

**Her Excellency Simona Frankel**

Ambassador of Israel in Belgium and Luxembourg  
Israeli Embassy in Belgium and Luxembourg  
Avenue de l'Observatoire 40  
1180 Uccle  
Belgium

***Concern: Call to End Impunity for Killers of Journalists in Palestine***

**7 November 2019**

Your Excellency,

We are writing on behalf of the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), the world's largest organisation of journalists representing over 600.000 members in more than 140 countries, to urge your government to address the issue of impunity for violence against journalists in Palestine.

The IFJ's principal mandate is to promote and defend the rights of journalists, including the right to life and physical safety. In this regard, it constantly monitors violations of our members' rights around the world and it publishes an annual report on journalists and media staff who are killed for no other reason than the legitimate practice of their profession.

On the UN's International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists, the IFJ has launched its annual campaign to 'End Impunity for violence against journalists', focusing on Palestine, Peru, the Philippines, Somalia and Ukraine. The IFJ is mobilising its 187 affiliates worldwide to highlight the impunity in these countries. [You can view the campaign here.](#)

In the Occupied Palestinian Territories, 31 journalists have been killed in the last 10 years, and 22 in the last 5 years. In 2018, two journalists were killed in Gaza while covering the "Great March of Return". One of them is photojournalist Yasser Murtaja, 31 year-old, who was killed on April 7. He was covering the Great March of Return and the protests along the eastern and northern borders of the Gaza Strip for the Gaza-based 'Ein Media News Agency. Israeli soldiers shot on Yasser hitting him with a bullet in the abdomen. According to the Palestinian Center for Human Rights' investigations, Yasser was wearing a **blue helmet and a vest marked press** when he was killed.

In addition, dozens of journalists were injured, arrested or banned from covering events. They suffered violations of the right to personal safety, inhuman treatment or violations of their homes. However, the list

of unpunished attacks against journalists is much longer. For these 31 murders since 2009, no one was punished. This is unacceptable.

In 2014, the so-called Israeli military operation *Protective Edge* in Gaza left hundreds of victims, including media workers. 17 journalists (16 Palestinian and 1 Italian) were killed during the two months of the offensive.

Together with the IFJ and its affiliate in Palestine, the Palestinian Journalists Syndicate, we demand your government, judiciary and law enforcement agencies undertake complete and effective investigations of all violations of journalists' rights and bring to justice the perpetrators of such crimes against journalists.

We urge your government to dispel the impression of indifference in the face of deadly assaults against journalists. There is so much more that can be done with a genuine commitment to fighting impunity. It needs to start with justice for the victims of violence.

Yours sincerely,

Anthony Bellanger



IFJ General Secretary