



International  
Federation  
of Journalists

*Abdelkrim BOUMELHA*  
President

*Elisabeth Villela da COSTA*  
General Secretary/Chief Executive

**Geneva, 23 September 2014**

## **IFJ Statement about the Report of the High Commissioner on Ukraine**

Thank you, Mr President,

The International Federation of Journalists commends the High Commissioner for his report on Ukraine and begs leave to draw the Council's attention to the dire situation of journalists and media staff, national and international alike, in the country.

According to our records, at least seven journalists have been killed while covering the crisis in Ukraine since the start of this year. Many were killed in the east where they were reporting on the conflict. They included nationals of Italy, Russia and Ukraine.

In many other violent incidents, journalists and media staff were attacked, injured and detained by members of various armed groups in the country.

In December 2013, at the height of the uprising in Kiev, over 50 journalists were injured as a result of being hit by rocks, flash grenades and gas pellets. Some were shot at by snipers and we received reports that police had attacked journalists, even though they had valid press cards and had identified themselves as reporters.

These incidents constitute serious violations of the rights and freedoms of journalists to work in safety and security as they carry out their important role to inform the world on issues of interest.

As the world's largest organisation of professional journalists, we know only too well that journalism will never be a risk free profession. But, we equally believe that there exist enough international legal safeguards to provide protection for media professionals.

We also wish to underscore that human rights law applies in time of peace, political unrest as well as in war to protect the sanctity of life and physical safety of all persons.



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We therefore call on the Council to condemn these appalling acts of mindless violence against journalists and the blatant disregard for their lives and freedoms.

We further support the High Commissioner's demand that " The Government of Ukraine must ensure that all acts of violence against journalists are properly investigated."

Thank you, Mr. President