



Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity for Crimes against Journalists

Situational Report on DRC (2017-2019)

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I. INTRODUCTION

As part of its annual monitoring report on attacks on press freedom, Journaliste en Danger (JED), a leading Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) dedicated to defending and promoting press freedom in the Democratic Republic of Congo has produced this report which covers press freedom developments recorded in the country from 2017 – 2019. The JED report which was produced with funding support from the African Freedom of Expression Exchange (AFEX) noticed an uneasy calm with regards to the working environment of journalists in the country. JED briefly described the press freedom situation experienced in 2017 as; **"Repression has become Rampant,"** while in its 2018 report thus; **"threats, aggression, arrests, censorship... predators are on the rise."** In the same vein, if called today to give a title to the annual report expected at the end of this year 2019, after the first peaceful transfer of power on 20 December 2018, JED would most probably summarize the safety of journalists' situation as **"Finally, Glimmer of Hope for Improved Safety of Journalists' Situation on the Horizon!"** in view of the early signals recorded in the first 6 months of 2019.

In fact, in 2017 and 2018, the press freedom situation in the DRC was still among the most deplorable in sub-Saharan Africa; the country remained at the bottom of Reporters Without Borders' World Press Freedom Index. In 2017 and 2018, DRC occupies 154th place out of 180 aligned countries, its lowest rank. Violence, intimidation and arbitrary arrests are among the main features of the hostile environment in which journalists live.

Compared to the year 2017, the year 2018 did not record any significant progress in terms of the physical, judicial and legal protection of journalists in the exercise of their profession. The number of journalists attacked and media silenced remained high, with 121 cases of press freedom violations recorded, as in 2017. No action has been taken by the country's authorities to strengthen the freedom of information situation in DRC but the number of media outlets has grown considerably.

In the last five months, from January 1 to the World Press Freedom Day celebration on May 3, 2019, thirty-seven (37) cases of press freedom violations were recorded, as against forty-four (44) cases in the same period in 2018, a decrease of 7 cases. The cases identified at the beginning of this year 2019 are as follows:

- Media Closed or Ransacked (impeding the free flow of information): 13 cases
- Journalists Threatened: 9 cases
- Journalists Arrested: 6 cases

- Journalists Assaulted: 5 cases
- Journalists Incarcerated: 4 cases

Of the 37 cases of press freedom violations recorded since the beginning of this year, 15 were recorded in Kinshasa and some provinces in the interior of the country, in the immediate aftermath of the inauguration on January 24 of the new President, Felix Tshisekedi. The inauguration coincided with the restoration of the Internet after 21 days' shutdown; the reopening of pro-opposition media outlets close that were closed in Katanga, namely Nyota TV, Mapendo TV, La Voix de Katanga and Jua, as well as the restoration of the signal of Radio France Internationale (RFI) which had been scrambled for several weeks. It was as if the storm of the elections of last December has been succeeded by a calm press freedom atmosphere in the DRC, while nothing concrete has been done by the new authorities to promote press freedom or to enhance the safety and protection of journalists.

II. OPEN WINDOWS ON THE SECURITY SITUATION OF JOURNALISTS

We attempt hereunder to present the picture of the safety of journalists' situation in the light of some major incidents.

A. The major freedom of expression violations

In general, all 9 categories of press freedom violations listed by Reporters Without Borders were recorded in the DRC. However, in 2017 and 2018, there were two categories of attacks that did not occur at all (ie 0 frequency), namely: Category 1 - Journalists Killed and Category 2 - Journalists Missing. Category 3 - Journalists in Prison (at the time of publishing the JED report), only one case had been recorded in 2018. The years 2017 and 2018 recorded the same number of cases of press freedom violations, ie 121 cases. Table 1. below gives details of the types and number of violations recorded in 2017 and 2018.

Table: FOE Violations Recorded in DRC in 2017 and 2018

| Types of Violation | Number of violation recorded in 2017 | Number of violation recorded in 2018 |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Journalists | - | 1 |

| | | |
|---|------------|------------|
| imprisoned/jailed | | |
| Journalists detained (detained for more than 48 hours): | 7 | 15 |
| Journalists arrested (detained for less than 48 hours) | 42 | 38 |
| Journalists threatened or harassed | 16 | 11 |
| Journalists assaulted, maltreated or tortured | 16 | 19 |
| Obstructing the free flow of information | 37 | 21 |
| Administrative, judicial or economic pressure | 3 | 16 |
| Total | 121 | 121 |

Since the publication of its 2018 Annual Monitoring Report JED has documented **37** cases of attacks or violations of freedom of expression from January 1 to May 3, 2019 (World Press Freedom Day celebration). Some of these violations included the following: **closure or destruction of media outlets: 13 incidents; Journalists threatened: 9 incidents; Journalists arrested: 6 incidents; Journalists assaulted: 5 incidents; Journalists detained: 4 incidents.** During the corresponding time last year (2018), it recorded 44 cases, a decrease of 7 cases.

In 2018, a new phenomenon on the press freedom landscape struck public opinion; that is attacks against women journalists. Eleven of such cases were recorded, namely 2 cases of journalists detained, 3 cases of journalists arrested, 1 case of journalist assaulted, 1 case of journalist threatened or tortured, and 4 cases of administrative, judicial and economic pressure.

Below is a detailed illustration of the attacks targeting female journalists:

- Sylvanie Kiaku, director of the newspaper "La Percée", published in Kinshasa, was held in custody for ten straight days at the Kinshasa/Gombe Peace Court and Makala Central Prison. The journalist was prosecuted for "defamation" against Mr. Yves Cuypers, Managing Director of the Commercial Bank of Congo. The journalist was prosecuted following the publication of two articles in which she claimed that a total of 958 employees of the Commercial Bank of Congo had been dismissed in line with a restructuring exercise carried out between 1999 and 2001. Supporting her assertions with documents, she revealed in the September 6, 2018 edition of *La Percée* that 270 of them (the dismissed employees) had so far died without receiving any compensation.

- Elisée Lusamba, a journalist with Radio-Television Malandji, a channel broadcasting in Kananga, Kasai Central province, was arrested by the provincial director of this service, Mr. Sakrine Ntanga at the local ANR office on Saturday, February 24, 2018. She was severely rebuked for reporting on a peaceful march by the adherents of the Catholic Church and publishing a communiqué issued by the Lay Coordinating Committee. The journalist had been warned not to broadcast the messages from the organisers of Catholic demonstrations at risk of being arrested or having her media house closed.

- Yolande Kusaya, a journalist with Radio Lisanga Télévision (RLTV), a channel broadcasting in Kinshasa, was arrested on Tuesday, July 17, 2018, by agents of the Congolese National Police in the commune of N'Sele. She had gone there to report on a land dispute. She was unconditionally released on Saturday, July 21st.

What about freedom of expression online?

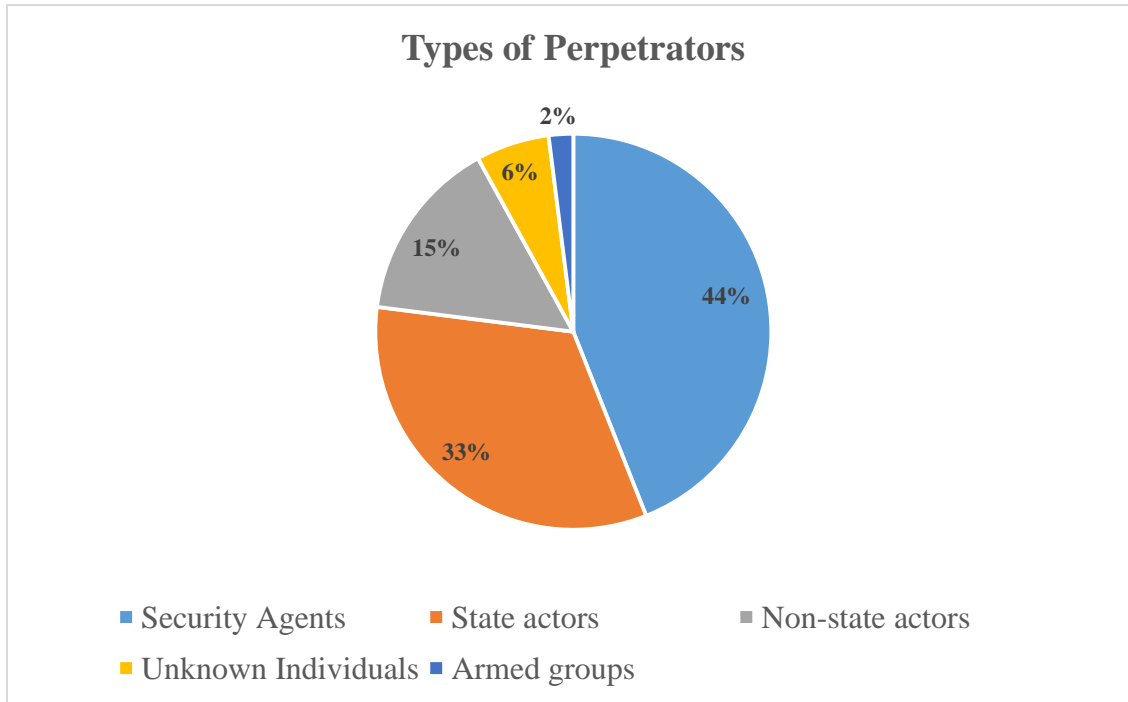
Freedom of expression online has not been spared in the crackdown. The desire to stifle online media and restrict spaces for freedom and expression is quite evident in the DRC, especially during serious political crisis. In fact, it was customary to disconnect the Internet and messaging services, as well as to scramble certain radio broadcast signals whenever the opposition, civil society organisations and citizens' movements plan to organise peaceful demonstrations against the Kabila regime. One example is the case where the Minister of Post and Information Technology, on December 30, 2017, instructed telecommunications operators in the DRC to cut Internet and SMS services for "state security reasons". On the orders of the same minister again, access to the internet and SMS was blocked on Sunday, January 21 at midnight to be restored three days later.

In order to restrict spaces for freedom and expression online, the authorities always dangle before the media the threat of administrative measures, including, on one hand, a demand to open a prior registration, and on the other hand, a requirement that advertising messages on any online media should, before its dissemination, pass through public institutions responsible for controlling advertising.

B. The main perpetrators of attacks on freedom of expression and of the press

In its monitoring report on press freedom violations during the year 2018, JED identified the following as the major perpetrators of the attacks against journalists and the media. Figure 1 below provides a distribution of the perpetrators of the violations recorded in DRC in 2018.

Figure 1. Type of Perpetrators



From the above figure, state security agents and state actors were responsible for a majority of the FOE violations recorded. They interfere with the enjoyment of press freedom through the use of arbitrary arrests of journalists and media professionals, the illegal closure of media outlets and shutdown of Internet connection and messaging services (SMS) in Kinshasa and the provinces.

While the main perpetrators of attacks on journalists and the media were the law enforcement agencies, Congolese intelligence and national or provincial authorities during the era of President Joseph Kabila, in the era of the new head of state, on the other hand, militants of the different political parties (the ruling party and the opposition) are also among the violators of press freedom. To the list of major perpetrators have been added: 1 ° the social actors (students, musicians, media managers, etc.: 15%), 2 ° the armed groups (2%) and 3 ° the unknown persons who issued anonymous threats against journalists: 6%.

C. Victims (names, media, dates, etc.) of attacks on press freedom

Below are some examples to illustrate the press freedom situation in DRC for the years, 2017, 2018 and 2019.

- In Kinshasa, Privali Wabembela, a reporter-cameraman with the *Vrai journal*, a general news magazine broadcast on Canal Congo Television (CCTV), was severely beaten on April 3, 2017 by a group of police officers while he was covering dead city protests. The protest was declared by some opposition political actors to demand the application of the 2016 political Accord setting timelines for the Kabila government to hold presidential election in the country.
- In a separate but similar incident, security agents on July 31, 2017 arrested, intimidated and detained in a school yard, several journalists who were covering popular rallies demanding Congolese authorities to respect the December 2016 Accords by holding presidential elections. The protesters were also calling for president Kabila to step down. The journalists included Alain Uaykanu, Christine Tshibuyi, Pascal Mulegwa, Chinois Mbelechi, Kelly Katombe, Emmanuela Nzombi and Nancy Ntumba working for the China New Agency, the news site Actualite.cd, the Anadolu agency, BBC / Kinshasa, the Reuters and Vox Congo news agency respectively. They were released following the intervention of the new provincial commissioner of Kinshasa, General Sylvano Kasongo Kitenge.
- A group of Congolese national police officers on May 17, 2017 beat up Francine Mukoko, Blaise Basomboli and Baudry Mata, all journalists working with the French television channel "TV5" near the Kinshasa's central prison. The three journalists had gone to the Kinshasa Central Prison to report on a crackdown at the station following the escape of several detainees in which many inmates were killed. The police also confiscated the equipment of the journalists.
- Steeve Mbuyi, a journalist with B-One and freelance photographer Samy Tumba, were held in custody for 24 hours on September 20, 2017 at a police station in Kinshasa. The two journalists were arrested while covering a demonstration in front of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, against the cancellation of so-called semi-biometric passports by the government.
- Poly Muzalia (BBC correspondent) and William Clowes (Voice of America reporter); They were arrested on 21 January 2018 in Kinshasa by agents of the Congolese National Police who quelled a peaceful march by the members of several Catholic parishes.
- Djouzen Belebele and Edmond Izuba, cameraman-reporter at Antenne A and journalist at RTVS, respectively; They were severely beaten on February 25, 2018 by security agents, the first incident occurring at a spot not far from the Saint Kizito Parish, in the district Kingabwa, commune of Limete; and the second, in front of the grotto of Saint Francis de Salles Parish, in Kintambo commune. The two journalists were covering an event organised by the Lay Coordination Committee (CLC). Their equipment (video and photo cameras) was totally damaged and confiscated.

Elisée Lusamba a journalist for Radio-Television Malandji and Honi Tshibola, Director of Radio-Television Kasai Horizons, both television channels broadcasting in Kananga, were arrested at the local ANR office on Saturday, February 24, 2018 by the provincial director of this service, Mr. Sakrine Ntanga. The two journalists were severely reprimanded for reporting on a peaceful march by the followers of the Catholic Church and for publishing the communiqué of the Lay Coordinating Committee. They had been warned not to broadcast messages from the organizers of Catholic demonstrations at risk of being arrested or having their media closed.

□ Junior Kannah and Marco Longari, respectively cameraman and head of the AFP photo desk, were arrested Tuesday, December 25, 2018 by a group of policemen detailed to guard the residence of the presidential candidate Emmanuel Shadary. The two journalists were accused of "spying" and reporting in "a sensitive area".

□ Urban Kabey, a journalist with Kasai Horizon Radio Television (KHRT), was beaten outside a polling station on Sunday, December 30, 2018 by a group of supporters of Governor Alphonse Ngoyi Kasanji, popularly known as "100% Ngokas". His equipment and motorcycle were taken away by his assailants. The journalist had filmed a group of voters chanting hostile songs against the governor of the province who was accused of taking computers (voting machines) from a polling station in order to tamper with the election results.

□ Stanis Bujakera, journalist-reporter at Actualité.cd, an online media based in Kinshasa, was beaten and molested on Monday, January 21, 2019, by a group of officers of the Congolese National Police at the headquarters of the Mouvement de libération du Congo (MLC, opposition party). The journalist had gone there to cover a rally that Martin Fayulu, an opponent and unfortunate candidate for the presidential election on December 30, 2018, had to hold to claim his victory.

□ Joseph Amani, TV5 Monde's correspondent in South Kivu, was assaulted by police and his equipment seized on the sidelines of rallies of supporters of candidate Martin Fayulu on January 24, 2019 in Uvira in the east of the country.

□ Israel Mutombo, a journalist with Afrika Tv, a channel broadcasting in Kinshasa, was brutally assaulted on Saturday, February 2, 2019 at the Ste Thérèse park in N'Djili commune by militants of "LAMUKA's" electoral campaign platform that supported his candidacy during the presidential election last December.

□ Radio Television Fraternité (RTF), a Catholic community station broadcasting in Mbuji-Mayi, province of Kasai-Oriental, was attacked on Saturday, March 16, 2019 by a group of protesters claiming to be supporters of Union Pour la Démocratie et le Progrès Social (UDPS), the party of the new President of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Félix Antoine Tshisekedi Tshilombo. This attack followed the broadcast of a report on the election of new senators, among them the former governor of this province, Mr. Ngoy Kasanji who thanked the population for the trust reposed in him, while the UDPS, the party of the president, won no senate seat

during the elections.

□ Flavien Rusaki, a journalist and owner of "Tokundola", a general news magazine broadcast on several television channels in Kinshasa, was assaulted on Wednesday, March 20, 2019 by activists of the UDPS (Union for Democracy and Democracy) (party in power) in Kinshasa at the headquarters of the party in the municipality of Limete. The journalist were in the accompanying the opposition figure, Franck Diongo, who had just left the prison, to the headquarters of the UDPS to show his support for the President of the Republic Felix Antoine Tshisekedi. Beaten and humiliated, Flavien Rusaki was accused of being close to the opposition and the defeated 2018 presidential candidate, Martin Fayulu.

D. The status of police investigations into major attacks against journalists, such as assassinations or enforced disappearances

Under the regime of Joseph Kabila, at least 14 journalists or media professionals were killed in conditions that have yet to be unraveled. In the majority of cases, the investigations announced in the aftermath of these killings never took place. The few investigations that appeared to have been conducted were deliberately bungled; and they all resulted in trials that failed to identify the true perpetrators of these killings, their sponsors, or their motives.

Despite condemnations by national and international human rights organisations, the Congolese justice system has, so far failed to shed light on the dark circumstances of these murders.

E. Laws, policies and practices in place that exploit or threaten freedom of expression

Four years after the last UN Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in 2015, the DRC has still not implemented the press freedom recommendations it accepted. For example, no "appropriate measure" has been taken to "protect journalists".

Indeed, to date, the DRC still uses a law passed in 1996, under the dictatorship of Marshal Mobutu, which text provides under the Penal Code prison sentences and heavy fines for defamation and insult. On the one hand, this law threatens and restricts freedom of expression and its corollary; press freedom of the press and, on the other hand, gives public office holders and powerful private individuals a a wide latitude to attack journalists.

As a matter of fact, the current legal framework is extremely uncomfortable for journalists. While in their daily activities, journalists are obliged by this law and by the journalistic ethics to verify information from source, there is however no law which obliges the sources to provide the information which the journalists need. And in the absence of a law regulating access to information, public officers feel no obligation to

disclose information about what they do on behalf of the population. Everything can be covered in secrecy; everything can be treated as state secret.

The Penal Code punishes defamation with prison sentences. And it defines defamation as the act of imputing to others specific statements, whether true or false, capable of damaging their honor and reputation. Defamation is punishable by a prison sentence. The judge is not bound by the veracity or falsity of the imputed facts. What matters is the respectability of the person cited. Also, different public and private authorities use and abuse their power via verbal means (criticism, contradictions, arrests or denunciations) to silence “annoying” journalists. Violence, intimidation and arbitrary arrests of journalists are commonplace. This has the effect of inducing journalists to practice censorship and self-censorship for fear of imprisonment or reprisals. Media organisations are closed and their facilities ransacked, internet connections are cut and radio and television broadcasts are scrambled. The bullying of journalists finally evolved into a system of practices and habits deeply rooted in the mentality of the country's leaders and authorities.

F. The various mechanisms or interventions available at the national, regional and international levels that guarantee the safety of journalists in the DRC

There is as yet no mechanism (system, institution or measure) that guarantees the safety of journalists in the DRC even though the country adheres to the various conventions, declarations and international resolutions in that regard.

To assure their security, journalists have recourse only to the inefficient legal and institutional system common to everyone, with all its inherent flaws and weaknesses (corruption, laxity, insensitivity, irresponsibility ...)

The CSAC (Council supérieur de l’audiovisuel et de la Communication), it is the only institution that the State has established to regulate the media. It serves as a public regulator of the media and communication sector as stipulated in the DRC constitution. Although meant to take care of all regulatory issues, it is far from taking care of the safety of journalists, contributing very little to advocacy efforts to obtain justice for attacked journalists.

There is, alongside, a federation of journalists called "Union nationale de la Press Congolaise (UNPC). It is a trade union organisation involved in the defense and promotion of journalists' interests mainly through self-regulation and training of journalists.

Journalists’ safety is not assured in their daily activities. And the families of journalists who are killed or arrested are abandoned to their fate. However, as a general rule, human rights NGOs intervene by condemning cases of blatant attacks. There is a single NGO, JED (Journaliste en Danger), which is

concerned with the safety of journalists' issues ranging from prevention of attacks to providing care for journalists in situations of insecurity and their families in the DRC.

At the regional and international levels, there is no mechanism to ensure the safety of journalists in the DRC. There are, however, UN agencies such as UNESCO, the United Nations Joint Office for Human Rights and international NGOs and networks such as the African Freedom of Expression Exchange (AFEX) and Reporters Without Borders which deal with safety of journalists' issues as part of their mission to promote freedom of expression and its corollary rights, which are freedom of the press and freedom of information. They thus come to offer their moral, material or financial assistance to afflicted journalists, at the request of the national NGOs. This means that much more needs to be done to ensure the safety of journalists. Fortunately, the new President of the DRC, Félix Tshisekedi, appears committed to changing the situation.

G. Combating impunity for crimes committed against journalists in the DRC

a) Control actions taken

Press freedom and freedom of expression is violated with impunity in the DRC. The state that should ensure the safety of journalists is relaxed or even apathetic, since the majority of press freedom violations are perpetrated by persons holding public offices which they often abuse. At this juncture, let's focus on the way NGOs like JED bring solutions. The new President of the Republic promised to carry out a sensitisation campaign among the security forces to respect human rights in general and press freedom in particular to enable journalists to do their work without fear of reprisals.

The contribution of NGOs is indirect and multifaceted:

- They condemn reported cases of attacks on press freedom.

JED uses several means to denounce abuse. It uses alerts in the national and international media, letters of protest to the appropriate authorities, monitoring reports.

- They develop advocacy activities to promote reforms of the legal framework to offer greater security to journalists in the exercise of their profession. To this end:

They go as far as proposing new draft laws and modifications to old laws.

- They organize sensitisation meetings among public authorities (members of the legislature, executive and judiciary) at national, provincial and local level,

- They organise training workshops for public authorities involved in upholding press freedom

- They organise programmes and public awareness debates on radio and television,

- They organise consultative meetings between journalists and Members of Parliament.

- They organise training workshops for journalists on topics related to their safety.

- They organise training workshops for representatives of the judiciary.
- They maintain regular dialogue with the ministry and agencies involved in promoting press freedom.
- They hire lawyers for journalists who are sued because of their work.

JED also encourages journalists and media organisations which fall victim to rights violations to take legal action against the identified perpetrators, whatever their (perpetrators') position and no matter how powerful the institutions belong to.

- They grant some humanitarian assistance (subsistence allowance) to journalists threatened or forced to go into hiding.

b) Results obtained

Despite repeated calls to the Congolese state by JED and other national and international NGOs, including AFEX and RSF, the authorities have taken no concrete political or legislative measures to advance press freedom in general, and the safety of journalists in particular. This culture of impunity encourages further attacks against journalists. However, the positive side, it could be said that without the actions of the NGOs, the deplorable environment of insecurity in which journalists in DRC work, could have been worse than it is today! **Moreover, does the period of calm currently being experienced in the press freedom environment as evidenced by a significant decrease in the abuses committed against the media and journalists since the advent of the new President of the Republic, even though no measure has been taken in this direction, not give one the right to be optimistic?**

In the same spirit of realism, it is worth noting the following tangible progress in the continued efforts at combating impunity:

- JED (the Congolese NGO of reference in the defense and promotion of freedom of the press), the CSAC (official media regulatory agency) and the UNPC (Union nationale des journalistes) today constitute an active-member network whose impact is visible in the domain of promoting press freedom and protecting journalists.
- Human rights NGOs (including JED) work more closely together at the national and international level to defend press freedom and the rights of journalists who have been abused.
- The amended text of the press law and the law of access to information are already in the drawers of the relevant legal institutions, to be promulgated (by the presidency) and the to be voted (by the 'National Assembly), respectively.

The new Congolese head of state came personally to grace the celebration of World Press Freedom Day of May 3, 2019, at the invitation the organisers, JED and its partners. On this occasion, he reiterated his commitment to make the media the 4th Estate in the DRC, to work to ensure respect for fundamental

rights, and to sensitise the security forces to respect the rights and freedoms of journalists to exercise carry out, without fear of reprisals, their mandate of informing the public.

H. The main challenges facing journalists

In a country where violations of press freedom are among the highest in the world, there are many challenges journalists face in the exercise their profession. The major issues border on:

1. Making good use of the current legal framework to ensure maximum freedom and security in the exercise of their profession,
2. Maintaining their independence and the ethics of their profession in the face of the double pressure of monetary inducement and their state of biting poverty
3. Promoting their credibility with the new authorities in the country while calling for legal reforms that can offer better guarantees of freedom and security to journalists,
4. Developing safety reflexes against fear and its consequences (self-censorship, clientelism and corruption),
5. Developing professional synergies that transcend community and political affiliations.

III. CONCLUSION / SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

The DRC is lowly placed (154th out of 180 countries) in the world ranking of press freedom. Indeed, its legal and institutional environment is among the most hostile for the exercise of the journalistic profession, with a deep-seated culture impunity for press freedom violations. However, all hope is not lost for an improvement in the situation. Even in the absence of any concrete effort to improve the situation, we are already experiencing some respite. It is really a problem of political will and change of mentality. Basically, there needs to be a general awareness of the fact that the media can play the role of a powerful driver of democracy and development.

The prospect of necessary change is driven by some powerful factors, chief among them:

- The country's adherence to international conventions, resolutions and declarations on press freedom
- The protection of the right to press freedom as enshrined in the constitution of the country
- The existence of activists (national and international organisations and citizens) determined to continue the struggle for the promotion and protection of the freedom of the press,
- The assumption of power of a Head of State who is committed to promoting the media to make it the real Fourth Estate of the Realm.

In order to bring about the change necessary for the promotion of press freedom in general, and press

safety in particular, we make the following recommendations:

a) To the Congolese Government

1. Effect the necessary drastic changes in terms of legislation and the supervisory structures of the journalistic profession through the following five projects:

- Reform the repressive legal framework immediately by initiating a process to decriminalise press offenses so that journalists can peacefully and freely exercise their indispensable role as the fourth estate
- Put an end to the arrests of journalists and arbitrary suspensions of the media houses by entrusting to an independent regulatory body the exclusive mandate to sanction press offenses as well as sensitise the security forces and the judiciary about the rights and duties of journalists,
- Put in place a national mechanism for the protection of journalists that is well resourced, and represented in the various institutions so that the abuses committed against the media professionals do not go unpunished,
- End impunity for crimes against journalists by re-launching investigations into murdered journalists over the past two decades.

2. Put in place a system of governance that would encourage journalists to act more like partners for the implementation of development plans and projects initiated in the country.

3. Transform national radio and television (RTNC) into a true public service media that is open to all the shades of opinion.

b) CSAC (Public Agency for the Regulation of the Media)

Act as a promoter of the freedom of the press rather than as police of journalists and their media organisations. To this end:

- It will play the role of mentor for media professionals on the one hand, and of their advocate with public authorities, on the other hand.
- It will prioritise activities relating to informing and consultating with journalists.
- It will involve informing or consulting journalists before making any important decisions concerning the press.

(c) Security services (police, army and intelligence agencies)

Carry out the various assigned duties in accordance with the rule of law prevailing in the country. For this purpose, you must:

- Recognise that the DRC is a country of law; also with human beings: we must act according to the legal principles in force,
- Avoid, taking journalists for, and treating them as political rebels and practising cruelty,
- Avoid the abuse of power: to each one his powers and his limits.

(d) Civil society organizations (human rights organizations)

Continue the struggle for promotion and protection of press freedom, by:

- identifying new challenges and new opportunities that the changing political context brings,
- draw lessons from past experiences to achieve best results from the advocacy actions to be carried out,
- Engage with public or private stakeholders in in regular dialogue
- develop synergies with peers.

e) Media owners and journalists

Practice the journalism profession with greater sense of responsibility. To this end, it is necessary to:

- respect the code of ethics and professionalism,
- pursue profession,
- respect the legal framework in force,
- use collective advocacy mechanisms to advocate for the desired legal and institutional framework,

f) To the general public

Mobilise more in defense of press freedom by:

- recognize that press freedom, as one of the fundamental rights guaranteed by the Constitution, is a powerful driver of democracy and development,
- Develop the instinct to cooperate more closely with journalists (delivery of information, assistance needed in case of attacks ...),
- develop a spirit of discernment towards the press,
- developing a critical attitude towards information conveyed by the press,
- mobilise more for the lobbying actions initiated to promote freedom of the press.

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