

Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/ukraine-violence-against-journalists-in-20-02-2014,45911.html>

Europe/Ex-USSR - Ukraine

Appalling impunity

Violence Against Journalists in Ukraine Demands International Engagement

20 February 2014

The International Partnership Mission on Safety and Protection of Journalists and Press Freedom in Ukraine, meeting in Kiev on 19 and 20 February 2014, heard testimony and witness accounts from a wide variety of stakeholders and found:

- an appalling number of cases of violence and harassment against journalists, including the murder of *Vesti* journalist **Vyacheslav Veremyi**;
- clear evidence that journalists, other media workers, and media organisations are being directly targeted and attacked because of their work;
- a culture of impunity caused by failure to investigate and prosecute crimes against journalists, media workers, and media organisations;
- that authorities have engaged in blocking, censoring and obstructing news organisations and news content, particularly during the current demonstrations and protests;
- that economic pressure and other indirect methods of inhibiting and discouraging critical reporting continue to be employed by Ukraine authorities.

The partnership mission, comprising international and local media and press freedom organisations, respectfully reminds the Ukraine government that it is the duty of the state to protect all citizens, including journalists, and to ensure that journalists and media organizations can carry out their duties without fear of violence or harassment.

The mission recognises and praises the courageous work of our colleagues in Ukraine in carrying out their essential duties in dangerous and difficult circumstances.

The mission:

- demands that Ukraine authorities fulfill their obligations and ensure that all attacks on journalists, media workers and media organisations immediately cease;
- calls on the Ukraine government to allow an immediate, independent, and transparent investigation to bring those responsible for attacks to justice;
- urges the Council of Europe to engage with Ukraine authorities to ensure this investigation, and to conduct their own investigation;
- calls on authorities to enact existing legislation, including Article 171 of the Criminal Code that forbids any obstruction of journalistic activity;
- strongly calls for joint efforts to seek international justice, including through potential submission to the European Court of Human Rights;
- calls on Ukraine authorities to recognise the fundamental right of the public to receive accurate and diverse information and to refrain from blocking, censoring or otherwise obstructing independent media, and encourage development of an independent and viable media market.

The International Partnership Mission on the safety and protection of journalists and press freedom in Ukraine includes representatives of the National Union of Journalists of Ukraine (NUJU), the Independent Media Trade Union of Ukraine (IMTU), the Ukrainian Association of

Press Publishers, the Independent Regional Press Publishers of Ukraine, Article19, the European and International Federations of Journalists (EFJ/IFJ), International Media Support (IMS), Open Society Foundations, Reporters Without Borders, and the World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers (WAN-IFRA).

[One Journalist dead, over 167 reported injured](#)

[Statement from Ukraine on Murder and Attacks on Journalists](#)

(Photos: AFP)

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