



Recommendation 2168 (2020)¹

Provisional version

Threats to media freedom and journalists' security in Europe

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Parliamentary Assembly, referring to its [Resolution 2317 \(2020\)](#) on “Threats to media freedom and journalists' security in Europe”, recalls that the right to freedom of expression and free, independent and pluralistic media are fundamental prerequisites of a true democracy. The safety of journalists and other media actors is a key component of this freedom. Member States have a positive obligation to establish a sound legal framework for journalists and other media actors to work in safe conditions.

2. However, threats, harassment, legal and administrative restrictions and undue political and economic pressure are widespread. In some countries, journalists who investigate affairs involving corruption or abuse of power, or who merely voice criticism of political leaders and governments in power, are physically attacked, arbitrarily imprisoned, tortured or even murdered.

3. Threats on media freedom and the safety of journalists have become so numerous, repeated and serious that they are jeopardising not only citizens' right to be properly informed but also the stability and smooth functioning of our democratic societies. The Council of Europe must make use of all its leverage to prompt member States to remedy these threats quickly and effectively by urging and supporting the reforms required to this aim.

4. In this context, the Platform to promote the protection of journalism and safety of journalists is an essential collaborative tool which helps to raise awareness on the situation in the member States and to identify positive and negative trends. Moreover, the Platform encourages joint efforts and more synergic action of the different stakeholders, and it provides benchmarks for the design and effective implementation of national strategies intended to uphold media freedom and journalists' security.

5. In order to reinforce the role of the Platform and tap all of its potential, the Assembly recommends that the Committee of Ministers:

5.1. encourage member States to promptly and substantively respond to alerts by taking appropriate remedial actions;

5.2. hold regular exchanges within the Committee on the alerts published on the Platform and on the follow-up actions taken by the member States;

5.3. organise an annual dialogue with the partners of the Platform, based on their annual report, in order to identify systemic challenges concerning media freedom and the safety of journalists in the member States, as well as possible solutions to meet those challenges;

5.4. consider the Platform and its alerts on media freedom and safety of journalists violations as a basis to set priorities and assess the progress of the implementation strategy of [Recommendation CM/Rec\(2016\)4](#) on the protection of journalism and safety of journalists and other media actors;

5.5. make available the resources and the support needed to give the Platform greater visibility, recognition and impact.

1. *Assembly debate* on 28 January 2020 (4th Sitting) (see [Doc. 15021](#), report of the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media, rapporteur: Lord George Foulkes). *Text adopted by the Assembly* on 28 January 2020 (4th Sitting).

