Platform for the promotion of journalism and the safety of journalists: Report of the partner organisations

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The partner organisations of the Council of Europe's Platform for the promotion of journalism and the safety of journalists have issued their annual assessment Report on the state of media freedom and threats in Council of Europe member States (see IRIS 2017-8/5). The data in the report are based on an analysis of the alerts submitted to the Platform.

According to the Report, the lack of adequate investigation into the murder of Maltese journalist Daphne Caruana Galizia demonstrates the deterioration of media-freedom conditions in Europe. The Partner organisations have thus urged the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe to appoint a special rapporteur to be in charge of monitoring the investigation process. The Partners organisations also reiterated the Guidelines relating to judicial follow-ups to the killing of journalists approved by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe in April 2016 (see IRIS 2016-5/3).

In 2017, there were 130 submitted alerts from twenty-nine countries. However, less than 30% of the alerts received a reply or any kind of reaction from the relevant Member State. Physical attacks on the safety and integrity of journalists (23%), as well as harassment and intimidation (23%), are the most frequently reported threats, followed by detention and imprisonment (21%). As stated in the Report, in respect of seventy-nine alerts (60%), the State appears to have been the source of the threat in question.

The number of reported physical attacks submitted to the Platform remains fairly high and in two cases their severity prompted journalists leave the country. In addition, five journalists were murdered in 2017; this - coupled with the fact that fifteen cases of murder and other types of threats were not adequately investigated - clearly shows that impunity "remains one of the single biggest challenges to the protection of journalists".

For all these reasons, the Partner organisations expressed concern that the Report indicates the worsening of the media conditions throughout Europe and called on member States to continue investigations and adopt effective measures to combat impunity.

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Partner organisations, Council of Europe's Partner Organisations on Media Freedom Raise Alarm after Grim Record in 2017 and Urge Close International Scrutiny over the investigation into Daphne Caruana Galizia's Murder, 19 January 2018

https://rm.coe.int/joint-statement-partners-platform-final-rev/168077ed10

Council of Europe, Safety of Journalists' Platform: a grim record in 2017, 19 January 2018

https://www.coe.int/en/web/portal/-/safety-of-journalists-platform

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