

## **Security Council meeting in Arria formula on Protecting Journalists: United Nations expert stresses the need for systematic international attention to all threats and violence against journalists and the media**

On 13 December 2013, the special rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, Mr. Frank La Rue, participated in a Security Council meeting in Arria formula on the Protection of Journalists. The meeting, co-chaired by France and Guatemala, brought together States, representatives of the United Nations, journalists and civil society, and offered an informal and interactive platform for exchange of views on how to better protect journalists in light of Security Council Resolution 1738. In this resolution, adopted in 2006, the Security Council condemned attacks against journalists in conflict situations and called upon all parties to put an end to such practices.

The protection of journalists and social communications are of central concern within all my activities as the United Nations expert on the right to freedom of opinion and expression, Mr. Frank La Rue stated. The kidnapping and killing of journalists remains a recurrent story, the root causes of which can be described by two words: silence and impunity. Mr. La Rue emphasized that even though it is true that journalists, social commentators and the media should take measures to improve their own security, the main responsibility clearly lies with States. He pointed out that although some extreme cases of violence receive international attention, the great majority sadly remains invisible and that the lack of political will to pursue investigations, inadequate legal frameworks, weak judicial systems and corruption are some of the main causes of such high levels of impunity.

In his reports to the Human Rights Council in 2010 and 2012, Mr. Frank La Rue, as well as the United Nations expert on summary executions, Mr. Christof Heyns, discussed the need for protection of journalists at all times in detail and prepared recommendations to increase their security. Promising initiatives have been set up since then, including the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity (2012) and several national plans to promote the protection of journalists. Mr. Frank La Rue expressed his willingness to collaborate with these initiatives and stressed that for these platforms of action to be fully implemented, systematic international attention must be given to all threats and violence against journalists and the media.

*In 2012 the Human Rights Council (HRC) adopted resolution 21/12 on the safety of journalists (A/HRC/RES/21/12) and requested the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to prepare a compilation of good practices in the protection of journalists, the prevention of attacks and the fight against impunity. This report was presented to the twenty-fourth HRC session in September 2013 (A/HRC/24/23). During the same session, the HRC adopted decision 24/116 (A/HRC/DEC/24/116) in which it decided to convene at its twenty-sixth session in June 2014, a panel discussion on the issue of the safety of journalists, with a particular focus on discussing the findings made in the report of the OHCHR, identifying challenges and further developing good practices. Afterwards, in December 2013, the GA adopted resolution 68/163 on the safety of journalists and the issue of impunity (A/RES/68/163) without a vote.*

To learn more, visit:

**Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council:** <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/SP/Pages/Welcomepage.aspx>

**Freedom of Opinion and Expression:** <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/FreedomOpinion/Pages/OpinionIndex.aspx>

**Extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions:**

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Executions/Pages/SRExecutionsIndex.aspx>

**HRC resolution 21/12:** [http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage\\_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/RES/21/12](http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/RES/21/12)

**HRC decision 24/116:** [http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage\\_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/DEC/24/116](http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/DEC/24/116)

**Report of the OHCHR on the safety of journalists:** [http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage\\_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/24/23](http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/24/23)

**United Nations Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists:**

[http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/pdf/official\\_documents/UN\\_plan\\_on\\_Safety\\_Journalists\\_EN.pdf](http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/pdf/official_documents/UN_plan_on_Safety_Journalists_EN.pdf)

**UNESCO:** <https://en.unesco.org/events/informal-meeting-security-council-%E2%80%9Cprotecting-journalists%E2%80%9D>