

WHITE
PAPER
ON
GLOBAL
JOURNALISM



GLOBAL PLATFORM

FOR QUALITY JOURNALISM

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By bringing more than two thirds of humanity to a standstill, the health, political and economic crisis of Covid 19 will have terrible consequences on all our societies. And we are certain today that it will continue to do so for some time.

This "Great Confinement", as already defined by the International Monetary Fund, in reference to the "Great Depression of 1929",

does not leave any continent or sector untouched, and the media, whatever their nature, are unable to escape this destructive wave. Many media companies have already closed down, millions of jobs have disappeared and journalists, even though quality information is essential for citizens in times of crisis, are suffering the full impact.

**IT IS TIME TO PROTECT MEDIA, SAVE JOBS AND SUPPORT THE MOST
PRECARIOUS WORKERS.**

**BUT IT IS ALSO TIME TO PREPARE FOR THE FUTURE, A FUTURE OF QUALITY,
ETHICAL AND SOLIDARITY-BASED JOURNALISM THAT RESPECTS LABOUR
RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS.**



The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), the world's leading organisation of the profession with 600,000 members in 146 countries, today proposes a strong and immediate global stimulus plan to save the most badly affected media and the most precarious journalists; and calls on all national governments to commit to quality journalism in this time of misinformation through strong political and economic measures that will

ensure the survival of quality media and professional journalists.

Many IFJ affiliates around the world have already achieved significant progress and strong commitments from governments or employers' federations:

- To ensure the physical and psychological safety and protection of media workers;

- To enable journalists to circulate freely in times of general confinement ;
- To provide journalists and media workers with the means to live and work decently with exceptional financial assistance, despite a drop in income.

From the onset of the pandemic, journalists have amply proved the essential role they play educating their citizens, contextualising the non-ending number crunching, explaining the science and, most importantly, unravelling the narrative played by politicians, asking the tough questions and exposing institutional failures. Thanks to their engagement, journalism as a public good, kept on thriving as the backbone of our democracies.

Unfortunately, at the same time, too many states are taking advantage of this crisis to increase their authoritarian power, strengthen their systems of surveillance of the population or to jail journalists while some media companies reduce salaries without negotiation, cut benefits or lay off staff.

The IFJ and its affiliates around the world will be at the forefront of tomorrow's journalism, globally and nationally, and will continue to promote the quality, ethical and solidarity-based journalism it has been standing up for since its creation in 1926.

THE IFJ THEREFORE PROPOSES A "GLOBAL PLATFORM FOR QUALITY JOURNALISM" TO SAVE AND PROTECT JOBS IN THE MEDIA INDUSTRY AND CREATE A FUTURE THAT PROMOTES A SUSTAINABLE, ETHICAL AND PUBLICLY SUPPORTED INFORMATION ECONOMY.



Information must remain a public good.

URGENT MEASURES - SUPPORTING MEDIA PROFESSIONALS

The IFJ calls on all governments to immediately open negotiations with the GAFAM Google, Apple, Facebook, Amazon, Microsoft - to collect a tax on revenues generated within their national territory.

These companies pay no tax in the majority of countries where they collect revenues, estimated at \$900 billion worldwide.

Taxing these revenues at 6% could inject \$54 billion into journalism.

The IFJ calls for these **funds to be managed jointly** by representative unions of journalists and media workers and national employers' organisations.

The IFJ calls on these organisations to use the funds **to support as a matter of priority** public service media, private, independent media and national and local **media not owned by multinationals**. These media should demonstrate the financial need for it.

Any journalism-recovery stimulus should be seeded with the necessary support **to revitalise adequately staffed newsrooms** able to deliver trustworthy news and information, and should not be allowed to be used to prop up profit at all costs, hedge fund-driven business models that have failed.

The IFJ wants these funds to be used as **a priority to support independent, co-operative and non-profit media enterprises**.

The IFJ calls on all governments to give **priority support to precarious journalists** (including freelancers) by creating a social protection fund, a national minimum wage, exempting them from income tax and granting them bank loans at reduced rates.

The IFJ wants public service media, private media and national and local media to be able to benefit from **reduced national taxation provided that** :
Social dialogue and trade union rights are respected, in line with relevant ILO Conventions

- **Dismissals are prohibited** if the company makes a profit ;
- **The annual accounts** are public and transparent;
- **There is diversity and equality** between women and men are demanded ;
- **Companies that have received funding may not**, for a period of five years, **engage in** mergers and acquisitions or leveraged buy-out **activity that would result in job cuts or wage reductions**.

The IFJ calls on companies to reserve **seats on their boards for workers' unions**;

To strengthen the media economy, the IFJ encourages the creation of **national media advertising programmes** to promote issues of national interest.

The IFJ recommends that governments reform media ownership rules to allow for **greater pluralism of information**.

In line with the EU Whistleblower Directive, the IFJ calls on governments to legislate urgently for the **protection of these citizens acting in the public interest**.

The IFJ considers it necessary that independent press distributors, who are involved in the distribution of print media, should be **supported by tax exemptions**.

The IFJ calls on governments to strengthen **journalists' authors' rights** in order to increase their income.

The IFJ encourages governments to fund free digital subscriptions for the youngest (6- 18 years) as part of **access to education and information**, in line with UNESCO's commitments, and proposes that families with a media subscription get tax credits.

The IFJ calls for media literacy **initiatives at national level** to combat misinformation and false news.



IN CONCLUSION,

The IFJ proposes to the world employers' federations to support this Global Platform for Quality Journalism and to ask their national members to implement it.

As an associate member, the IFJ calls for formal support from the United Nations and its agencies (UNESCO, ILO, OHCHR) as well as regional political and economic entities to follow up the Global Platform for Quality Journalism:

- the 47 members of the Council of Europe;
- the 55 countries of the African Union;
- the 35 states of the Organization of American States;
- the 22 countries of the Arab League;
- the 21 members of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation.
- The IFJ has received the support of the Global Union Federations

ITUC/CSI : International Trade Union Confederation - 200 millions members / UNI-Global - 20 millions / PSI : Public Services International - 20 millions / IndustriALL - 50 millions / EI : Education International - 20 millions / BWI : Building and Wood Worker's International - 12 millions / IUF : International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations - 12 millions / TUAC : The Trade Union Advisory Committee to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) - 58 millions / ITF : International Transport Workers' Federation - 20 millions





IFJ LAUNCHES NEW GLOBAL CHARTER OF ETHICS FOR JOURNALISTS

The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) adopted at its 30th World Congress in Tunis (2019) adopted a new Global Charter of Ethics for Journalists, a document that defends and reinforces ethical standards for journalists worldwide.

Meeting in Tunis for the 30th IFJ Congress the 300 delegates backed the new charter, which builds on and reinforces the ethical standards laid down by the 1954 IFJ Declaration of Principles on the Conduct of Journalists, the most widely recognised text on journalistic ethics to date. That Declaration was drafted in Bordeaux, France, 65 years ago, and was last updated in 1986, hence the need for a new Charter adapted to current challenges facing the media.

The adoption of the Global Charter on the Ethics of Journalists is a milestone in the IFJ's history because ethics was one of the IFJ's founding pillars when it was created in 1926 in Paris. This document takes up the professional duties laid down in 1954, but it also includes rights, in a world where the profession is being abused. All journalists around the world identify themselves with the IFJ's Global Charter of Ethics and can challenge it against unscrupulous employers.

The Charter is based on major texts of international law, in particular the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It contains 16 articles plus a preamble and defines journalists' duties and rights regarding ethics.

The Charter's preamble states: "The journalist's responsibility towards the public takes precedence over any other responsibility, in particular towards their employers and the public authorities." It recalls that journalism is a "profession" that "requires time, resources and the means to practice". Other main provisions cover respect for truth, conflicts of interest, protection of sources and discrimination.



GLOBAL CHARTER OF ETHICS FOR JOURNALISTS

The IFJ Global Charter of Ethics for Journalists was adopted at the 30th IFJ World Congress in Tunis on 12 June 2019. It completes the IFJ Declaration of Principles on the Conduct of Journalists (1954), known as the "Bordeaux Declaration"

The right of everyone to have access to information and ideas, reiterated in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, underpins the journalist's mission. The journalist's responsibility towards the public takes precedence over any other responsibility, in particular towards their employers and the public authorities. Journalism is a profession, which requires time, resources and the means to practise – all of which are essential to its independence. This international declaration specifies the guidelines of conduct for journalists in the research, editing, transmission, dissemination and commentary of news and information, and in the description of events, in any media whatsoever.

1. Respect for the facts and for the right of the public to truth is the first duty of the journalist.
2. In pursuance of this duty, the journalist shall at all times defend the principles of freedom in the honest collection and publication of news, and of the right of fair comment and criticism. He/she will make sure to clearly distinguish factual information from commentary and criticism.
3. The journalist shall report only in accordance with facts of which he/ she knows the origin. The journalist shall not suppress essential information or falsify any document. He/she will be careful to reproduce faithfully statements and other material that non-public persons publish in social media
4. The journalist shall use only fair methods to obtain information, images, documents and data and he/she will always report his/her status as a journalist and will refrain from using hidden recordings of images and sounds, except where it is impossible for him/her to collect information that is overwhelmingly in the public interest. He/she will demand free access to all sources of information and the right to freely investigate all facts of public interest.
5. The notion of urgency or immediacy in the dissemination of information shall not take precedence over the verification of facts, sources and/or the offer of a reply.
6. The journalist shall do the utmost to rectify any errors or published information which is found to be inaccurate in a timely, explicit, complete and transparent manner.
7. The journalist shall observe professional secrecy regarding the source of information obtained in confidence.
8. The journalist will respect privacy. He/she shall respect the dignity of the persons named and/or represented and inform the interviewee whether the conversation and other material is intended for publication. He/she shall show particular consideration to inexperienced and vulnerable interviewees.
9. Journalists shall ensure that the dissemination of information or opinion does not contribute to hatred or prejudice and shall do their utmost to avoid facilitating the spread of discrimination on grounds such as geographical, social or ethnic origin, race, gender, sexual orientation, language, religion, disability, political and other opinions.
10. The journalist will consider serious professional misconduct to be
 - plagiarism
 - distortion of facts
 - slander, libel, defamation, unfounded accusations
11. The journalist shall refrain from acting as an auxiliary of the police or other security services. He/she will only be required to provide information already published in a media outlet.
12. The journalist will show solidarity with his/her colleagues, without renouncing his/her freedom of investigation, duty to inform, and right to engage in criticism, commentary, satire and editorial choice.
13. The journalist shall not use the freedom of the press to serve any other interest and shall refrain from receiving any unfair advantage or personal gain because of the dissemination or non-dissemination of information. He/she will avoid - or put an end to - any situation that could lead him/her to a conflict of interest in the exercise of his/her profession. He/she will avoid any confusion between his activity and that of advertising or propaganda. He/she will refrain from any form of insider trading and market manipulation.
14. The journalist will not undertake any activity or engagement likely to put his/her independence in danger. He/she will, however, respect the methods of collection/dissemination of information that he / she has freely accepted, such as "off the record", anonymity, or embargo, provided that these commitments are clear and unquestionable.
15. Journalists worthy of the name shall deem it their duty to observe faithfully the principles stated above. They may not be compelled to perform a professional act or to express an opinion that is contrary to his/her professional conviction or conscience.
16. Within the general law of each country the journalist shall recognize in matters of professional honour, the jurisdiction of independent self-regulatory bodies open to the public, to the exclusion of every kind of interference by governments or others.



International Federation of Journalists