



**His Excellency Maeen Abdulmalik Saeed,
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November 11, 2021

Concern: Call to End Impunity for Killers of Journalists in Yemen

Your Excellency,

We are writing as members 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 Yemen.

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 Yemen, Somalia, Kosovo, Mexico and Afghanistan. The IFJ is mobilising its 187 affiliates worldwide to highlight the impunity in these countries. You can view the campaign [here](#).

Forty-five journalists were killed in Yemen between 2011 and September 2021, many of whom lost their lives since the beginning of the war.

According to the Yemeni Journalists Syndicate (YJS), none of the perpetrators has been brought to justice.

We are particularly concerned by the absence of an independent judiciary and inadequate security conditions which make the death toll and the conditions to report even more difficult.

In addition to the killings, Yemeni media workers suffer arbitrary detentions, injuries and threats on a daily basis. They often face media restrictions or closures and self-censorship out of fear of reprisals. They are regularly prevented from covering news and face the suspension of their



salaries. Yemeni media has become highly polarised along political and sectarian lines and we regret that media professionals are too often, considered by the warring factions as the enemy.

The latest Yemeni Journalists' Syndicate (YJS)' report on the state of media freedom in the country lists 63 attacks against journalists and media from January to the end of September 2021. The crimes range from targeted killings, imprisonment, attacks on media houses, shutdown of media and confiscation of newspapers to death threats, harassment and assaults.

Most of these violations were committed by the armed groups and states involved in the war. The YJS cites both warring parties as those mainly responsible for the attacks against media workers this year.

In addition to the reported killings, 10 journalists are still under Houthi custody, while four of them have been sentenced to death on charges of *"treason and spying for foreign states"* in arbitrary trials. They are being held in extremely dire conditions, subjected to torture, and denied appropriate medical care. They are mostly denied family visits. Two journalists were held recently and later released, namely Youness Abdelsalam, in August 2021 by the Houthis and investigative journalist Adel al-Hasani in September 2020 by STC forces. According to the YJS, there is also one journalist under Al-Qaeda custody.

Today we warn you against the state of deterioration of press freedom in Yemen and your need to promptly act to ensure the safety and security of our colleagues reporting on the ground.

[None of the crimes](#) against journalists can go unpunished.

Today, we demand justice and urge your authorities 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,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Anthony BELLANGER'. The signature is written in a cursive style with some capital letters.

Anthony Bellanger
IFJ General Secretary