

URGENT MOTIONS

1. Murderers of Journalist Milan Pantić Must Be Punished

Journalists' Association of Serbia (JAS)

Congress of the International Federation of Journalists, Muscat, Oman,
May 31 - June 3, 2022

Bearing in mind that June 11, 2022 marks the 21st anniversary of the unpunished murder of local journalist and correspondent of “Večernje novosti” Milan Pantić, which took place in front of his home in Jagodina, a town in central Serbia.

Considering that the government in Serbia established the Commission for the Investigation of Murders of Journalists in 2013, which consists of journalists, representatives of the police, the prosecutor's office and the Security Information Agency.

Emphasizing that working on shedding light on the case of the murder of Milan Pantić has been in the mandate of the Commission for the Investigation of Murders of Journalists since its establishment.

Stressing that the Commission, as a body with a mandate from the Government of Serbia, has completed its work and that the police investigation has pointed out the masterminds and perpetrators of the murder of journalist Milan Pantić.

Underlining that the investigation of the police and the prosecutor's office in Jagodina did not lead to the punishment of perpetrators and those who ordered the murder of journalist Milan Pantić, and that it has been at a standstill for 21 years.

Concerned that the findings of the Commission for the Investigation of Murders of Journalists have been submitted to the Serbian official bodies and that there has been no progress, although for a year now there has been a clear and publicly announced request from the Commission

and the Journalists' Association of Serbia that the Prosecutor's Office for Organized Crime should take over the investigation from the Prosecutor's Office in Jagodina so that the murderers and those who ordered the murder could be brought to justice.

The latest obstruction for the work of the Committee we received from our sources at the beginning of May 2022.

Congress of the International Federation of Journalists:

Provides full support to the work of the Commission for the Investigation of Murders of Journalists and the efforts of the Journalists' Association of Serbia in identifying and punishing the masterminds and murderers of journalist Milan Pantić.

Calls for an efficient judicial procedure to be carried out without delay and for experts from the Prosecutor's Office for Organized Crime to be engaged due to the background of the case, so that the murderers and those who ordered the murder of journalist Milan Pantić could be punished after more than two decades.

Congress asks the Executive Committee of the International Federation of Journalists to:

Fully acquaint themselves with the results of the Commission for the Investigation of Murders of Journalists in the case of the murder of journalist Milan Pantić.

Organize a meeting with the representatives of the Serbian authorities and the prosecutor's office in order to obtain information about the progress of the procedure for finding the perpetrators and those who ordered the murder of the journalist Milan Pantić.

Unanimously carried

2. Supporting Brazilian Journalists in the Fight to Defend Democracy and Against Bolsonaro's Systematic Attacks

Moved by FENJ

The 31st World Congress of the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), meeting in Muscat, capital of Oman, from 31st May to 3rd June 2022 :

Whereas the President of Brazil, Jair Bolsonaro, has launched repeated attacks on democratic institutions and is threatening not to accept the outcome of the general elections scheduled for October ;

Whereas Jair Bolsonaro, is named by the report of the National Federation of Journalists (FENAJ) as the person most responsible for situations of violence against journalists and journalism in the country; in 2021, out of the 430 cases of violence against journalists registered in Brazil, the President was responsible for 147 of them, including 129 attacks against the press with the aim of discrediting it and 18 verbal attacks against journalists;

While Bolsonaro's verbal attacks are often misogynistic, targeting women journalists, who now constitute the majority of the profession in Brazil;

Whereas Bolsonaro's repeated statements inflame his supporters, leading to violent attacks on journalists on social networks, as well as physical attacks on journalists or teams of reporters in the streets of Brazil;

Whereas violence against Brazilian journalists is escalating in the run-up to the 2022 general elections, with serious cases reported last May;

Whereas successive attacks are undermining and restricting press freedom in Brazil;

While, in the wake of the already polarised general elections, the importance of journalistic activity is increasing and, at the same time, threats of violence are on the rise;

The 31st Congress of the International Federation of Journalists resolves to :

Repudiate Jair Bolsonaro's attacks on the Brazilian and international press and **reaffirm** the importance of journalism as one of the pillars of democratic societies;

Express the support and solidarity of journalists from more than 140 countries represented by the IFJ and meeting in Oman to their Brazilian colleagues;

Give full support to all campaigns and initiatives aimed at defending democracy and protecting Brazilian journalists against acts of violence and promoting press freedom in Brazil, especially in the context of the upcoming election campaign.

Unanimously carried

3. Support for Brazilian journalist Rubens Valente in his petition to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights

FENAJ

The 31st World Congress of the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), meeting in Muscat, capital of Oman, from 31st May to 3rd June 2022
:

Whereas, in a democratic society, the function of journalism is to constantly monitor the activity of the powers of the State, and criticism or denunciation of possible improper acts in the exercise of public office is part of the democratic control by public opinion, which "encourages transparency in the activities of the State and promotes the accountability of public officials in their public management" (Judgment of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, 5/2/2008);

Whereas the award-winning journalist Rubens Valente, by publishing his book "Operação Banqueiro" in 2014, consolidated six years of journalistic work, relating the circumstances of the arrest of Brazilian financier Daniel Dantas and facts of undeniable public interest;

Whereas the Brazilian judiciary, and in particular the Federal Supreme Court, condemned the journalist for "moral damage" following his quotation in the book of a decision in favour of the banker by one of his ministers, without pointing out any relevant factual irregularity or offensive sentence, in an unprecedented judgment against journalistic work;

Whereas the lump sums of compensation are unreasonable for an accused employee and the decision that new versions of the book must contain the entire original application and judgement - a total of more than 200 pages - makes it impossible for the book to be republished, effectively removing the book from the market and inflicting a measure of censorship on it;

Whereas such a decision sets a precedent that can be used against any journalist, thus constituting a threat to press freedom in Brazil;

In April 2022, journalists Rubens Valente had appealed to the Inter-America Court of Human Rights against the ruling of the Federal Supreme Court.

The 36th Congress of the International Federation of Journalists resolves to :

Express its support for journalist Rubens Valente to continue his relevant journalistic work;

Address the Inter-American Court of Human Rights to request that the petition presented by Rubens Valente be processed as soon as possible in order to prevent the perpetuation of such violations against the journalist and to discourage any similar outcome in other cases like his.

Unanimously carried

4. On current challenges of journalists in the world related to the war in Ukraine

Submitted by the Independent Media Trade Union of Ukraine (IMTUU)

Recognizing the unprecedented severity of the challenges facing world journalism since the beginning of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, the IFJ Congress declares:

- 1) Full solidarity with Ukrainian journalists who need protection, safety and security for their professional activities at this difficult time and will need assistance for a long time to recover. With this in mind, the assistance to Ukrainian journalists launched by the IFJ and the EFJ with the support of their affiliates and donors should be continued and expanded. We also support the appeal set out in the “Perugia Declaration for Ukraine”, which was signed by the IFJ and EFJ leadership.
- 2) Admiration for the courage and professionalism of foreign journalists, who, risking by their lives, report true about the situation in Ukraine and other hot spots. Thanks to their information, humanity has a chance to become better and achieve peace. The IFJ Congress calls on governments and international organizations to do their utmost to ensure the safety of journalists work in the “hot spot” and the preservation of their lives and health.
- 3) The need for a serious discussion about what journalism is today and what a threat to the profession and to all mankind is the propaganda, disguised as journalism. In view of this, we focus the efforts of our executive bodies on the promotion of journalism standards, IFJ principles, the development of effective mechanisms for detecting propaganda, a clear separation of it and its disseminators from journalists and journalism.

Abstentions - 4

Carried

5. RUSSIAN MISINFORMATION AND THE WAR IN UKRAINE

Moved by the NJU UK + I

IFJ Congress condemns the position of the Russian state-controlled media that has covered up and justified the war waged by the Russian Federation against independent and sovereign Ukraine and deliberately misled Russian citizens.

Congress notes that these platforms keep silent about: Russian soldiers committing numerous war crimes; significant Russian casualties; and, that the most affected targets are civilians – schools, hospitals, museums, and residential buildings – as well as the 32 journalists who have died so far in the war. Most “Russian mass media” are inciting hysteria and hatred.

Congress notes that allegations against constituent unions are investigated by Executive Committee under the internal rules of the IFJ. Congress calls on the incoming executive to investigate all allegations lodged under these internal rule within two months of the receipt of competent complaints.

Since 24 February, and throughout March, April, and May of 2022 the extent and degree of this misinformation has become increasingly stark. Since the start of the invasion, the Russian authorities have placed journalists under extreme pressure. One or two have committed brave acts of resistance. Many others have been forced to flee Russia. Congress applauds those journalists who have resisted, and pledges its support for those who feel compelled to seek exile.

This congress condemns the Russian government for using the law to bully and harass journalists for simply doing their jobs.

This congress expresses its support and solidarity with the Russian Journalists and Media Workers Union that has recently become an IFJ

associate affiliate. This organisation supports the 15 male and 3 female journalists who are now in prison in Russia.

Congress applauds the IFJ's Executive for swift and proportionate action to assist journalists in Ukraine.

Congress calls on the incoming Executive to: continue supporting independent journalists in Russia; to continue supporting its affiliates in Ukraine – IMTUU and NUJU; and, to increase its campaigning in support to the principle that truthful, plural, transparent reporting is vital for the achievement of a peaceful and just world.

Supported by: Ver.di, SNJ (France), SNJ CGT (France), Norway, KUJ (Kenya)NUJ, NUSOJ (Somalia), ZUJ (Zimbabwe), SUJ (Sudan), Unifor (Canada), FNSI (Italy), National Writers Union (USA), MEAA (Australia), NJ (Norway).

Unanimously carried

6. Support for press freedom and independent journalism in Oman

Submitted by the Norwegian Union of Journalists

The IFJ has received reports on an Omani journalist charged with breaking the law by publishing a story on a corruption case against government officials. The journalist's court hearing was scheduled in May but was postponed to mid-June without explanation. The congress has been ensured that the Oman Journalist Association is on the case, and we hope that it will be solved soon after the closing of this congress.

- The IFJ congress asks the new elected IFJ executive committee to support the Omani Journalist Association in its efforts to reform and to abolish laws that allow to jail journalists for doing their job, or censor the media.

- The IFJ congress asks the Omani authorities to allow all journalists to work freely and without fear of legal harassment.
- The IFJ congress stands in solidarity with all Omani journalists and the Omani Journalist Association.

Unimously carried

7. Emergency visa support and international refuge for Hong Kong journalists

Submitted by Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance, Australia

The MEAA and other IFJ affiliates in the Asia-Pacific region are gravely concerned at the rapid collapse of Hong Kong's free media and the ongoing safety and well-being of professional and independent journalists.

Since the enactment of the National Security Law in 2020 in the Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China (HKSAR), the closure or exodus of both local and international media outlets, eroding Hong Kong's reputation as a bastion for media excellence in the Asia region, has been witnessed.

Only two independent media outlets remain - one Cantonese and one English.

The situation facing journalists and other human rights defenders in Hong Kong is at a critical point.

** We call on the IFJ Congress to demand governments around the world to immediately support journalists seeking to leave Hong Kong by issuing humanitarian visas or implementing special visa programs.

Supported by: Afghan Independent Journalists Association (AIJA), Aliansi Jurnalis Independen (AJI) Indonesia, Association of Taiwan Journalists (ATJ), Cambodian Journalists Association (CamboJA), E tū (New Zealand), Federation of Media Employees Trade Unions (FMETU), Free Media Movement (FMM), Indian Journalists

Union (IJU), Japan Federation of Commercial Broadcast Worker's Union (Minpororen), Japan Federation of Newspaper Workers' Union (Shinbunroren), National Union of Journalists Malaysia (NUJM), National Union of Journalists of the Philippines (NUJP), SINDIKASI, Sri Lanka Working Journalists Association (SLWJA), and Timor Leste Press Union (TLPU).

Unanimously carried

8. Motion for a constitutional amendment from the IFJ gender council

Submitted by Unifor Canada

Whereas: the International Federation of Journalists agrees to promote gender mainstreaming in all activities.

Whereas: the IFJ recognizes women are under-represented in many of our affiliates and our leading bodies.

Whereas: The IFJ commits to work to continue to develop a stronger presence and participation of women in our unions and associations, with the aim of achieving equal representation, including in leadership positions at both national union and IFJ levels.

Therefore be it resolved that Section ~~32 and~~ 43 of the IFJ Constitution be amended as follows: (new language highlighted in yellow):

~~32. Congress shall also elect two reserve committee members from each region and two further reserves not bound by any geographical criteria, and one Gender Council Chair. The Gender Council Chair shall be a member of the executive committee with voice and vote.~~ The reserve receiving the greater number of votes in each case shall be considered the first reserve. If a member is unable to participate in a meeting of the Executive Committee he/she must inform the General Secretary at least

~~four weeks before the meeting. The General Secretary shall then call the appropriate reserve to participate in the meeting in the following order: First regional reserve, second regional reserve, first general reserve, second general reserve. In such circumstances the reserve shall have all the rights, duties and powers of a member of the Executive Committee.~~

43. There shall be a gender council whose mission is to advise on and coordinate the gender work of the IFJ. It shall have the right to set its working rules, composition and policies under the authority of the Executive Committee, and financed accordingly. ***The chair of the gender council shall be a de facto member of the executive committee with voice and vote.***

Abstentions – 28

For – 146

No – 0

Carried