

Session 4: Journalists' Safety in a Hostile World – Physical, Digital and Financial Safety

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Notes

1. The session examined the physical, digital, legal and financial risks faced by journalists and their implications for journalists' ability to investigate and report independently. The discussion emphasized the importance of assessing risks before pursuing a story and continuously reassessing them as circumstances on the ground can change rapidly. The session also highlighted the responsibility of media organizations to create an environment where journalists can raise safety concerns, refuse excessive risks and seek changes to assignments without compromising their professional standing. Financial and legal support were also identified as important aspects of protecting journalists and maintaining editorial independence.
2. The session featured a rigorous discussion between the speakers and participants, particularly on the practical challenges of journalists' safety. The exchange underscored that journalists' safety is a shared responsibility between individual journalists and their organizations, and that protecting journalists is essential to safeguarding editorial independence and the public's right to know.
3. Overall, the session provided the participants with a better understanding of the multidimensional nature of journalists' safety. They learned about the need to protect themselves against physical threats, digital attacks, legal intimidation and financial pressures that could undermine their ability to report freely and independently. The session also encouraged participants to reflect on the role of media organizations in establishing effective safety protocols and providing appropriate institutional support. The session also reinforced the importance of solidarity, cooperation and shared responsibility in addressing journalists' safety challenges, protecting editorial independence, and upholding press freedom and the public's right to information.

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