

PACE: resolutions on the protection of journalists in Ukraine and Gaza

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On 1 October 2025, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) adopted a resolution entitled “Journalists matter: the need to step up efforts to liberate Ukrainian journalists held in captivity by the Russian Federation”.

Since the start of the full-scale war of aggression in February 2022, over 800 crimes against media and media personnel have been documented as committed by the Russian Federation, including the killing of over one hundred media workers. Moreover, at least 26 media professionals and journalists are being unlawfully deprived of their liberty and held as civilian detainees in the Russian Federation and in the temporarily occupied areas of Ukraine (as at 1 October 2025).

In its Resolution 2618 (2025), the Parliamentary Assembly urged the liberation of Ukrainian journalists unlawfully detained by the Russian Federation. The Assembly observed that the journalists remaining in Russian captivity face “fabricated criminal charges, violation of basic rights, torture, and even death”, and demanded the “immediate release of all journalists detained in contravention of international law” as “journalists working in areas of armed conflict are civilians and are protected as such under international humanitarian law”. It also called for updated information on detainees’ whereabouts, and unhindered access for the International Committee of the Red Cross and the United Nations to places of detention.

Moreover, the Assembly demanded accountability and reinforced sanctions against Russian officials and detention facility heads responsible for violations. They also encouraged financial support for Ukrainian journalists and media outlets, and stronger international campaigning to highlight their plight.

Furthermore, the Assembly decided to establish an annual commemoration during its autumn session, named “Victory for Victoria” in memory of Ukrainian journalist Victoria Roshchyna, who died in Russian custody. This tribute is for all journalists who risk their lives to defend the right to truth and information.

On 2 October 2025, in a separate resolution adopted during an urgent debate on the humanitarian situation in Gaza, PACE paid particular attention to the protection of journalists. In Resolution 2623 (2025), PACE deplored “the

exceptionally high number of journalists killed or injured in Gaza", noting that journalists and media workers are civilians under international humanitarian law, and calling on all parties "to ensure their protection and the safe, unhindered access of all journalists to conflict areas". The Assembly called on Council of Europe member States to continue to exert pressure to grant immediate free and safe access of accredited international journalists and media workers to Gaza and facilitate the evacuation of Palestinian journalists and their families and provide them with psychological and material support for their immediate protection.

Journalists matter: the need to step up efforts to liberate Ukrainian journalists held in captivity by the Russian Federation, PACE Resolution 2618 (2025)

<https://pace.coe.int/en/files/35656>

Urgent call to put an end to the devastating humanitarian catastrophe and the killing of journalists in Gaza, PACE Resolution 2623 (2025)

<https://pace.coe.int/en/files/35688>

