer aldığına gözlemlendiği ve dergide görev alan veya yazıları yayımlanan şahıslardan açık kimlik bilgileri tespit edilen şahıslardan;

S.N.	ADI SOYADI	TCKN NO	DERGEDEKİ POZİSYONU	UYAP BİLGİSİ
1



There was a reaction from international press professional organizations to the blacklisting of the authors and editors of the Journalist Post magazine, which is published in 3 languages for the sake of press freedom.

The European Federation of Journalists (EFJ), the European Center for Press and Media Freedom (ECPMF), the International Press Institute (IPI), Article 19 and the Italian-based think tank OBC Transeuropa condemned the blacklisting in a joint statement. DJU, the world's and Germany's largest journalism association, also supported the joint statement.

The European Federation of Journalists (EFJ) has joined the partner organizations of the Media Freedom Rapid Response (MFRR) in condemning the attempt to intimidate independent journalists and trade unionists. EFJ sent a message of solidarity to the 20 journalists who were subjected to illegal labeling by the General Directorate of Security (EGM) due to their articles.

Mesopotamia News Agency (MA) announced on September 5 that

the General Directorate of Security (EGM) had blacklisted 20 journalists in connection with their articles in the Journalist Post magazine, published by journalists living in exile. The secret file containing the document was revealed during the trial of MA Editor-in-Chief Dicle Muftuoğlu on terrorism charges.

The list includes the names, ID numbers, positions of journalists who are involved in the management of the magazine or contribute to the magazine, and whether they log in with their identification numbers in the National Judicial Network (UYAP).

In a joint statement by the 5 international professional organization expressed "We call on the Turkish authorities to put an end to the repression of media freedom defenders and to stop the legal proceedings against the journalists included in the list. 38 journalists and media workers are still behind bars in Turkish prisons for doing their work in the public interest"

Blacklisted journalists say they will not give up freedom of the press and expression.

DFG CO-CHAIR DICLE MUFTUOĞLU:

WE ARE TARGETED BECAUSE WE WRITE THE FACTS



Dicle Muftuoğlu, who is an editor at the Mesopotamia Agency and is also the Co-Chairman of the Dicle Fırat Journalists' Association, is also among those who have been blacklisted. Some of the cases of Muftuoğlu, about whom dozens of investigations have been launched so far, are still ongoing.

Stating that the conditions of the geography where they are located and their identities determine their news priorities, Muftuoğlu answered, "Why are you at the target?" as follows: "Unfortunately, we are writing about the struggle of people who are ignored and who have been subjected to massacres. A government that sees no harm in carrying out massacres on the Kurdish people is also targeting journalists who spoke about violations. To give an example; the lives of 2 citizens named Servet Turgut and Osman Shibani, who were tortured and thrown out of a helicopter by soldiers in the Çatak district of Van. Our

friends were deprived of their freedom for 6 months because they reported this incident. Unfortunately, revealing the facts is considered a crime in this country."

"You have been blacklisted for writing in our magazine. What do you think about this?" she answers our question in the following way, "This document has been sent to my ongoing case file. One of the methods used by the government to criminalize journalists. The understanding that defines all who do not act as spokespersons of the government as "terrorists" and "foreign power" also does the same to the journalists. An additional file is being sent to the case, which has no evidence to create a perception about me. There is nothing acceptable about this situation. I am a journalist and I have the right to speak on every platform. Especially as a representative of a professional organization, it is unacceptable for me to be tagged because of an article I wrote about our struggle."

GOKHAN DURMUS, CHAIRMAN OF TURKEY JOURNALISTS' UNION:A

NO MATTER WHAT THEY DO, WE WILL DEFEND THE FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

The fact that the General Directorate of Security has decriminalized 20 of our colleagues, including myself, for writing articles is embarrassing for our country. As the Chairman of the Turkish Journalists' Union, I give statements to numerous media organizations and write articles. I stand behind the statements I have made about the state of press freedom in Turkey and the articles I have written.

I haven't said anything that's not true until now, and I won't later on. If someone is blacklisting me for expressing the facts in the media, let them do. I have no fear regarding this. But the dangerous thing is that those who express the problem for freedom of the press, which really needs to be talked about, are being labeled by those who created this problem. The situation of making writing, speaking, expressing the problem seem like a crime is an attack on the democracy of this country. No matter what they do, we will continue to defend the freedom of the press and expression.



EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF JOURNALISTS (EFJ) VICE PRESIDENT MUSTAFA KULELI:

I SAY IT ONE MORE TIME, TURKEY IS BIGGER THAN ERDOGAN

They are trying to criminalize journalism and rights advocacy by juxtaposing them with terrorism. They speak softly but carry a big stick to intimidate us. If we were afraid of threats, we would not aspire to these tasks. We will continue to defend journalists, journalism and democracy. As I said in my article on the subject of my blacklisting: Turkey is bigger than Erdogan. Because Turkey does not fit into the dictatorship shirt on which it is wanted to be worn. The people of Turkey will eventually defeat tyranny and despotism.





KERİM BALCI *

Civil death in a civilized world

In September 2016 the award-winning Syrian journalist Zaina Erhaim was stopped at London's Heathrow Airport and her passport --- declared stolen by the Syrian government --- was confiscated. Having evaded the Syrian regime's persecution till then, Erhaim was left practically stateless by the UK border agency and had to seek asylum. Assad's long arm reached Heathrow Airport through the INTERPOL's Stolen and Lost Travel Documents database.

Dictators learn from dictators.

Many Turkish dissidents had their valid passports confiscated by the visa departments of Western embassies and returned to the Turkish missions in third countries. Trying to convince border police that you have not stolen your own passport is an awkward situation indeed. And there is no remedy for the endured distress and the ensuing state of de facto statelessness.

When INTERPOL realized that its Stolen and Lost Travel Documents database was being misused, it established a mechanism to decline submissions by countries like Turkey. But dictators are apt in finding international organizations willing to collaborate. The Turkish government's latest transnational repression tool weaponizes anti-terror financing measures and recruits financial institutions to do its dirty job against its critics abroad. An administrative list of asset-freezing signed only by the Ministry of Interior and the Police Chief of the country was disseminated to financial conduct authorities, financial intelligence agencies and international financial transaction organizations and it did the trick. Closure of bank accounts, blocking of online trading accounts and cancellation of uber-style working contracts ensued. Erdoğan's long arm was everywhere and it was disguised as respectable financial institutions of Western democracies...

Having your online bank account closed with no explanation does not sound as radical as having your passport confiscated, but the repercussions in the long run

are exorbitant. The prime challenge of dissidents of any authoritarian regime is to establish stable and sustainable lives in their new countries of abode. In the West having a bank account and a dependable credit score is the first step towards settlement. Without a bank account, one cannot rent a house, hire a car, pay a bill, enrol a gym, register a school, subscribe to a phone line, play an online game, apply for a loan and have a decent credit score. In many Western countries, a debit or credit card is recognized as a supporting identification document.

It costs almost nothing to the Erdoğan regime to issue asset freezing lists and to be frank, with almost no assets left back in Turkey to be frozen, it does not hurt the dissidents in Turkey to have their assets frozen; but when the repercussions spillover into abroad it may lead to catastrophic ends.

Seeing this potential spillover and having many of its members on the asset-freezing lists of Turkey, International Journalists Association commissioned a report to British Barrister Michael Polak and Belgian lawyer Ali Yildiz on the "Weaponization of Anti-Terror Financing Measures: The Turkish government's new transnational repression tool to silence its critics". The report underlines that by way of usurping the international agreements and mechanisms established to fight the funding of terrorism, the Turkish regime is debilitating the fight against terrorism and wasting valuable time and energy of international organizations turning them into its longarm of transborder repression.

Dissidents abroad play a crucial role in the democratization of illiberal regimes. Sentencing them to a kind of civil death in the civilized West is in stark contradiction with the very values the Western democracies stand for. ■

**Kerim Balci is a former editor with now-defunct Turkish newspapers Zaman and Today's Zaman, and the former editor-in-chief of Turkish Review.*



AFP



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LILIAN SANCHES *

Political violence

T rue to be told, it was never considered safe to be a journalist in Brazil, but during election years the hazards faced by those professionals reach levels as high as the political stakes. With a record number of attacks against the press in 2021, the country has gone in the red zone of the Press Freedom World Ranking, an analysis carried out by the international organization Reporters Without Borders (RSF). According to this, since current President Jair Bolsonaro took power in 2019, the work environment has become even more dangerous for journalists. In only two years, the country has lost six positions in the ranking and is in 111th position. In Latin America, Brazil is the second country with the highest number of journalists murdered.

The Report on Violence against Journalists and Press Freedom – 2021, published annually by the National Federation of Journalists (FENAJ), based on data collected by the entity itself and by the unions in every Brazilian state, corroborates Reporter Without Borders' findings. The number of attacks on journalists and media vehicles set a new record in 2021, registering 430 cases, two more than the 428 recorded a year before. Censorship became the most common type of violence in recent reports, alongside discredit, which started off its own category in 2019, after the President in office began to systematically attack journalists and the media. Last year, 140 occurrences of censorship were recorded, representing 32.56% of cases, while discredit accounted for 30.46%. In addition to censorship, the number cases involving physical violence also increased; there were four assaults against journalists and eight attacks on union entities/leaders.

Even in such an alarming scenario, institutional assistance measures are scarce. The Protection Program for Human Rights Defenders (PPDDH) was implemented in the country in 2007, but only 11 years later, environmentalists and communicators had the chance to be included in the list of beneficiaries. And, to this day, just seven journalists were chosen to join the program; a reflection of how slowly Brazil is moving forward in terms of public policy to address the problem. Especially during election years, every press freedom studies and dossiers indicate the tendency for violence climb, hence

the obvious yet underrated need to adopt more emergency measures to prevent crimes and protect the fundamental role that press plays in guaranteeing democracy.

With Election Day just creeping around the corner and no structural nor institutionalized initiatives in this regard, Reporters Without Borders (RSF) for Latin America, with the support of the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives (FCIL) in Brazil, launched a project to identify, analyze, decipher and report online attacks against journalists and communicators during the electoral process in 2022. By the end of the second round on October 30th, over 100 Twitter and Facebook profiles of journalists, influencers, public officials and candidates, both at federal and state levels, will be monitored daily. The project will also watch out for terms considered as stigmatizing speeches, offenses and insults recurrently used on the networks to attack journalists and the press in general.

The results of this work will be compiled and published periodically, throughout the campaign, on the RSF website. A detailed report regarding the main trends and attacks observed will also be shared at the end of the electoral process. The project's main goal is to better understand the origin, structure and organization of online attacks, expose perpetrators and find effective and lasting solutions to fight the phenomenon.

It's urgent that this kind of political violence do not go unpunished and are not trivialized. Should not just professionals but society altogether demand articulated measures at the municipal, state and federal levels in the prevention, protection and access to justice. Protecting journalists it's not only to protect freedom itself, but care for and hold dear the already enfeebled cornerstone of democracy. ■

** Lilian Sanches is a journalist and currently a Social Psychology PhD candidate. As a researcher, she has worked in the humanitarian and peace journalism field, focusing on terrorism and its media representation phenomena. She has 10+ years of professional experience, covering international affairs, economics, city management and public services. In 2019, she produced five special pieces for Jornal da Cultura as an international envoy to Iraq, Lebanon and Lebanon.*



SANNA CAMARA *

#NeverAgain: Gambian Journalists Fighting to Ensure a non-Recurrence of Jammeh History

The Gambia Truth and Reconciliation Commission set up following the defeat of dictator Yahya Jammeh in The Gambia, laid bare the extent of persecution that journalists and free expression activists faced under the tyrannical rule of former President Yahya Jammeh: over 140 cases of arrests and detentions were registered between 1994 and 2017.

This was the period when a one-time Lieutenant in the Gambia army led a blood-less military coup against a three-decade democratic government of founding president, Dawda Kairaba Jawara. For a current population of about 2 million, 140 is quite high a figure, especially when it represents violations of human rights and press freedom. This numbers include three killings, high number of tortures, false imprisonment, burning down of media offices and their facilities when they publish or broadcast critical content against the former dictator. It represents Yahya Jammeh's score card against journalism in mainland Africa's smallest country.

From independence in 1965 to 1994, The Gambia had one of the strongest democracies on the African continent. It was headquarters to the continent's human rights body, the African Commission on People's and Human Right. Last year, the country recorded 70 years of multiparty democracy, even when ruling parties were usually more dominant. The founding president of the republic, Dawda Kairaba Jawara was a key figure in international justice and peace on the continent and beyond. For example, he initiated a West African military intervention force to quell the war in Liberia, and by extension, Sierra Leone in the 19902. He was delegated to negotiate peace in far corners of the globe. The country, despite its poverty, geological and small economic size, was considered the most peaceful on the continent, recognized with the slogan, The Smiling Coast of Africa.

Thanks to this peace and democracy the country enjoyed prior to the coup, The Gambia hosted a high number of refugee population, from war torn countries like Southern Senegal, Liberia, Bissau, Conakry and Sierra Leone. As a result, a high number of practising journalists from the West Africa sub region also chose to reside and practice in The Gambia, leading to the establishment of the first daily newspaper in the country by a Liberian journalist, Kenneth Best. While Edward Francis Small was credited to be the father of independent journalism in the country, the publisher of the country's first daily, Mr

Keneth Y. Best, a Liberian national, was credited with being the father of modern-day newspaper journalism in The Gambia. By 1994, about two dozen of West African journalists were living and working in key positions in The Gambia media scene. Within five years of the Yahya Jammeh regime, 85 percent of them have been either deported or forced to leave the country.

Yahya Jammeh saw journalists as "illegitimate sons of Africa," that must be taught a lesson. In his tenth year in office, a leading journalist, advocate and publisher of a local daily, The Point, was assassinated while celebrating 13th anniversary of the newspaper. No arrests were ever made for this crime. Earlier in 2000, a young journalist covering student protest was also gunned down in front of the country's main Red Cross building at city square. In 2006, another journalist, Chief Ebrima Manneh was picked up by plain-clothes security officers and was never found or seen since then. These crimes are too numerous to mention here.

As the country begins work to implement the work of the Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission – a body established to interrogate the human rights violations and other crimes of the dictator's rule, journalists are holding forte to ensure that constitutional provisions guaranteeing their freedom and roles in the country's governance are truly reflective of the modern-day Gambia all seek to build.

Section 207 of the country's constitution provides "The freedom and independence of the press and other information media are hereby guaranteed." Sub section 3 of the same states that "The press and other information media shall at all times, be free to uphold the principles, provisions and objectives of this Constitution, and the responsibility and accountability of the Government to the people of The Gambia."

With these as a guide, journalists are hoping that a more free, vibrant and progressive media would make The Gambian press an example for others. For its history, it's a #NeverAgain for such recurrence of the crimes meted to the press under Jammeh in The Gambia. ■

*** Sanna Camara has worked as an editor and manager for various media organizations in Gambia for 20 years. He also chairs the Journalism Awards Committee of the Gambia Press Association.*

HANGING ON THE CROSS FOR THE SAKE OF FREEDOM

Although the living conditions of Burundian journalists in exile are becoming increasingly difficult, they are fighting shoulder to shoulder in solidarity. The survival of journalism in Burundi depends on this solidarity.



BOB RUGURIKA *

Sandrine Nkurikiye is a young Burundian journalist who was exiled to Rwanda with her 3 children and her husband. She was devastated by the death of her father in Burundi on September 16, 2022. She could not go to the funeral because the risks of being killed or kidnapped. In exile, on the day of the funeral, she felt the pain of his loved ones.

She is now a neighbor with the wife of Burundian journalist Jean Bigirimana, who has been missing since July 22, 2016 after being arrested by intelligence agents in the country of exile, 60 kilometers from the economic capital Bujumbura. His colleagues at the Iwacu newspaper gather every July 22 to commemorate Bigirimana.

Valentin Singirankabo, another journalist from the famous African Public Radio (RPA), lost his two sisters in Burundi in 2016 and 2018. The pain is still there. She could not attend the funeral of his sisters.

Olivia Gakima, a Renaissance Television journalist in exile, lost her father in the corona pandemic one morning on July 19, 2021. She could not go to his father's funeral, She almost couldn't accept the consolations of her neighbors or friends in the country where she had to take refuge.

Another female journalist from RPA, Josiane

Muzaneza, also experienced dramatic events. She was exiled with her husband. Her husband died in her arms, leaving behind a few months-old orphan. The families of Josiane and her husbands decided to bury the funeral in him in their home country. However, Josiane was unable to attend her husband's funeral. Josiane Muzaneza's other brother also died on July 25, 2022. The second time she was not allowed to attend the funeral. Currently nothing can explain her emotions.

Burundian journalists in exile mourn the death of Prosper Nzisabira, alias Osso, every year. This man, who spread joy around him, died of a heart attack in November 2021 in Dakar/ Senegal, where he had to take refuge for a better future. He never got a chance to say goodbye to the wife and children he left behind. Friends of Prosper Nzisabira consider the cause of death to be "the worries of life". 6 months before Prosper's death, his colleague at the same radio station, Inzamba François Bizimana, had lost his life in a car accident.

Today the families of Prosper Nzisabira, Dit Osso and François Bizimana do not know which saint to dedicate themselves to. There is no insurance, no pension, no spouse to shelter, and no one to provide for the family. Added to the weight of the exile was

the concern for the future of the children.

Another journalist is on the verge of death in exile. Hermès Ntibanditse works as a journalist and presenter at RPA. 3 years after receiving the news of his wife dying of the disease, he was also caught in the grip of a disease. For 10 days in the hospital in Rwanda, he struggled between life and death. Unfortunately, he didn't make it. Now he has completely lost his sight.

DISSAPPEARED JOURNALISM

We are not going to talk here about the devastation of the families in exile and their stories. In addition to this great suffering, the majority of journalists live in precarious conditions. Daily expenses and monthly rent have become a big problem for many of them.

Media workers living in the country are also not happy. They express that they live in fear because of their profession. They have decided never again to deal with news topics that require investigation and sensitive issues related to the authorities.

"There is no journalism anymore, we are just doing communication," says my journalist friend at a private radio station based in Burundi. In terms of press freedom, Burundi received a score of 0 out of 4 in the latest world freedoms report published by Freedom House.

THE OPEN-AIR PRISON

All observers agree that Burundi has become an open-air prison. The people no longer have freedom of opinion and expression. We are talking about a country that is under investigation by the International Criminal Court for crimes against humanity. Among criminal victims, there is a news cameraman of the National Radio Television. Christophe Nkezabahizi was murdered along with his wife, 2 children and a cousin. They were killed by the police on October 13, 2015.

After this incident, the Imbonerakure militia, as well as the police and the army, chose to target independent media. African Public Radio (RPA) and Renaissance Television have also had their share of this outrage.

According to the Burundian Journalists' Union, more than 117 journalists have been exiled as a result of the crackdown. Many have sought refuge in countries close to Burundi. Apart from a dozen journalists who were able to reach Canada and Europe through family reunification, the rest face various challenges that negatively affect their daily lives.

Following the crisis in 2015, some Western countries decided to end their relations with members of the media in exile in the name of protecting their interests with Burundi. This further increased the difficulties experienced by journalists. Only a few organizations from the Netherlands, Belgium and Germany have extended a helping hand. Economic difficulties

have weakened the independent Burundian media.

BRAVE JOURNALISTS WIN THE HEARTS OF THE PUBLIC

Despite the adversities experienced, brave journalists in exile are quickly finding new sources of information for themselves. 80% of the journalists who went into exile returned to their profession. These journalists regularly inform the public with breaking news through social media and shortwave broadcasts. The journalists won the hearts of Burundians with the news they made again.

The Vrije Universiteit Brussels received Burundian media attention in 2020. They made a series of programs called "Radio Phenix, with Burundian journalists facing the crisis". The program was broadcast on the Belgian Radio-Television channel The First, which broadcasts in French.

FORCED SELF-CENSOR

Blaise Kararumiye, a reporter for Radio Isangan-iro in Karuzi State, has been detained. The journalist's research report on cows brought from Uganda and later slaughtered in the Rift Valley epidemic was cited as the reason for the detention.

As a condition for his release, the publication of a news text prepared by state officials was imposed. A colleague in Burundi relayed that Blaise was now trying to do his profession in fear. The government forces journalists to self-censorship, ordering them to accept every statement made by the authority.

Burundi's media and journalists are facing a law initiated by the National Communications Council (CNC) that makes journalists dependent on power. If the CNC takes back the press cards from the journalist, this means the end of their career.

Officials of the Presidency, CNC and Burundi secret service continue to search for the directors of the publication after being informed of any issues. There are so many reasons why journalism is on slippery ground in this country.

This pessimistic picture should in no way overshadow the work of Burundi's media in exile, who have been awarded worldwide for their work in support of freedom of expression and human rights. Just like in the case of African Public Radio...

Although the living conditions of Burundian journalists in exile are becoming increasingly difficult, they are struggling shoulder to shoulder in solidarity. The survival of journalism in Burundi depends on this solidarity. ■

**Journalist. Director of African Public Radio (RPA). 2016 CNN Freedom of the Press Award Winner*



THOMAS SIDERIS *

PRESS FREEDOM IN GREECE:

“Control the message!”

Tn Greece, there has always been a strong dependence of the media on big business interests and mainly on government officials. Government, business and the media form a peculiar triangle with multiple interdependencies. Especially, in the National Broadcasting Corporation (ERT), government control is more than suffocating. The public broadcasting corporation has all the characteristics of a “state agency”, i.e. an agency that depends fully on the state. Not only today, but also in the past, a politician could call and could interrupt a program on the air. Such incidents have happened in the past.

But what is happening today in Greece in terms of press freedom is a dystopia. None government has ever tried so overtly and aggressively to control the media in Greece, having as a basic principle “control the message”. A typical instance is that immediately after the elections of 2019, the director of the press office of the prime minister and former director of the press office of the party that won the elections was placed in charge of the public broadcasting corporation (ERT). Thus, regardless of the individual’s abilities, preemptive government’s control is obvious. From 2019 and then, the public media in Greece and the National Intelligence Service are under the direct control of the prime minister who is also their “natural head”. The paradox is that the Greek government presents itself as a liberal government that politically represents the “political space of the center”, but the methodology it follows is a reminiscent of dark periods in the modern history of my country as well as the practices of authoritarian regimes.

COVID-19 AND THE FADING INDEPENDENCE

However, the problem has a legal dimension as well as a moral dimension. The government during the covid pandemic mainly funded the private media with exorbitant amounts in order to promote, as it claimed, the “health message”, i.e. measures so as to protect from the covid virus. However, in reality, money, which is Greek citizens’ money, was given by the government to fully control the political message of the media. Today, almost three years later, the vast majority of the Greek media presents exclusively the government’s positions, covers up any government failure or mistake, and attacks anyone who expresses a different opinion as an “enemy of the homeland”. However, as long as we accept the axiom that the free press is a pillar of democracy, we understand that democracy in Greece is a comatose patient. For me, the most unethical thing a government could ever do is to exploit the health crisis in such a cynical and vulgar way.

GOVERNMENT’S OSTRICH POLICY

But this situation is just one aspect of the problem. When the scandal of phone surveillance against politicians and journalists was revealed, the government followed the “ostrich policy”. The government stuck its head in the ground, like an ostrich, and pretended that it understood nothing. Even today, so many months later, refuses to contribute to the investigation of the case, continues to lie and pretend that there is absolutely no problem. In fact, because it completely controls the majority of the media, the issue of telephone surveillance of politicians and journalists is absent from the news agenda of the ra-

dio and the popular Greek television stations. Thus, Greek citizens are not informed about something that directly concerns them, since the wiretapping by the intelligence service, which the prime minister controls with the so-called “staff state” law, is a deep wound to the body of democracy.

GREECE RANKS LAST

When Reporters Without Borders published its annual report on the state of press freedom, Greece was ranked 108th in the world and last in Europe, behind Hungary and Poland, two countries where corruption and governmental entanglement of power and media are identified as the norm, the Greek government pretended that it did not understand, and attacked Reporters Without Borders, which are called by the government as a simple “non-governmental organization”. When the issue of the press freedom in Greece began to be captured in the international media, the government revealed a “conspiracy” by anonymous international circles.

However, authoritative international media are those that clearly capture what is really happening in Greece, mainly on three issues: the issue of immigration, the issue of wiretapping and the issue of freedom of the press. And it is not the first time that the international press presents an image and a reality of Greece that are completely different from those which are presented by the Greek media. Only when the international media at the beginning of the previous decade began to investigate and present the criminal activity of the Nazi organization “Golden Dawn”, only then did the real dimension of the problem begin to be recorded in the Greek mass media.

FINANCIAL CRISIS DAMAGES JOURNALISM

A question, which remains unanswered even today, is why Greek journalists accept this situation, why they are tolerant of this situation. The deep economic crisis, which hit and has been hitting Greece for many years, left visible wounds in Greek jour-

nalism as well. However, there are Greek media and Greek journalists who continue, despite the difficulties, practicing investigative journalism, in order to bring to light cases of economic and governmental corruption. I would like to specifically mention the investigation into the global financial corruption scandal of the pharmaceutical company “Novartis”, a part of which also concerns Greece. Often, Greek journalists, who expose financial scandals and disputes, are targeted by some anonymous killers, to take as an example the case of the Greek journalist George Karaivaz, or face SLAP lawsuits. But they continue to do what they know and must do: primary research so as to truth comes to light. ■

THOMAS SIDERIS

Tom Sideris is a journalist and filmmaker, based on Athens, and an official member of International Press Institute.

Thomas Sideris is an investigative journalist and film director. He is working at the Greek Broadcasting Corporation. His name was in the short list for 3 years in a row (2018, 2019, 2021) for the PRIX EUROPA PRIZE, a special EU prize for the best journalist in Europe.

He is a member of the International Press Institute, based in Vienna/Austria and has been honored with TORCH AWARD in the USA (human rights advocacy via his films, Pennsylvania, May 2021), the Journalists and Writers Foundation Award (New York, September 2019), Athanasios Botsis Journalism Foundation Award (Athens, January 2018), the Albert Schweitzer International Organization Award (Vienna, September 2017) and more than 30 awards at film festivals around the world for his films. He studied Political Sciences and Public Administration at the Law School of the University of Athens and specialized in the mass media and has a postgraduate diploma in Human and Social Geography on the subject «Human Geography, Space Development and Design» by the University of the Aegean. He is also a PhD candidate in Human and Social Geography by the Harokopio University of Athens. His research field is about the human body in space, the human “landscapes” and the fluid temporary habitable spaces and the fluid identities. He is a member of the International Academy of Social Sciences (Florida, USA).



Keiso Mohloboli, brave journalist of the small African country of Lesotho:

“I was separated from my autistic son for 2 years during my exile”

Never let your job separate you from your children. If you allow your job to send you into exile without your children, you will not have enough time to fill that gap when you are separated.

LAILA MÜLLER

Lesotho is a small country in the southernmost part of the African continent, the entire territory of the country is surrounded by the borders of the Republic of South Africa. As in other African countries, journalists are subjected to many abuses in Lesotho. Harassment and physical attacks against journalists have increased significantly in recent years. There is almost no freedom of the press in Lesotho. This means media is not independent.

Violations against the media have become a recurring phenomenon over the years in Lesotho. This situation leaves the country far be-

hind in terms of living democracy. We talked to award-winning journalist Keiso Mohloboli about journalism in her homeland, Lesotho.

How did you become a journalist? Is there a special event that made you the person you are today as a journalist?

Before I became a journalist, my parents wanted me to become a nurse, a teacher or an accountant. When I expressed my desire for journalism to my parents, they always discouraged me. I started a nursing school so that my parents would be satisfied. I quit soon after because I didn't like it.

At home, while the tension continued due to my dropping out of school, the experienced journalist Kekeletso Motopi, the Editor of The Monitor Newspaper, gave me the chance to write a story. I gained my first experience there. I was lucky to get mentorship from a woman. In the media sector, where the weight of male dominance is felt, she gave me the opportunity to write harsh stories as a woman. While working, I also completed my journalism education.

Thanks to the World Learning Scholarship, I had the opportunity to work in the investigative journalism department of the Los Angeles Times. I've learned a lot of things here that news outlets can't do.

How did your passion for journalism arise? Were you an advocate of freedom of expression before your exile?

I believe my passion for journalism will never dry up. I always tell curious young journalists that journalism is a way of life, not a job. I chose journalism because it triggered my perspective on what I do. Collecting information, interviewing and writing is like living life forever, it's more like leaving real life and always existing in the universe. Far beyond a pen is more powerful than a sword, journalism is something that shows who I am.

Before I went into exile, I didn't focus much on the issue of freedom of the press. However, I have actively participated in campaigns organized by the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA-Lesotho) on issues of defense of freedom of expression.

Can you say that the press is free in Lesotho?

Press freedom in Lesotho is very weak. There are abuses here too. There is an increase in attacks on journalists every day.

The cases filed against me from 2013 to 2016, when I went into exile, and the torture and murder of a journalist in November 2021 after writing an article about a gun theft can be examples of violence against journalists.

There is a need for a favorable legal framework in Lesotho that will allow the media to work more freely and effectively.

How would you describe the life of a journalist in your country? Has anything something changed when you returned to your country after exile?

Nothing has changed in Lesotho since 2016. Violations against the media have been proven truth for years. As a result of these violations, it is becoming difficult to expect a democratic standard of living in the country. Although the media is introduced as the fourth power on paper, it is considered the "enemy of the state".

The country has begun to take steps towards implementing National Reforms, but Lesotho remains a country that has failed to implement regulations to protect the media.

You have been questioned because of a news story. How did you feel as a female journalist?

On June 23, 2016, my article about the Army Commander, Lieutenant General Tlali Kamoli, was published in the Lesotho Times. In the evening after the publication of this article, the police called me by phone to find out where I was. Shortly after, two police officers picked me up from my house and took me to the police station. I was questioned by six policemen here.

I was not accused; only one of the deputy commissars told me that the army commander was very angry with what I had written about him. There were no charges, they weren't saying I broke any laws. Only the anger of the Lieutenant General caused an embarrassing interrogation.

They confiscated my phone because they wanted me to disclose my sources of information. They refused my request for a lawyer. They did not give permission for water, food and toilets. They didn't meet my hygienic needs as a women. Because of this, I was also exposed to bacterial infections.

How has life in exile changed you and your view on freedom of expression?

After all the events I've been through, nothing has been the same for me. I have serious trust issues. I pay attention even to small details. I no longer spend long time in public places. I am drift away from the things I used to enjoy.

In Lesotho, too, after completing the "National and Constitutional reform process", things will change in a positive direction. Until now, the freedom of expression enshrined in the constitution had remained just a 'decor' with many restrictions imposed along with it. I believe that will change.

What do you envision for media freedom in Lesotho in the coming years?

There is a need for a favorable legal framework in Lesotho that will allow the media to work more freely and effectively. I dream of an independent and free media. Freedom of expression is an important right of society. Because it serves public debate and supports a free and independent press in the transparent functioning of the state.

There are many journalists living in exile in the world. What would you like to say to those living in exile?

It is not easy to live your life as a woman in exile. Proper housing, food and not having your family with you are just some of the difficulties you are experiencing. During my time in exile, my autistic son and I were separated for 2 years. Since then, I have realized that there is no story worth my life.

If you are separated from your children, take your children with you with support from human rights organizations. Because when you are separated, you don't have enough time to fill that gap any day. ■

KEISO MOHLOBOLI

Keiso Mohloboli studied journalism at the Polytechnic of Namibia, the University of the Witwatersrand in South Africa and ALISON. Award-winning Investigative Journalist reporting on general health issues, women's and girls' empowerment, political party stories and GBV stories. She contributes to local media such as Mopheme, The Monitor, The Informative, Lesotho Times, Sunday Express and Public Eye. She is also a media trainer at TechCamp. Because of the news she wrote, she had to leave her country because she was exposed to life-threats from 2016 to 2018.



TAHA SIDDIQUI *

Journalism is dead in Pakistan

Tn Pakistan, press freedoms are under a constant attack. There was a time when journalists and media activists in the country used to say that the field of journalism is dying due to the limitations it is facing, and those restrictions were increasing as time passed, but now it may be apt to say that the industry is dead and Pakistani journalists are living in a post-journalism period, where the state has complete control over private media. The reason: the growing influence of the Pakistani military in day to day political affairs of the country and encroachment into almost all domains other than their traditional role of providing security and safety at the borders of the country.

The Pakistani military has covertly and overtly ruled the country since its inception in 1947, and although the country currently boasts of having a democracy, the reality is that the Pakistani government works at the behest of the military, with the generals controlling affairs from behind the scenes.

The history of Pakistani media dates back to the country's partition from India, when the British colonials left in 1947. Several private newspapers existed at the time which continue to exist today in both English and the native Urdu language, but no news channels were allowed by the Pakistani authorities, except for the official state run PTV (Pakistan Television). Then in early 2000s, the then dictator General Pervez Musharraf privatized the broadcast media, offering licenses to the general public, for launching news channels. Some feel that this change of heart by the Pakistani state, and that too at a time when there was a military dictatorship was a pleasant development, but the reality is much different. The media was in fact freed in response to the 1999 war that Pakistan had lost to India. It emerged that General Musharraf allowed private media to flourish

because the military leadership at the time believed that they were defeated by India not because of their own weaknesses (and misadventurism given Pakistan army soldiers entered the Indian controlled territory disguised as jihadis), but the loss was due to the strength of private Indian media that was successful in selling a global narrative that Pakistan was behind the violence in the Kargil region, close to the disputed Kashmir territory between the two countries.

Once the media privatized, it became a strong voice for democracy and became part of the "Lawyers Movement" that led to the ouster of General Musharraf in 2008. This was a time when democracy was restored in Pakistan and the public thought that the military influence was going to be a thing of the past, but that was wishful thinking.

The first reality check came in May 2011 when Saleem Shahzad, a Pakistani journalist working for international media was kidnapped and found dead with torture marks on his body. According to independent investigations, he was picked up by the Pakistani intelligence agency the ISI which is linked to the country's armed forces, which did not approve of his investigations that linked the Pakistani military and militant networks. Following this high-profile murder in broad daylight, the Pakistani media made a lot of noise, and yet no one has been ever punished to date for this heinous crime, even though Shahzad, the journalist, had shared names and communications with his colleagues of some ISI officials before his disappearance, who were threatening him with dire consequences.

This attack sent a chilling message within the Pakistani media industry as Shahzad was one of the first journalists to have disappeared from Islamabad, the country's capital. Following this, the local media began to be very cautious, and became more careful in what it

should and should not print and broadcast but the final nail on the coffin came in 2014, when the top Pakistani news show host Hamid Mir was attacked by armed men in the city of Karachi, as he was on his way to his news channel. Fortunately, Mir survived the attack and named General Zaheer ul Islam, the ISI chief as the main suspect, saying he had been receiving threats from the agency for his journalistic work. Naming the ISI chief was a bold move, but it backfired leading to Mir being put off air along with his news channel too. The rest of the media industry realized that if the biggest name the industry could face such a fate, they stood no chance and soon everyone started to fall in line.

By 2018, the Pakistani military ensured that any other dissenting voices were silenced, as this was election year and they wanted to bring in Imran Khan, a cricketer-turned-politician to run the country as their chosen man.

This was the same year when I was also attacked for my journalistic work by armed men I believe to be from the Pakistani military. I survived this attack - which was a kidnapping and assassination attempt, and shortly after went into exile, after the country's interior minister privately informed me that my life was in danger as long as I reported about the Pakistani military. I had been working with international media like the New York Times, the Guardian, France24, Al Jazeera English, and many others. I had been receiving threats since 2014, following the Mir attack, as I refused to censor myself. Few months before the attack on me, I was also charged with counter terrorism and cyber crime under a new law that the Pakistani government had passed (under pressure from the military) known as the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act 2016.

Once I fled from Pakistan, and came to France, I was contacted by two Western intelligence agencies who told me that my name was on a kill list according to some communication they had intercepted and I would be killed if I ever return to Pakistan.

Following this, I went public with the information I had received, and my parents, who continue to live in Pakistan have been repeatedly harassed by the

Pakistani authorities, pressuring them so that I may go silent.

Today, it's been more than 4 years since my exile, and the situation in Pakistan back home for journalists has only worsened. Several of my journalist friends who chose to remain in Pakistan despite the risks have either lost their jobs, or have been silenced through intimidation. Several news channels have regularly faced blackouts and their licences cancelled. Even though Imran Khan had a fall out with the military and the generals were forced to cede some power to political parties that they did not support in the past, the situation for the media remains the same. And the censorship is not limited just to print and television media but also digital media with social media sites being regularly restricted in the country if they do not remove content that the Pakistani state does not agree with. Owing to such environment, more than 90% of Pakistani journalists exercise self-censorship according to a recent survey. Pakistan is currently ranked at 157 out of 180 countries on the Reporters Without Borders (RSF) Press Freedom Index.

The RSF in its latest report says: "Pakistan is one of the world's deadliest countries for journalists, with three to four murders each year that are often linked to cases of corruption or illegal trafficking and which go completely unpunished. Any journalist who crosses the red lines dictated by Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) - an intelligence agency offshoot - is liable to be the target of in-depth surveillance that could lead to abduction and detention for varying lengths of time in the state's prisons or less official jails. Furthermore, the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), Pakistan's leading military intelligence agency, is prepared to silence any critic once and for all. ■"

** Pakistani descent Taha Siddiqui is an award-winning journalist living in France since 2018. He is the director of the Opposition Club, an intellectual cafe in Paris. He has covered and continues to write for many news organizations, including The New York Times, The Guardian, and France24. His first book will be published in March 2023.*



MONIKA NAGYOVÁ *

Did two innocent people have to die for us to wake up?

In fact, we were deceived into thinking that freedom of expression is included in democracy. Two innocent people had to die for us to wake up. We have experienced a trauma from which Slovakia will take a long time to recover.

Tn Bratislava, the capital of Slovakia, I asked a friend from Turkey, “Is it possible to humiliate Erdogan on the streets of Turkey?”

“Yes, you can! But you will suffer the consequences, they will put you in prison and hurt your family,” my friend replied.

This dialogue occupied my memory for a long time. It seems inconceivable to me that something like this could happen in my country. I live in a country where everyone criticizes the government from morning to night. Politicians are criticized by the public and various organizations, especially the media. The cartoons criticize the highest authorities of the state on social platforms. I live in a country where the health system, the education system is not working well and the domestic politics is ridiculous. But there is still the fact that we can freely express our opinions.

Of course, this freedom was not always there. My country has been ruled by ‘Big Brother’ Russia for 40 years and led his life under a communist regime that did not allow the people to express themselves or freely fulfill their beliefs. I was a child at the time and I didn’t realize these difficulties. The regime has banned many authors from publishing their books. I absolutely cannot imagine the possibility of such a thing happening today. I love reading, and if there were banned authors in my country, I would give any effort to find and read their works.

THE UGLY TRUTH

I am a blogger on the most read intellectual news portal. During my 17-year publishing career, the editorial team of my publisher, SME Daily, has never touched my texts. It’s true that I don’t focus on political articles. Rather, I often reflect on the ugly truths that affect people living in this country. Shortage of doctors, potholed roads, poverty, mistreatment of the elderly...

I also write about the fact that this society is struggling to come to terms with ‘otherness’. We look down on people, for example, just because they visit a psychiatrist. Telling a story about what doesn’t work is a good way to get the problem into the public’s subconscious. I have received very good feedback from my readers so far.

I published my first book last year. The book called *Sídlisko* [The Estate] is set in the eastern Slovak city of Košice, the largest Romanian ghetto in Europe, where about 6 thousand Romanian live. The story is based on a real event, and critics called my book a social drama. A leading sociologist said in his article about my book that I made visible things that we don’t want to see. A terrifying story that emerged from real events.

THEY LACK BASIC RIGHTS

The realities in which the story takes place are terrifying. The limitation of water and heat, the devastation of apart-

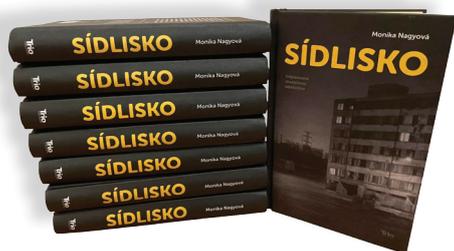




PHOTO: VLADIMIR SIMICEK / AFP

ments and their surroundings is monstrous. Furthermore, domestic violence and patriarchal hierarchy is a widely accepted norm there. The sociologist writes that it is a sad state of affairs after hundreds of studies, dozens of action plans, and millions spent. Our country is failing to break the vicious circle of generational poverty and social exclusion of marginalised Roma. Many children today do not even get a basic stuff – to sit in school without hunger. - - - In the book, I did not look for an answer to who is to blame. I just portrayed the reality. The state, but also the whole society, the minority, the majority, and last but not least, each one of us, must answer who is responsible for this. I realize that my book probably wouldn't be published during the communist regime because it holds up a mirror to one of the biggest failures in this country. -

JOURNALISTS CAMPAIGNED

I saved the most important topic for last. It was a cold February. Monday February 26, 2018. I came to work, made myself a coffee and turned on the computer. I checked my e-mails and checked the newspapers on the Internet. The headlines were as follows: a journalist and his fiancée were killed in Slovakia.

I felt like someone had poured a bucket of cold water over me. This news not just jolted me out of my routine morning, but also out of the apathy I had been living in for years. The journalist had lain in a pool of blood for five days, and when he was found, became a hero of Slovakia. Ján Kuciak, a modern-day knight who used data to reveal the truth. A talent silenced by a gunman in his old house that he was about to do up. He was shot coming upstairs from the basement, and his fiancée at the computer where she was choosing a dress for her wedding.

I could think of nothing but this terrible news. Col-

leagues remembered Ján, who lost his life, as a workaholic. He was a colleague who preferred to expose the corruption committed by someone who was in a high position all day long with coffee at his desk, at the computer, with his fingers on the keyboard. He had spent long days at his desk in the morning, going through business records and tax returns. His death shook Slovakia. We took to the streets, went to demonstrations, listened to speeches attended by thousands of people.

CORRUPT GOVERNMENT AND FEARLESS JOURNALISTS

I felt that something important was emerging, something that would change the course of history. At that time, no one believed that the killer would be found. However, everything began to change. The government that ruled here for 12 years was corrupt at its core. New cases appeared every day. Journalists were not afraid, they knew that their work was a unique task. Even news outlets rivals to each other have come together to give the important information to the Slovak people. As a result of this, the Prime Minister resigned. As a result of the corruption he was involved in, he was not elected after 12 years. Now a new government has taken office, which reassures everyone that all the evidence reveals that the shooter of the murder of Ján Kuciak was committed by an influential Slovak oligarch.

30 years after the fall of the communist regime, it had escaped our attention how important freedom of expression is. In fact, we were deceived into thinking that freedom of expression is included in democracy. Two innocent people had to die for us to wake up. We have experienced a trauma from which Slovakia will take a long time to recover. ■

** Blogger and author of the book Sídliisko*



JONATHAN GORVETT *

Gulf States is no Place for Press Freedom

These days, reporting on how citizens are coping with the rising cost of living may be everyday business for many journalists, worldwide.

In the United Arab Emirates (UAE), however, it can bring unexpectedly dire consequences.

Back in June, with petrol prices spiking even in the oil-rich Emirates, UAE newspaper Al-Roeya published a feature on cash-strapped Emiratis buying cheaper petrol over the border in Oman.

“It’s hard to imagine a more innocuous piece of reporting,” Amnesty International’s Devin Kenny told Journalist Post from Beirut.

Yet, what followed was a mass firing of newspaper staff and Al-Roeya’s sudden closure.

The story likely fell foul of draconian media and cybercrime laws that allow prosecution for anything deemed to undermine the “standing or prestige” of the state.

Such punitive laws are not unusual in the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) – the six nation grouping of emirates and kingdoms that runs along the Gulf from Kuwait to Oman, via Bahrain, Qatar, the UAE and Saudi Arabia.

In the latter, 26 journalists are currently in jail – the largest number in any GCC state – with laws in place that criminalise “blasphemy”, “inciting chaos”, “harming the reputation of the king and the state” and “jeopardising national unity”.

Even Kuwait – long one of the most open media environments in the region – has laws against publicly “insulting” the emir or the state. These carry mandatory five-year jail terms.

Now too, rights groups say, the war in Ukraine is making the situation worse, as it has given the oil and gas-rich GCC states much greater leverage on the world stage – and over periodically critical Western governments, in particular.

“Countries like the UK and US have major leverage

in a place like Bahrain,” Joey Shea from Human Rights Watch (HRW) told Journalist Post. Yet, “Right now there is no political will for them to exercise that leverage.”

The result is a continuing deterioration of media freedom in the region, alongside a growing sense of confidence amongst state authorities when it comes to silencing journalism and journalists.

STATE CONTROL

While the Gulf states have relatively small populations – with the exception of Saudi Arabia – most have a large number of media outlets.

Kuwait, for example, with a population of around 4.2 million, has 11 daily newspapers and three weeklies in Arabic, with two more dailies in English.

Yet, for all the numbers, diversity of opinion amongst local media is often missing. Government ownership – or ownership by entities closely linked to the government and the ruling family – is generally the norm.

“All the papers usually report incidents such as protests using anonymous government sources and never giving any other views,” says Kenny.

One example is the coverage of recent protests by members of Kuwait’s stateless Bidun community, which has been demanding recognition and citizenship for many years.

After one such protest, on August 26, 18 participants faced prosecution for participating in an “unauthorised demonstration” – a national security crime in Kuwait.

The event was reported by local daily Al-Qabas, however, in just two sentences. In these, an un-named “well-informed source” gave the Public Prosecutor’s decision to detain a number of “illegal residents”.

Most local journalists, being well aware of the law and its harsh penalties, self-censor when it comes to reporting such incidents – although in Saudi Arabia, for example, official government censors also work at the media outlets to ensure daily compliance with the gov-

ernment line.

Whole subject areas can also be taboo. “Topics of gender and sexuality remain among the most prominent and strictly enforced red lines imposed on the press,” Pauline Adès-Mével, media spokesperson for Reporters without Borders (RSF), told Journalist Post.

This is the case in countries where there is more space for reporting – such as Kuwait – and in countries where there is virtually none, such as Bahrain or the UAE.

Indeed, in the latter two countries, stories about people being prosecuted for trying to report something can be the only sign that something has happened.

On January 24, for example, Houthi forces in Yemen fired two missiles at the UAE – both of which were shot down over the Emirates.

The attack itself was not reported by local print and TV media at the time, yet several Emiratis filmed the event and posted videos of it on Twitter.

The official UAE news agency, WAM, then issued a warning from the attorney general that those publishing such videos risked “deterrent legal measures”.

This became the only official report that the attack had happened, while the citizen journalists posting the videos on social media were then prosecuted.

EXCEPTIONS AND NORMS

“The overwhelming nature of coverage [in the region] is what the government says and celebratory pieces lauding what the government does,” says Kenny.

Yet, the Gulf has also been home to some exceptional reporting.

Qatar-based and state-owned TV outlet Al Jazeera routinely gives critical coverage of news in other Arab nations – including other Gulf states.

Indeed, in 2017, when Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Bahrain and Egypt broke off diplomatic relations with Qatar and launched an embargo against the country, the closure of Al Jazeera was one of their principle demands, given the channel’s critical stance.

Qatar refused to shut the channel, however. It also then gave extensive coverage to the murder of journalist and political activist Jamal Khashoggi by Saudi security operatives in 2018.

Yet, as one former senior editor at Al Jazeera English (AJE), who wished to remain anonymous, told your correspondent, when he started back in 2007, “I was told [by the Qatari authorities] we could be critical of anywhere and anything, but just couldn’t ever mention Qatar.”

This has changed a little recently, with AJE recently including some coverage of labour issues in the run up to this year’s FIFA World Cup in Doha – a controversial subject for the Qatari authorities.

Such reporting has, however, been absent from Al Jazeera’s Arabic version. Meanwhile, blogger Malcolm Bidali – who had been reporting on migrant labour rights in Qatar – was prosecuted in 2021 for allegedly

receiving “foreign funds to propagate disinformation,” a charge he denied. Bidali was subsequently fined, but allowed to leave the country.

Elsewhere, in Bahrain, the newspaper Al-Wassat had reported cases of torture and abuse by the Bahrain authorities during a more open phase in the country’s media, prior to the Arab world uprisings of 2011.

That shock wave, however, galvanised repressive regimes around the Gulf to crack down, with Al-Wassat hobbled and then finally closed in 2017.

“Oman, Saudi Arabia, and Bahrain are at the bottom of the ladder,” says Adès-Mével. “It is difficult to even have reliable information from these countries, due to the increased surveillance and intimidation of journalists.”

REPORTING FOR A CHANGE

Indeed, in recent years, rights organisations have reported almost universally deteriorating press freedom in the Gulf.

Of the 180 countries monitored by RSF, Saudi Arabia ranked 166th in its 2022 World Press Freedom Index, the UAE 138th, Oman 163rd, Bahrain 167th, and Kuwait 158th. All except Qatar, at 119th, registered a worse score than in 2021.

Reporting about press censorship in the region is scarce, however, and often overwhelmed by positive stories highlighting the region’s spectacular sports events, architecture and tourism.

Gulf regimes also routinely use social media to promote themselves and to hunt down opposition.

“It’s important that journalists in Europe be critical of the role of social media platforms,” says Adès-Mével, “and report on violations of data privacy committed in these countries.”

Journalists in Europe are well positioned to cover these sorts of stories and pressure big data companies to respect journalists’ privacy online.”

The UAE, for example, has also used the Israeli Pegasus spyware to track everyone from local citizen journalists to critical peers in the UK House of Lords.

Yet, “Since the Ukraine war and the hike in oil and gas prices,” adds Kenny, “in the UAE and other Gulf states, there’s a feeling that governments are a lot less likely to be criticised now for being repressive, as Western governments are much less likely to speak out.”

A bleak picture for now, then, behind the glitzy towers, world-class sporting events and booming oil and gas markets of the Gulf. ■

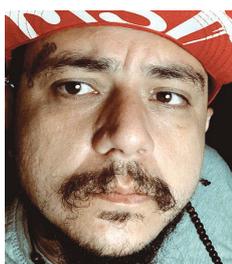
**Jonathan Gorvett is a freelance journalist who has lived in and reported on the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle Eastern regions since the 1990s. During that time, he has contributed regularly to Foreign Policy, Foreign Affairs, Asia Times, Al Jazeera English, the Boston Globe and many other newspapers and magazines in Europe, the US and elsewhere.*



PHOTO: GULSHAN KHAN / AFP

Janna Jihad, the youngest reporter under occupation

“I wanted to have a normal life”



LUCAS SIQUEIRA *

Janna Jihad has become the youngest Palestinian journalist to document the Jewish State’s occupation of the Occupied Palestinian Territories (TPO). At the age of seven, the girl witnessed the murder of her uncle and cousin by the Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF), and since then she began to document and report on the violations of the soldiers of the Jewish State in her village.

Like any child, “I just wanted to have a normal life and be able to play football with my friends without tear gas grenades being thrown at us,” says the young reporter.

At the moment, at the age of 15, Janna is exposed to life threats every day. Some of the threats also include information such as her way to school, license plates of her family cars and even her address. The young girl, who lives in the West Bank, does not even have the opportunity to hide, because she lives in the village of Nabi Saleh, an area where the occupation of the Jewish State established an illegal colony.

In this interview with the Middle East Monitor, she talks about this daily life in which there are constant attacks on Palestinian homes at dawn and no one is being held accountable.

You are one of the youngest journalists in the world.

What motivates you?

When I realized that there was not enough information flow to tell about what was happening in my village, I decided to become a journalist at the age of seven. I watched people who were constantly arrested, injured and even killed for trying to resist the occupation.

My house has been attacked several times during the night. We woke up to the sound of gas bombs.

How can a seven-year-old child experience such horror?

What about all these violations of my rights as a child?

I’m so sorry that I had to find a way to share my feelings. One day we marched at a demonstration singing and holding our flags, and of course, the occupying forces of the Jewish State came to suppress the protesters, that’s when I took my mother’s phone and started recording.

Who commit crimes against Palestinians and encroach on our rights apartheid regime as one of the millions of Palestinian children living under it, I found a way to make my message known in this way.

What is the difference between you and other young people in the world?

The only difference between me and the children in the world is that I am Palestinian. This means that my land has been under occupation for more than seventy-four years, and I have lived all my life under this regime. There is a regime that violates at least most, if not all, of my rights. This means that my life has been directly affected by the occupation.

I didn’t have a normal childhood. I have witnessed my family, friends and neighbours being injured, arrested and killed. I’ve never been able to live like a normal child. I never felt safe in my own home.

There are so many differences in being a Palestinian,

just from our eyes or from our identity, this is something that we cannot change. Even we, young people, are treated as second-class citizens. We are being discriminated against just because we are Palestinian.

That's the difference, they're trying to stop us because we're trying to stop the invasion so that future generations can have the childhood we didn't have.

What is it like to grow up in an occupied area?

Living under occupation is like living in a massacre. My village is very small, next to a colony in the occupied West Bank. Like the lives of so many other children in so many other villages in Palestine, our lives are affected on a daily basis.

I usually wake up very early to go to school in Ramallah, which is about 30 minutes from my house. Several times I have been woken up by the IOF invading our villages and scaring the children in the middle of the night. I wake up to the sounds of gas bombs exploding near my window. They throw people out of their homes in the middle of the night just to arrest one person. There are many times we have been subjected to violence, pepper sprayed and left on the street for hours in the cold of winter. They're doing this to scare us, as a collective punishment.

This is an extremely frightening situation. Waking up to the sound of gas bombs and a soldier of the Jewish State entering your house pointing a gun at you affects a person. It's very difficult to sleep after all this. These things usually happen at 02:00 or 03:00 a.m. in the morning, so you can stay up until seven so you can get ready to go to school.

It takes a 30-minute drive to get to school. We pass through checkpoints where they verify our identities. Sometimes the soldiers of the Jewish State also put barriers on some random streets, when these barriers are closed, we have to follow another path, which can take up to 3 and a half hours. If there is no checkpoint, we can get to my school in 30 minutes.

There is a Jewish State settlement next to my school, many demonstrations take place in this place. That's why we can't open the windows because of the smell of gas.

It is also difficult to study at home, because a lot of events are constantly happening outside. I like to play football with my friends, but if one of them sees a soldier, they all start throwing stones, and then the soldiers throw things at us, so the cycle repeats every time.

We are exposed to many things every day. We don't have many expectations from life. We don't make plan because we don't know what will happen next. At any time without any sanction, I can be arrested at a checkpoint, or a soldier can come to my house to arrest me or kill me. The truth is, because I am Palestinian, they can do what they want.

Do you think you would have become a journalist if you had grown up in another country?

It's hard to imagine myself even if I don't live in Palestine, because, as I said, my life is very different from other people's. It is very easy for me to imagine a free Palestine. Did I grow up in a free Palestine, I wonder?

Of course, what is happening in Palestine is not the only injustice in the world. You know from the many forms of colonization and the many injustices practiced against many groups of people around the world that capitalism has been affecting all of us for many years. So, I wanted to choose a career that would help me deliver that message.

Before I became a journalist, I wanted to be a footballer or an artist. I've had so many different dreams.

I love and fully appreciate the fact that I can convey a message through journalism, but I wish this had happened in different circumstances, instead of trying to publicize to the world all the fears and traumas that I have experienced.

Who inspires you as a journalist?

In fact, one of my most important role models before becoming a journalist was my uncle Bilal Tamimi. He's been taking me to shows since 2009, when I was 3 years old. He was the only person in my village who had a camera in his hand and documented the invasion. So being close to him, of course, had a big impact. I realized that the camera can really send a very clear and very accurate message. There are a lot of valuable people I'm inspired by, but he's the first person I can think of.

What has changed in your life after you started publicizing the violence of the Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) against Palestinians?

A lot has changed in my life since I became a journalist. Thanks to journalism, I can reach many people around the world with my videos and messages, but of course, everything has a price. I get a lot of attacks and a lot of threats. Once, when I was 11, they made a report in the Jewish State that I was the next threat to them. A website published a story with the headline: How do we stop her? After that, I received a lot of threats: We know your address. This is your car. That's the way you go to school. We will kill him and burn him like Dawabcheh's family...etc

I'm worried for my life, but still, being a journalist didn't change the situation much, because a Palestinian child is never safe, even in her or his own home.

The Dawabcheh family was burned alive in their own home in a fire caused by settlers from the Jewish State in TPO. The victims included a father, a mother, and an 18-month-old baby. The only survivor of the attack was Ahmed, who was four years old at the time.

What do your parents think about your profession? Do they support you? Are they scared?

All my family, especially my mother, always give me a lot of support and help in any way they can, but of course they are still my family, so they are afraid for me. Like all parents who take care of their children, they are afraid, but they know that we must do something to change the current situation, since we cannot remain silent.

What are the challenges of broadcasting from Palestine?

It is extremely difficult to be a journalist for anyone who is trying to expose the crimes of the occupation of the Jewish State. The occupation, unfortunately, is extremely strong. They will try to silence anyone who tries to resist. I found myself being interrogated when I was 12.

After my house was broken into, I started broadcasting live, they tried to take my camera and break it. In some of the videos you can see them trying to take my camera away.

Of course, it's not just my rights that have been violated. Many platforms, social media and 'internet' pages of those who condemn the occupation have been "hacked". Many videos were removed on the grounds that they did not comply with community guidelines. In fact, because the propaganda of the Jewish State is extremely powerful, they destroy the rules of society and attack anyone who tries to resist the occupation.

Do you think world leaders are closely interested in Palestine?

World leaders are forced to ignore the Palestinian issue, so we are trying to attract the attention of all people in the world, normal people like us, we need them to be aware and know about the occupation and resistance. ►

What are the current dangers for you?

Anyone who resists is under threat of arrest, dead or injured at any time.

In Palestine, anyone can be questioned, tried or arrested without grounds. This has been happening for so long that no one is being held accountable for it. Even if they are supposedly held accountable, there is no justice in their proceedings.

The law of the “Jewish state” according to the system, Palestinian children can be arrested from the age of 12 and sentenced to up to 6 months in prison.

An amendment to the Youth and Citizenship Law in 2015 also began to condemn the parents of stone throwers and introduce fines for the parents of those convicted of a crime.

According to the independent human rights organization and the law center Adalah: “The law violated that the application of criminal responsibility and punishment, which is the most basic principle of criminal law, is specific and applicable only to the person who committed the crime. Punishment of parents violates the prohibition of collective punishment, since parents cannot be held responsible for the actions of their children”



Are you afraid that the soldiers will arrest you or do something to you?

I’m a child, I’m someone who has fears and emotions like other people, but I can’t let my fears control me, if I did, I wouldn’t be able to continue. I’m not going to let fear control me.

I am afraid of being arrested, and think that staying in a Jewish State prison means that you will have no rights. You will be subjected to many mental and physical tortures. You will be subjected to interrogations and you will not be able to communicate with the outside world, your family, loved ones.

What are your plans for the future?

I dream of finishing high school first, I’m still in the tenth grade. After that, I plan to work on a field such as political science or another field that improves my journalism.

I am passionate about many issues, so I hope to build

a career that will help me fight all kinds of injustices in the world.

I hope to go to university and see Palestine free.

How do you dream of Palestine in the future?

I am hopeful for a free Palestine where I can have all my rights freely. I hope to be able to go to the beach to see the Mediterranean at sunrise. We can’t go there because the Jewish State won’t let us. I hope one day I will be able to go to Jerusalem and the Al-Aqsa Mosque. I hope people can live without fear and respect each other’s rights. I hope people can walk around freely without fear of being arrested or killed and news of his death getting out in the newspapers.

I hope my three-year-old cousin can live the childhood I couldn’t live. I hope I can play football without being afraid of the gas bombs of the soldiers of the Jewish State.

I hope no one has to watch their family get killed in front of their eyes. I hope that no one else will have to see Palestinian blood spilled everywhere.

I really hope to see Palestine free from Jewish State occupation.

What would you say to young people from the Jewish State?

I would like to point out that they are also victims of the occupation. I am resisting as a Palestinian and I am aware of the occupation of my land. My land has been colonized but I reject being colonized.

I want them to stop and think. Thousands of families were expelled from their homes and lands to establish their colonies. I want them to think about all the Palestinians who have been forcibly displaced so that their homes are given away to strangers.

I invite them to read the history of the Jewish State and ask yourself: how was Israel founded?

I urge them to be more aware and think deeply about what is happening.

I invite them to wake up.

In 2017, Janna Jihad received the International Charity Award in Istanbul for documenting violations committed against Palestinians.

The journalist and activist believes that his generation is the generation of change that will make a difference and make the necessary changes for a better, freer world, and she respects human rights.

Janna closes the interview by sending a message to young people.

“Resistance can take different forms, it can be drawing, painting, dancing, singing and organizing a protest, we can do all this and give people the opportunity to be aware of the injustices that are happening in the world. Some people think that these are small steps, in fact, those are quite big things. I hope that we can come together to make this world a place of justice, equality and decency. We need to be together because all our struggles are tied together. We must liberate Palestine, eradicate poverty and put an end to all forms of injustices anywhere in the world, be it in Brazil, Palestine, America or Yemen.” ■



OLGA MYROVYCH *

How media can be effective during the war

The full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine has put journalists before a choice, whom to be in this war.

You can prepare yourself for war, but anyways, war always catches you being unprepared. This was a case for thousands of journalists early in the morning on February 24, 2022, when the first Russian missiles hit peaceful Ukrainian cities.

The full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine has put journalists before a choice, whom to be in this war – a caring family member who ensures safety to their children or elderly parents, a volunteer defending their country in the armed forces or a media professional keeping reporting for the sake of their audiences. Those, who opted to stay in the profession, turned into war reporters overnight. Not all of them went to the frontline, but everybody started covering the war.

INFORMATION CLASHED AS MUCH AS SOLDIERS

Media at war have a privilege but also a duty to document reality. To fulfil this mission, journalists have at least to stay alive. The first days of the full-scale invasion have revealed a cold, hard fact: Ukrainian media serve for the Russian military as a target of the same importance as the Ukrainian Armed Forces. Russians hit TV towers, switched off the internet, destroyed the editorial offices and captured journalists. The informational blackout nearly turned the occupied territories into news deserts but also posed a risk of leaving the Russian war crimes invisible to the world. Both challenges are equally difficult. In both cases, Ukrainian journalists took responsibility for tackling them.

You've probably seen the dramatic pictures made by Mstyslav Chernov and Evgeniy Maloletka in the occupied Mariupol. They stayed for 20 days in the city under siege documenting the destruction of the once beautiful Ukrainian port city and the genocide of its population carried out by the

Russian army. Many more examples of courage, dedication and commitment have become known later. Those who still stay in the territories taken by the enemy and in danger of jail and torture anonymously pass on the information to their colleagues at large. Those who spend days and nights using OSINT analysis tools to identify Russian soldiers and their commanders that gave the order to murder civilians in Bucha, Hostomel, Iziium, and dozens of other towns and villages across the country. Those who daily update the memorial of the war victims with new profiles, who bring their stories to the public to make us remember them for ever. Those who give the voice to the survivors and recall those who hope for liberation without giving up. Those who turned their social media pages, podcasts and blogs into bullhorns sharing with the international community cases of courage and despair that coexist side by side on the frontline of the battle between freedom and doom.

WE PAID THE PRICE OF TRUTH WITH THE LIVES OF OUR FRIENDS

Being an existential threat to the open society, the war highlights the true values lying at its core. When writing this article, eight journalists were killed in Ukraine in the line of duty. This is the price that the media pay for the opportunity to tell the truth about Russia's crimes against humanity. What if the media would give up their duty? War crimes love silence, and silent witnesses are not a threat. Thanks to the daily feat of journalists, we still have hope for justice. ■

** Olga Myrovych is a Ukrainian media expert leading the NGO Lviv Media Forum, an umbrella organization uniting media professionals from Ukraine and abroad.*



SERHIY TOMILENKO *

Journalists are important

Without the close cooperation of the media, the world would not be aware of the missile attacks, tortures and murders that the Ukrainian people are experiencing today.

The key slogan of our press organization in recent years is: “Journalists are important!”. This slogan was born during the period of the global trauma of the COVID-19 pandemic, when humanity closed in on their homes during the pandemic, doctors and other emergency service workers and journalists performed their duties.

Today, in Ukraine, “Journalists are important!” rhetoric took a new meaning: without the close cooperation of the media, the world would not have been aware of the missile attacks, tortures and murders that the Ukrainian people are having to face today.

From the very first days when the bombing of Ukrainian cities started, the invaders began to massacre the peaceful Ukrainian people simply on the grounds that they were ‘Ukrainians’. In these difficult moments, the National Society of Journalists of Ukraine (NSJU) switched to the “hotline” scheme. NSJU has received hundreds of hopeless phone calls from our colleagues who have lost their homes,

jobs, livelihoods and careers.

With the support of international journalism organizations, the Society provided various assistance to its colleagues affected by the war. In addition to assistance such as evacuation from cities occupied by Russians, shelter in areas far from city centers, relocation of news centers to safe places, creation of new news centers, technical vehicle support, and they also provided financial assistance. NSJU provided support to journalists who joined the ranks of the Ukrainian Defense Forces during the Russian attacks, as well as to the families of colleagues who died in the attacks.

At the same time “Journalists are important!” slogan carries suffering as well. Since the beginning of the large-scale war in Ukraine, 39 journalists have become victims of the Russian invaders. Among them are Ukrainians Yevheniy Sakun, Oleksandra Kuvshinova, Maksim Levin, American Brent Renault, Irishman Pierre Zakrjevsky, Russian Ok-sana Baulina, Lithuanian Mantas Kvedaravicius, Frenchman Frederic Declerc-Imhoff and others.

PUT RUSSIAN PROPAGANDISTS ON TRIAL

Journalists became an open target of the Russians. Many of our colleagues were deliberately killed by the invaders by targeting them in the suburbs of Kiev, Buca and Irpin. The occupiers know that journalists record the atrocities they commit. NSJU continues to cooperate with the International and European Federations of Journalists (IFJ and EFJ), the American-based Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) and UNESCO in recording crimes committed against journalists.

The Society took the initiative to establish a special court and punish Russia for the murder of journalists in Ukraine. We demand that the Russian propagandists who incite hostility and hatred against Ukraine and democratic countries be brought to justice.

Every death in war is a terrible tragedy that cannot be measured by earthly values. For this reason, we have great respect and gratitude to foreign journalists who knowingly and willingly came to Ukraine to perform their profession, risking their lives. They are performing an extremely important task in order to tell the world the facts in our country.

The clearest example of how the occupiers see journalists as a threat is the numerous repressions against our colleagues in the occupied territories. For example, journalist Oleg Baturin from the Kherson region was tortured, kept in captivity for 8 days, without being allowed to meet with his family and take medicines.

JOURNALISTS' FAMILIES ARE BEING TAKEN HOSTAGE

The journalists' apartments are searched and their computers and communication devices are confiscated. Many of our colleagues cannot live in their own apartments. They hide in close acquaintances or relatives. However, those are also being targeted. For example, the invaders arrested the younger brother of the journalist Kostyan-

tin Rijenko as they could not find him at home.

The Russians are offering journalists to either shut up or become local propagandists. A terrible example of this repression took place in Melitopol. Soon after the city fell into the hands of the invaders, the Russians searched the apartment of Svitlana Zalizetska, Editor-in-Chief of the local news site "Ria-Melitopol", which publishes online. When they couldn't find our friend, they took his 75-year-old elderly father hostage and locked him in the basement. Then they called his daughter on the phone, offering that her father would be released if he regretted and cooperated.

A bulletproof vest with the inscription 'PRESS' is the security standard for a journalist. NSJU, with the support of international journalistic and humanitarian organizations, primarily UNESCO, IFJ and EFJ, provides security equipment and medical supplies to colleagues traveling to dangerous areas of Ukraine. In addition, with the support of the IFJ, NSJU has established a network of Journalist Solidarity Centers in Ukraine, where journalists who have been forced to leave their homes inside the country can find shelter, support and assistance. In addition to providing material and technical assistance, these centers provide journalists with security, digitization of mass media, etc. and gives trainings on subjects.

The Journalist Solidarity Center operates in six cities of Ukraine - Kiev, Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk, Chernivtsi, Dnipro and Zaporizhia. Our main task is to meet the needs of as many media employees as possible and to help them to continue their professions.

As NSJU, we sincerely express our gratitude to colleagues in other countries and international organizations for their support to our country and Ukrainian journalists in difficult wartime. We hope that these supports will continue. ■

**President of the National Society of Journalists of Ukraine (NSJU)*

Ukraine
Germany

Masha Efrosinina

I AM A LIVING DEAD

I feel that
Peaceful
Masha remains
in a dark
hole, crying
helplessly.



PHOTO: YÜKSEL DURGUT



YÜKSEL DURGUT



Masha Efrosinina is a superstar in Ukraine. The 43-year-old journalist is one of famous TV hosts in her homeland. She has millions of followers on social media. The messages she publishes reach large audiences. Efrosinina starred in as many as 20 different programs on television channels, a theater play and 5 films. She presented the 50th Eurovision Song Contest in front of 150 million European television viewers in Kiev. She owns her own fashion brand and is the first female UN Goodwill Special Ambassador in Ukraine. She has climbed to the top of fame as well as in her profession, such as being the sought-after face of the fashion magazine Elle. Efrosinina's family members are also influential people in Ukraine. Her husband Timur Khromayev is a former minister, and her sister is the spouse of former President Viktor Yushchenko.

We met her in Munich, Germany, where she had to seek asylum. Our interview with Masha took place in an emotional atmosphere. She took refuge in Germany with his son and daughter. Her eyes filled with tears everytime she spoke about the husband she left behind, her remarkable life, her journalism career, and her popularity. We talked to Masha Efrosinina about her broken dreams and life plans in exile.

The first shock wave of the war has passed. What has changed in Ukraine during this period? How is the situation now?

This is a difficult question to answer quickly. My perspective has changed a lot in this period. In the first days of the war, I was in a mixed mood. We were experiencing emotions that were difficult to live with, and that we had never known. I never thought people could feel so much hate. Panic, fear and tension were beginning to appear in the Ukrainian people due to events they did not expect. People assumed that nothing would happen in Ukraine was very strong.

I recall the days when the war started to be talked about. Can you believe that tanks entered Kiev shortly? "This is a joke. This is a city of 5 million people, can tanks really get in here?" we asked each other. As if nothing had happened, I continued my regular television programs, and my children went to school. Our atmosphere did not even change. Perhaps, we were just a little calmer than before. It was like the silence before the storm, but this silence ended at five o'clock in the morning with the sounds of explosions.

How did these sounds of explosions and being in the middle of the battle affect you?

In November, we received the news that Russian troops arrived at the border. This was the first sound of the footsteps of the war. The topics of friends' meetings changed. Men began to discuss the war. I was having a busy time with New Year's shows at the time. My job required me to travel a lot. I had a lot to do with my conferences, filming and my fans. We had planned a lot of new content on my Youtube channel. There was no event we did not attend in January, there was

no city we were did not go to.

The winter months are very cold in Ukraine, therefore, they are travelling to warmer places in the winter months. This is also our tradition. But we did not go anywhere because my husband did not think it was the right time this year. With the month of February, peak period started over in my work life.

Have you ever had a terrible dream? When you wake up from a bad dream, you wonder if you are still dreaming. I was feeling that way at that moment. You cannot get out of that nightmare and get rid of its impact for a long time. When you wake up from a nightmare with the sounds of explosions, you realize that you are not in a dream. But you wish that what happened was a dream. You cannot understand it with your mind, with your heart. It can be felt much more deeply. This is a feeling that everything is over, but there is little hope that it will improve. But the end of my hopes has come.

Our new reality began in February. Our house got crowded. Our friends came to visit. My husband asked me to call people we know and who live in the eastern parts of the city. He thought they would be safe with us.

My phone was ringing constantly. All TV channels wanted to broadcast live. I did not know what to say during the broadcasts. I could only cry and say that I was scared. I could see on the television broadcasts how horrified my colleagues were. I do not remember very clearly after that.

Even during the hot war, you continued to work as a journalist. And now you are a refugee in Germany. How is Masha now? What is she doing?

I feel that Peaceful Masha remains in a dark hole, crying helplessly. Because everything I have done in my journalism career, in my interviews, in my life, in my relationships, my emotions have always been at the forefront. People who recognize me know that I am emotional. But I do not know how to explain it right now. Now, I'm a living dead.

All my emotions were paralyzed at once, and it was as if I disappeared into a deep pit. Nevertheless, I am not blind to the rising sun, the sky above me. And that still gives me hope. Because I saw the unity of the Ukrainian people and the strong stance of women in the most difficult times. This solidarity between people was really incredible. To see the unity of the people from the first moments of the war was beyond even my dreams.

As I left the war behind and headed west with my children, thousands of my followers, whom I did not know in person and watched me on TV, competed to offer a cup of tea or provide shelter. Since the Russians blocked the roads, we could cover short distances in 3-5 days. We spent every night in a different place. We slept together on the floor with families we had not known. We could not know how to be united without experiencing these difficulties.

WE HAD NO INTENTION OF LEAVING THE COUNTRY

You were on your way to get away from the war, but you had to leave the country. Was it your plan all along?

No. We were just planning to go to the West of Ukraine. It was never in our mind to leave the country. We spent 4 weeks in Lviv with our children. During this time, I volunteered to help refugees. I posted call to help videos from my social media accounts. I gave hundreds of interviews around the world, from Japan to India. The media was not blocked at that time. Most of the media outlets continued to TV broadcasts. The biggest support came from Georgia. ►



MY DAUGHTER TURNED 18 THE DAY THE WAR STARTED

USA said that on the 16th of February, Russian troops will begin their attacks. My daughter told me the news; “Mom, it is my birthday that day. I’m turning 18.” And I told her, “The war will not start.” I could never believe the news that war was at just around the corner. As if nothing is happening, we celebrated my daughter’s birthday on February 16. We had a beautiful day. I went to work again in the morning. Until February 23, I was shooting until midnight for my comedy show. My husband and friends came to my show that day. It was a fun program. My husband told me that the atmosphere was very hugger-mugger on the way back. He said we need to pack our passports and emergency bags in case something happens. I didn’t know what to put in it. I started preparing the bags the next morning when I started hearing sirens. Everything changed at an instant.

I WANTED TO STAY IN UKRAINE INSTEAD OF MY HUSBAND

The messages of support I posted were aimed at the Russians. I believed that if millions of people took to the streets, Putin would not be able to do anything. My husband was taken to the army after a while. The mobilization affected the children the most. We had no choice but to leave the country. I also wanted to stay in my country. I told my husband to go to western Europe with the children. I wanted to stay instead. By law, men cannot leave the country. It was a very difficult decision for us, but we emigrated thinking about our children.

▶ LET THE BOMBS KILL ME

We had to spend nights in shelters. Russia bombed at midnight when everyone was asleep. We were waking the children up and going down to the shelter. One time my son said, “I am not waking up, Mom! I want to die, let the bombs kill me.” Every night for weeks, when I was in a deep sleep, being woken up by the sound of a bomb and taken to the shelter that makes a person crazy. Sleeping problems were inevitable. I was shuttling between the shelter and where we were staying. After a while, I had to cancel my broadcasts upon my husband’s warnings.

I’M LIVING MY WORST FEAR, I’M IN ANOTHER COUNTRY, MY SCHEDULE IS EMPTY!

You are currently in Germany as a refugee. How do you feel about that?

I do not feel good at all. Everyone has some fears in life. One of my fears was living in another country. I was born in Crimea. I am totally Ukrainian. This country has given me the opportunity to reach millions of people, millions of women who follow me. I have always felt useful to my country. I am the first Ukrainian woman who is awarded with the title of ambassador to the United Nations. I had a successful life; I was doing what I loved and what I was good at. I was afraid of losing them.

My husband and I have traveled a lot. When we came to Germany, Austria or Italy; no one looked and did not recognize me! Of course, I did not want to live anywhere else. My husband was in politics before. He served as a minister during the Poroshenko presidency. He was a very successful businessman afterwards. He is a real genius in finance. He also never thought about living anywhere else. But my worst fears came true.

I started working at a young age. When I was 13, I taught English to a group of students aged between 7 and 11. This is how I earned my weekly allowance of 10 euros. I worked all my life. I come from an ordinary family in Crimea. I won everything by scraping my nails. I cannot imagine a life I lead without working. My schedule was full till the end of 2022. I have never had a life with a calendar that has been empty until today. We have never had a life where my kids killed time on the phone.

I LEFT MY BUILD-UP WITH A SMALL SUITCASE

I had a driver, and we had a cook. Everything in our life was very orderly. Masha means working life. My husband and I had been building our house where our children were born for the last

five years with our savings while we were making our careers. I left all this with a small suitcase. For 125 days, we continued living in fear, worrying every day on the evening news to see if bombs had hit our house.

I do not know if we will be able to go back there. My husband, who has never touched a gun in his life, is now at war. When he voluntarily applied to join the army, he trained 8 hours a day for 2 months to be able to use weapons. We have no idea where he will be sent with the mobilization.

My German friends Daniel and Caroline, who brought me here, helped me to keep working and to continue the struggle for my country. The Germans did not withhold their support. I do all the work here alone. Food, dishes, cleaning, ironing. I have to find myself a job. I am waiting for job center to help me land a job.

I COULD NOT HAVE PREDICTED THE POWER OF PROPAGANDA BEFORE THE WAR

Putin played his role well over the press in this process. He did his propaganda well. The media is completely under control. Putin also played this propaganda tool well against the public. Have you experienced similar problems in your publications?

I do not really mean much to Russia. But they are even using me for their propaganda. They re-edit and publish my videos. For example, at the borders of Poland, Hungary and other countries, human traffickers deceive women by promising to help. These women handed in their passports and then disappeared. The ministry of defence said: “Do not give your passports to anyone. Move in groups. Do not let your children go anywhere with anyone!” and wanted this message to be announced. By the evening of the day, I posted this message, the video became a tool of Russian propaganda. In the news, they made it look like as if Ukrainians raped and kidnapped women at the border.

INFORMATION WAR IS ON ALONG WITH THE HOT WAR

My uncle and his children live in Russia. No one called and asked about how I am doing. After a while, he called me once and said, “Our last name is the same, I thought if I wrote to you, they would arrest me.” It’s like they have been hypnotized. There was not a single message from my colleagues, whom I know from television and publications. A few of them did not want it to be known what they had written to me. This is unbelievable. The same language, the same culture, yet how far we are from each other. We did not anticipate the power of propaganda before



the war. Now we get it. In addition to the hot war, there is also an “Information war”. This is one of the main things that needs to be fought. Fake channels, fake news..

SILENCE IS A BETRAYAL TO MY COUNTRY

In Turkey, in Russia, in China, in your neighboring country Belarus, journalists are in prisons because of their opposition to the regime. We are also creating this magazine together with many exiled journalists. These journalists are now far from their homes, just like you. We were talking about Putin's propaganda. This propaganda is carried out through television channels, newspapers, that is, the media. How important is journalism to you?

I'm talking to people from Washington to Syria. They are all fighting for peace and women's rights. When I tell them about the war, their eyes are slowly closing and that makes me feel that I should shut up now. When I was telling about what happened once, I realized that and I said, “I'm sorry, I didn't want to bore you.” A colleague said to me: “You can't stop talking! Because that means you betrayed your country.”

To stay in Germany is not to betray your country, but not to talk about the war is. As a journalist, I must continue to speak under any circumstance. We need to talk to governments. We should talk to big companies like Instagram and Facebook so that they do not censor the images we share under the pretext that they are “sensitive content”. What you censor as sensitive content is what is happening in my country! This experience gives me the strength to keep talking.

When I first started doing interviews in my career, I met with a famous and experienced

journalist. He told me, “You do not know where you will be in the future, but journalism is not where you are, it is inside you. It doesn't matter where you are. Do not lose that passion inside. Journalism is what reaches you is to work with your information and analysis to separate the right from the wrong for humanity. Journalism is the essence in you. You should act accordingly. Who you are, where you live, your wealth or poverty, your feelings doesn't effect your action. Do not lose interest in everything. Maintain your appetite for getting to the truth in happenings. What can you give to those who watch you, to those who follow you? Are you able to give them a perspective as well, or are you just working for yourself?”

Journalists like me, who have lost everything and started from scratch, who continue their professions in the new countries they live in, should always remember that the essence of our profession is to convey the truth to people.

Do you have a message that you would like to convey to your journalist colleagues who are still working in Ukraine? There are still active journalist organizations in Ukraine.

They are doing an epic job. As soon as the war began, the television channels ceased to compete and became one body. Now, whichever channel you press from the remote control, the channel comes up with a broadcast established with the same solidarity. Journalists conduct a 24-hour broadcast. They are broadcasting from a single center without a competitive environment. I am proud of the publications documenting the war. We are tired, but we have to hold on. We must carry this hope within us. Rockets, explosions make a person exhausted. If we start to lose hope and faith that victory will come, it will be bad for us. ■

MASHA ASSOCIATION IS WITH WOMEN IN UKRAINE

We are growing the Masha Association, which is active in Ukraine. We are helping women and children as much as we can. We are trying to get people out of the occupied areas in Ukraine.

YOU SHOULD NOT FORGET THE SUFFERING PEOPLE

I accept all the proposals that can make our voice heard throughout Europe. But people are bored and tired of hearing about Ukraine. I can understand that. When the upheaval started in Donbas in 2014, we felt the same way after a while. My children also express that they are bored from the subject we talk about. I think it is normal for people in Europe to think this way for us now. There is everything you can have here. The markets are full of food. You can reach what you want. I do not blame anyone, but how can you forget the people who are suffering next to you? The whole country had been renewed to prove to Europe that we are an advanced society. We were close to entering the EU. A ridiculous man has come and thinks that he can take all away from us because we are Ukrainian, and we are after our freedom. I cannot imagine that happened in the 21st century.



LYUDMILA MAKEI

Harder living than saying

SPOT- It's not easy being a journalist in war zones. It is not easy to be both a victim of the war and a journalist in your own country. Journalist Lyudmila Makei, who is in exile in Kosovo, said: "The written press is documented evidence of the war crimes committed by Russia against Ukrainians."

I had a professionally active life in Ukraine before the war. I was working for a popular newspaper published in Russian. But like many of my colleagues, I am one of those who think that the language of the press in Ukraine should be 'Ukrainian'. We stopped using Russian, the language of the neighbor, soon after.

The newspaper, where I worked, closed in 2019 after the end of advertising revenues with the corona crisis. This decision of the newspaper owners had a shocking effect on my colleagues. Some of my colleagues were thrown into business life, while others went to Kiev or abroad in search of work. I also continued my profession as a freelancer. I have collaborated with various publishing organizations. At the same time, I took various online trainings and participated in professional competitions. In fact, I won two of the competitions.

It was a great blessing that my productive abilities appeared before the war. In addition, I had the opportunity to publish my first book and promote it in the best museum in the city. I was able to devote more time to my drawing, which is my passionate hobby. Thus, my drawings were exhibited in America, Bulgaria, Kosovo, Israel, Germany, and Ukraine. Although some people are uncomfortable with my publications, I am very happy that I have been able to instill happiness in people with the works I have put forward.

EXILED IN KOSOVO

I live a life of exile in Pristina. I write stories of Ukrainians affected by the war in Ukrainian and foreign media institutions. Thanks to the "Residency for journalists in Kosovo" project, I am able to carry out my profession. With this program, in which I was the first participant, a temporary opportunity was provided to 20 Ukrainian journalists. Ukraine has not yet officially recognized the Republic of Kosovo. Despite this, I will never forget the help and warm support of these people on behalf of my country.

INFORMATION WARFARE

Information warfare is part of the ground war. The Kremlin knows this very well and uses it. For this reason, they do not refrain from allocating resources to support his propagandists. Long before the Russian invasion of Ukraine, swarms of social trolls began to come out of every crack like cockroaches. Ukraine has not found time to curb social information pollution.

Regarding the role those Russian journalists played in the outbreak of the war, there is an official position of the National Union of Journalists of Ukraine. These people, who have been harboring hatred against Ukrainians for years, cannot be called journalists anyway. These are propagandists who, in their words, pave the way for Russian tanks.

The lack of communication affects the public the most in the war. Rachists* cut off communications in order to deprive residents of towns and villages of information sources. In the Mykolaiv and Kherson regions, they first seized the editorial offices of local media, and then began to act as spokespersons for the Kremlin.

The media, especially the print media, is documented evidence of the war crimes committed by Russia against Ukrainians. There are special units in Ukraine that ensure recording the war crimes of the Russian Federation.

There is no time-out for such crimes. For every Ukrainian who was killed, executed, and tortured, I hope that those responsible will be found. But first, the media needs to do an effective job. The world should not forget about Ukraine, because this war concerns the future of Europe and the world.

*The expression used for the occupying Russian soldiers, derived from the words racist, racist and fascist.

FOUNDATIONS OF JOURNALISM SHIFTED

The Russian invasion of Ukraine radically changed the foundations of journalism in Ukraine. On the morning of February 24, when the occupation began, we all woke up to a different reality. We were taught to write about the events that happened in the profession of journalism training. We were never trained how to be war correspondents. When going to conflict zones to the news, the importance of wearing a bulletproof vest and helmet was theoretically taught. In practice, we have witnessed that the news centers have none of these stories.

When the war was around the corner, the Ukrainian Newspaper Unions and foreign organizations began to distribute defensive equipment to journalists. With the beginning of the war, neither bulletproof vests nor the inscription "PRESS" were of any use. We have seen how Russian snipers target journalists. The murders of Ukrainian photojournalist Maks Levin, American reporter Brent Reno, Lithuanian director Mantas Kvedaravicius, French journalist Frédéric Leclerc-Imhoff and Irishman Pierre Zakrevsky proved how dangerous journalism is in Ukraine.

I often lived with the fear that my colleagues would never return to the news bureaus. I have had colleagues like Oleksandra Kuvshinova, a young television journalist who was under artillery fire in the Village of Horenka, who lost her life during her mission.

Sigma TV employee Viktor Dedov was the target of a can-

nonball in his house in Mariupol, where he was staying with his family. Journalist Valeriya Hlodan and her three-month-old daughter were killed by a rocket attack in Odessa. During the shelling of the capital Kiev, journalist and producer of Radio Svoboda Vira Gric was killed in his own house. The war left huge losses, difficult to restore. It is absolutely impossible to get used to this pain.

At the same time, the war also took away the working opportunities of many journalists. Media institutions were either bombed or looted by the rashists*. We have had many colleagues from the occupied territories who have been forced to take refuge in safe places in the country.

LEAVE MY ARCHIVE, TAKE MY CAMERA

No one could have imagined that the Russian invaders would ruin Kharkiv, Mykolaiv, Mariupol and other Ukrainian cities. On cold winter days, during the occupation of Mariupol, we lost contact with our colleagues, who were hiding from Russian missiles in bunkers, for 2 months. They struggled for life in inhumane conditions. They were sleeping on the concrete floor and melting snow for water. These are scary, as well as frightening stories.

The photos taken and reported by the talented photographer Yevhen Sosnovsky from Mariupol in the bunker were on the agenda of the world. He had announced to the world the stories of the death of his loved ones, written in the diary of an 8-year-old boy with whom he stayed in the shelter, with stunning photos. When Yevhen was freed from the occupation, he had said that if the occupiers caught them, he was prepared to "give away their cameras if they don't touch their archives".

"IT IS THUNDER"

I talked to Olya Grigoryan, a journalist in Mariupol, about those terrible days she lived in the shelter. She expressed that she didn't know if she would wake up in the morning. She convinced her daughter that the sounds of explosions were not the sound of bombs, but thunder. Olya, like many Ukrainian mothers, lives in Germany with her child. She dreams of returning home. But there's nowhere for them to go back to now. There exist neither the house where they live, nor the street, nor the city itself.

It is not easy to listen to and write about people whose lives were darkened in the war. But this absolutely needs to be done so that the world does not forget about Ukraine. ■



ONE OF THE 100 MOST INFLUENTIAL NAME - NOT ONLY IN WAR BUT FOR THE WORLD: SEVIL MUSAYEVA

THE REALITY OF UKRAINE



YUNUS ERDOĞDU

T Ukrainian journalist Sevil Musayeva was Time Magazine's list of the 100 Most Influential People in the World for 2022. Musayeva underlines that the truth will prevail against the lies of the war.

The Russia-Ukraine War has also made its mark on Time Magazine's list of the 100 Most Influential People in the World for 2022. There are three names from Ukraine on the list selected by reader votes. Journalist Sevil Musayeva, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and Ukrainian Chief of Staff Valeriy Zaluzhny.

The list, published on May 23, consists of the titles icons, titans, artists, leaders and innovators. The Editor-in-Chief of Ukrayinska Pravda, Sevil Musayeva, also found a place for herself in the "Innovators" category on the list.

The name of the author of the article about Musayeva in the magazine is Amie Ferris-Rotman. A veteran reporter, Rotman has also been following the war in Ukraine. In his article, Rotman uses the following phrases for Musayeva:

"In the bloodiest war of this century in Europe, Ukraine is fighting for its future and the right to exist.

The Editor-in-Chief of the top independent news website Ukrayinska Pravda, Sevil Musayeva, ensures that her publications cover every aspect of the conflict."

GRIEF AND DEATH EVERY DAY

Sevil Musayeva participated as a speaker at the "Time100 Summit" that took place on June 7 in New York. She talked about what the war meant to her. She expressed that they faced grief and death every day while doing journalism in the war.

In the shadow of the war, the Ukrainian journalist spoke as follows: "Life will defeat death, light will defeat darkness, and the truth of Ukraine will definitely defeat lies. No matter how difficult this struggle is."

The Ukrayinska Pravda news portal, which stands for "Ukrainian Truth" under the direction of Musayeva, has 4 million visitors daily. The site, which is banned in Russia, is an important news source for both those in Ukraine and those abroad.

SEVGIL MUSAYEVA

Crimean origin journalist Sevil Musayeva was born on June 18, 1987, in exile in the Uzbek city of Cuma. After the Crimean Tatars were allowed to return to Crimea in 1989, she settled in Kerç city with his family. She started journalism during her high school years in Crimea. She graduated from the Taras Şevçenko Institute of Journalism in Kiev, the capital of Ukraine. Since 2014, she has been the Editor-in-Chief of the Ukrayinska Pravda news portal. In 2011-2013, she was a correspondent for Forbes Ukraine magazine. In 2014, she launched the online business publication Hubs and was the editor-in-chief of the publication. She has covered important news in the field of energy in various media organizations. She has been awarded many times in the field of journalism.

IJA announces the justice march in Strasbourg to the world

Thousands of people gathered in front of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) in Strasbourg on 24 June for a call to 'justice'. Participants from many European countries called on the ECHR to 'Take action now against the lawlessness committed in Turkey'.

Hundreds of journalists have been arrested in Turkey during the state of emergency declared after the alleged coup attempt of July 15, 2016. A total of 179 media outlets were closed. Thousands of journalists became unemployed after 2016. A request was made to the ECHR to take action against these illegal seizures.

International Journalists Association (IJA), one of the 8 founding members of the Peaceful Actions Platform.e.V. supported the justice march held in front of the ECHR with more than 50 members. IJA announced the event to the whole world simultaneously with live broadcasts, videos, photos and social media posts.

Report on journalists' confiscated property published

The 'Campfire 2022' media festival, one of Germany's most important journalism events, was held in front of the state parliament in Düsseldorf on August 27th after a short covid-19 break. The festival is organized by the International Journalists Association e.V. also participated the media festival, which was attended by 28 journalism organizations, IJA also shared with the public an international report prepared for journalists whose property was illegally confiscated.

According to the report; The assets of 770 people were frozen on the charge of 'financing terrorism' with two decrees issued in 2021 in Turkey without even the

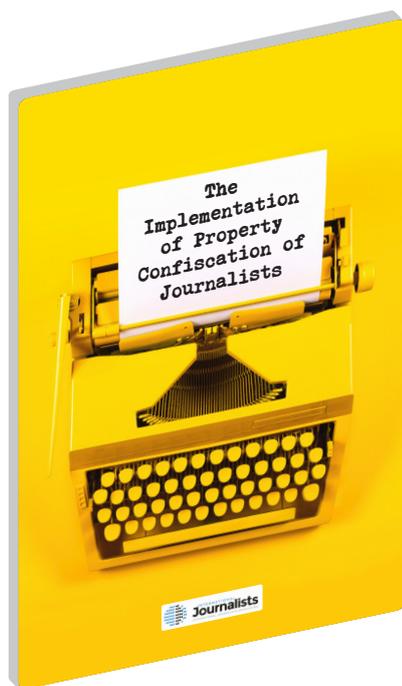
need for a court decision. The list includes 34 journalists. Mentioned journalists were made unable to carry out many of their financial transactions because of this accusation.

Turkey is on the gray list of the Financial Action Task Force on the Prevention of Money Laundering (FATF) established within the framework of the OECD. The Grey List means that countries with deficiencies and risks of money laundering and terrorist financing are kept under close surveillance. International organizations are also clamping down on Ankara due to accepting black money from abroad without question.

FATF instructed Turkey to freeze assets linked to terrorism. The Erdogan Regime, on the other hand, turned this instruction into an opportunity for himself. No matter how many dissidents they wanted to silence, all were stuffed together into a list announced with a decree. The list of 770 people, including 34 journalists, was sent to financial intelligence agencies by linking them to terrorism. Because of an extremely vague and abstract accusation, journalists abroad face obstacles in everyday banking transactions.

It is not just the 34 journalists on the Decree Law lists whose assets have been frozen. The property of many journalists who have been imprisoned in Turkey for years has also been confiscated.

In this report, which IJA shared with the public, international organizations are asked not to accept the unlawful decrees issued by Ankara.



International Journalists annual meeting of members

The members' annual meeting, organized by International Journalists, was held in Germany on July 10. About 150 exiled journalists, who were forced to leave their countries after the anti-democratic process, were fulfilled their long-

ings with each other in the event organized under the roof of the IJA. More than 400 invited guests were present together with families in the program, where there were participants from different countries of Europe.



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