

“Nothing and no one is perfect. This is also true for the media in South East Europe. So far, SEEMO has expressed numerous concerns about the way in which journalists and media are treated in public, within the political arena and also concerning the security for the journalists. Within Europe, it is a common responsibility to guarantee freedom of expression.”

**Erhard Busek**, President of the Institute for the Danube Region and Central Europe, Vienna, Austria, and Coordinator of the Southeast European Cooperative Initiative (SECI).

“I would like to hereby endorse the work of the international non-governmental organisation SEEMO, which has been assembling editors, media publishers, and leading journalists from Southern and Eastern Europe for a number of years. Since one of the priorities of my presidential term has been reconciliation of countries of the region, establishment of cooperation in different fields, and development of friendly relations among our nations, we aspire to the same goals.”

**Ivo Josipović**, former President of Croatia, Zagreb, Croatia

“The main tasks of SEEMO have always been the fight for press freedom and anti-corruption as well as building networks of media representatives from the region with organizations at international level. SEEMO is today respected by media companies and media owners, journalists, but also all other important players in society, including leading political representatives and international organisations.”

**Dr. Michael Spindelegger**, former Vice-Chancellor and Foreign Minister of the Republic of Austria, Vienna, Austria

“SEEMO role is essential in protecting, supporting and guiding journalists in South, East and Central Europe.”

**Marina Constantinoiu**, Editor-in-Chief, *Jurnalul National*, Bucharest, Romania

“SEEMO reactions and support were very significant to me, not only in a moral sense, but they also contributed to quicker reactions by state institutions. That type of pressure from international organizations towards Croatian authorities is very important because it shows that the case is being followed outside of Croatia.”

**Drago Hedl**, reporter, *Jutarnji list*, Zagreb - Osijek and author, Croatia

“I’ve had SEEMO’s support from the very beginning, when you addressed public letters to Vojislav Koštunica and Dragan Jočić, the Prime Minister and the Minister of Interior in Serbia at the time. SEEMO is a big source of support, help and comfort that I needed at the time of my attacks. Big thanks to SEEMO, all the colleagues who are a part of the organisation.”

**Vladimir Mitrić**, correspondent, *Večernje novosti*, Loznica, Serbia

“I can’t overstate the importance of such (SEEMO) support. Visibility – domestic and international – of a case like mine is really very important.”

**Anuška Delić**, investigative journalist of *Delo*, Ljubljana, Slovenia

“For me SEEMO was very important organisation which enabled my further professional improving on numerous significant subjects, a platform which enabled networking with colleagues in the whole region, sharing of experience and knowledge with others, a help which was most needed when I got sick, but also the maintenance of the space for the work during the time when the isolation and pressure within my own surrounding was most intensive and most dangerous.”

**Esad Hećimović**, editor, OBN TV, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina

## SEEMO Safety Net Manual Guidelines for Journalists

# SEEMO

## Safety Net Manual

### Guidelines for Journalists in Extraordinary or Emergency Situations

By Saša Leković, Jorgos Papadakis and Slađana Matejević

Editor: Radomir Ličina

S · E · E · M · O

INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY  
International Media Center

Osservatorio  
balcani e caucaso

SECEPRO  
South East and Central Europe PR Organisation

Safety net for European Journalists  
A Transnational Support Network  
For Media Freedom in Italy and South-east Europe

Vienna 2015





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Safety Net Manual - South East Europe Media Organisation, SEEMO-SECEMO, SEEMO – IPI, International Academy – International Media Center and South East and Central Europe PR Organisation (SECEPRO)

Vienna 2015



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Safety Net Manual  
 Guidelines for Journalists in Extraordinary or Emergency Situations  
 By Saša Leković, Jorgos Papadakis and Slađana Matejević

*Publisher*

South East Europe Media Organisation, SEEMO–IPI, SEEMO-SECEMO,  
 International Academy – International Media Center and South East and Central  
 Europe PR Organisation (SECEPRO), Vienna

*Publisher's Representative*

Oliver Vujovic

*Editor*

Radomir Ličina

*Proofreading/Translation/Language Editors/Translation Assistants*

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 Özgün Özçer, Irene Dioli, Dragan Sekulovski, Istvan Deak, Vojislav Stambolija, Željko Bistricki

*Pre-press*

Rastko Ličina

*Circulation*

6,000 (all languages together)

*Printed by*

Digitprime, Belgrade in cooperation with Standard 2, Belgrade

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The project ‘Safety Net for European Journalists. A Transnational Support Network for Media Freedom in Italy and South-east Europe’ is funded by the European Union. This publication / news has been produced with the assistance of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of SEEMO and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Union.

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## Editor's Foreword

Though the south, central and eastern regions covered by SEEMO include ten EU member states and several others in the process of negotiating accession to the Union or aspiring to join European family, the media situation is far from satisfying. Media outlets, as well as individual journalists, are too often the targets of threats, pressures, limitations, and even direct attacks by various interest groups, underworld figures or political entities led by 'democratically' elected leaders.

This depressing reality is evident even in 'normal and stable' circumstances in practically all societies of the region. But this reality becomes much gloomier in situations of turmoil and instability, which are not rare in South East European countries. Far too many media workers and journalists have been exposed to an array of political, financial or physical dangers, risks and assaults. Too many colleagues are still 'living' and working under constant police surveillance and protection. Too many brutal offences or even assassinations of journalists and media workers remain unresolved while perpetrators enjoy impunity.

During the early days of the South East Europe Media Organisation in 2000 and several years later, SEEMO was able to provide a sort of a shelter for regional colleagues in serious trouble. Unfortunately, these days are long gone and we were forced to change our efforts to protect of journalists by making verbal protests that were sent to the authorities of the countries concerned. Many of these pleas and requests had positive effects, but very often the general work conditions for our colleagues in specific and outstanding situations did not change for the better.

SEEMO is very active in supporting journalists who have been pressured or attacked. Its main activity is to protect press freedom by helping journalists and media outlets in South East Europe. Over sixty-five per cent of SEEMO's press releases and letters of protest to governmental and other officials have yielded positive results. Every SEEMO protest is distributed to leading regional and international media, national and international governmental and non-governmental organisations, politicians and public persons and institutions. SEEMO has special press-freedom webpages. Missions and monitoring visits are part of its regular press freedom activities. In the past, SEEMO has provided direct help to journalists in the region by giving them technical equipment and other assistance. SEEMO also provided necessary aid to journalists who received death threats.

In a booklet treating the *BBC's* values and standards it is written that, in a perfect world, editorial guidelines for journalists would consist of one sentence only: use your

own best judgement. But the world we live in is far from perfect, especially in South and East Europe.

That is why SEEMO decided to try to help journalists in the region by providing them with a practical manual giving concrete examples and advice about how to behave and react in extraordinary situations, as well as some basic rules of professional and unbiased conduct that is essential for the job. The manual offers some references from colleagues who experienced a range of different threats, pressures and other challenges. It should be noted that this manual is published in English, and has also country editions in local languages for Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Italy, Macedonia (RoM-FYROM), Montenegro, Serbia, Slovenia, Romania and Turkey.

We hope some of these recommendations and guidelines will be helpful to journalists facing difficult situations.

The manual is published within the EU-funded project ‘Safety Net for European Journalists’, with which the European transnational partnership coordinated by the Italian think tank Osservatorio Balcani e Caucaso (OBC) has dedicated the year 2014 to studying the state of press freedom in Italy, South East Europe and Turkey. Among the many actions, the partners fostered knowledge-sharing within a very fragmented media freedom community; monitored, documented and reported on violations of press freedom in 11 European countries; crowd-sourced and mapped hundreds of media freedom violations across Europe online; offered concrete support to threatened reporters and media professionals; and raised public awareness about a problem that is shared from east to west.

Radomir Ličina, Editor

## Introduction

These safety guidelines are part of a wider initiative to help media workers in the region to be more secure and protected, while staying professional and responsible in carrying out their duties. In too many cases journalists and media in South East Europe have been attacked and threatened, deliberately or furtively by those afraid of the public eye. Whether they are corrupt politicians, tycoons bewildered by the power of their money or darkest shadows from the underworld, the political, legal and financial environments are becoming more hostile toward media even in EU member states!

The South East Europe Media Organisation (SEEMO), therefore, together with SEEMO-SECEMO, International Academy – International Media Center, South East and Central Europe PR Organisation (SECEPRO) from Vienna and think tank Osservatorio Balcani e Caucaso (OBC) from Rovereto, Italy (which monitors 26 countries in South East Europe, Turkey and the Caucasus, including six EU member states), decided to offer this brief and practical guide to journalists and media workers who might find themselves in trouble while executing their basic duties.

This Manual contains definitions, advice and practical examples connected to the regular activities of media workers and media outlets in extraordinary situations, like reporting from conflict areas, during demonstrations and social unrest, about natural and other disasters, and reporting under internal and external pressures, threats and law suits. It covers basic principles of ethical journalism, including corruption and examines new challenges presented by new technologies. Some of these topics, like reporting from war zones, were given more space in this book than others. This is primarily due to the fact that one of the main contributors to the Manual, Saša Leković, has impressive experience in that field, and also because this knowledge is also applicable in other extraordinary situations.

The publishers and the authors sincerely believe that their product, though not perfect, will serve its purpose and good intention to help journalists cope with the hostile or violent responses to unwelcome views in media and public in general and to defend the freedom of the press and speech as one of the main principles of liberty.



# Part 1:

## Reporting in extraordinary situations

### A. Reporting from war zones

Reporting from war zones requires comprehensive, detailed preparation and adherence to a set of rules while in the field to minimize potential danger to a reporter. A large part of the advice regarding preparation and fieldwork for war reporters is also applicable to reporting on other exceptional situations such as violent demonstrations, floods, fires or similarly dangerous settings. This is why the handbook opens by treating war reporting; also, this is the reason why this section is so thorough and detailed.

The ensuing sections will not repeat the basic advice for war reporting that is applicable to other exceptional settings. Instead, they will deal with topics specific to particular events and phenomena. Furthermore, authors drew on their own experiences to the extent that it was possible. If they did not have relevant experience in certain areas, that of other journalists was used, mostly from South East Europe but also from other parts of the world. It would be best if you never had to utilize the skills and expertise that are indispensable in war reporting, but it is still good to master them. They often come in handy in peaceful conditions as well.

#### What it is

Reporting from a war zone could find you reporting from the front line of a battlefield, or from an area directly or indirectly caught in a war. It is potentially the most dangerous situation that a reporter can be in, since the customary code of conduct is not valid. Situations can change rapidly and often the reporter is not able to decide independently on the length of stay in a dangerous place or when to leave a place safely. What are the main challenges?

When spending time in a war zone and gathering information, a reporter is faced with the danger of being wounded or killed, knowing neither when nor from whom the greatest danger might be coming. A rocket, a land mine or a bullet could harm him/her if s/he is reporting from the front line of a battlefield or any other part of a war zone.

If there are fighters from one side of the conflict in his/her immediate surroundings (a frequent occurrence in war zones, especially on the front line), a reporter is in danger of

being attacked by the fighters of the other side. A reporter is not armed or trained for combat. His/her job in a war zone is to report, not to fight.

A reporter is in danger from the fighters in his/her immediate surroundings as well, because in stressful situations (for example, death of a squadron member) fighters might take revenge on a reporter, accuse him/her as guilty just for being there, or simply because a reporter is not a member of the group, per say, and is in a sense ‘a foreign body’.

Threats to reporter safety in war zones do not stop at the level of information-gathering but extend to publishing as well, especially if a reporter spends long periods of time in the same area or returns to that area often. Fighters and war zone inhabitants often react emotionally to reporting related to them and to events in their area. If they are not satisfied with such reporting (even in cases when they themselves have not seen or heard original reports but received second-hand information or hear rumours), they have been known to react harshly. A reporter can find himself/herself limited in his/her ability to move around the area; s/he can be exiled, beaten or even killed.

There is another category of war reporters in addition to those who were sent to war zones by their editors and freelance journalists who decide to enter war zones independently. Local journalists do not travel to a war zone to report, but live there instead. They are better at knowing the area and the people who live in it, including local fighters. However, that is not always an advantage. Unlike reporters who arrived to a war zone from another city, country or even continent, local reporters are known by the majority of inhabitants and fighters in the area. In stressful war situations old misunderstandings, prejudices or conflicts from their shared history can be rekindled and escalate to an attack on the reporter. Local reporters are under even more pressure than others if area residents and local fighters do not like their reports. During wartime, a local reporter’s community often expects him/her not to adhere to high standards of his/her profession. Instead, s/he is faced with choosing sides, i.e. to disseminate propaganda instead of reporting objectively on events. There is additional stress if a local reporter lives in a war-affected area together with his/her family.

Sometimes a reporter is under pressure to cooperate with the military, police and intelligence agencies, especially if s/he travels in areas that are inaccessible or insufficiently secure for them. At the same time, there is a danger of reporter’s information being misused by another reporter cooperating with intelligence and other security services, or even of intelligence agents falsely presenting themselves as reporters. Such occurrences are common in war zones.

Last but not least, there is a great danger for reporters to be accused of spying, especially in situations with many casualties among fighters or local inhabitants.

### **How to report**

Reporting from war zones, like any other journalistic work, requires exceptional preparation. It requires not only a mastery of journalistic tools and methods, but also famil-

ilarity with the geography, historical facts and other relevant information about the area one intends to report on. Such preparation is indispensable for local reporters as well, even though they know more about the area and its people than reporters coming from other places.

It is essential to know not only who is fighting whom and why, but also what the political situation is in a war zone; who the leaders of the fighters are, and who the members of local authorities are. The usual institutions of civil government are often not functional during wartime, especially in areas of greatest conflict. They are replaced by various crisis management centres. At times no formal organized action other than an army, and possibly police, can be found. Sometimes there are only paramilitary units. Such situations are extremely dangerous for reporters.

Prior to departing for a war zone, gather information from reporters who have already been there and contact reporters who are about to leave for the same place as you. If you do not know anyone, look for such people through journalism networks. Make a list of the names and contact information for military officials, police and various civil services prior to your departure, if these institutions are operating in the war zone. Find out who knows them well and make a list of people who might be able to help you once you are there. Also make a list of who to avoid.

Definitely try to find out who you can trust and ask for help should you need it. If you have never been to the area before, try to establish trust and connection through an intermediary, someone who knows both you and a potential contact in the area very well. Naturally, it is important that you know the intermediary very well and have complete trust in him/her.

As you leave for a war zone that you intend to report on, keep in mind that regardless of your plan, you can never be certain about how long will you stay there and under what conditions. You should prepare yourself for a significantly longer period and worse conditions than the ones you are expecting. Here are a few pieces of advice regarding travel and things to bring, as well as things that are not recommended to bring into a war zone.

### *Transport vehicle*

In general it is not recommended to go to a war zone with your own car. You cannot be certain you will be able to move around without obstacles, and doing so may make you too noticeable. If you are forced to leave your vehicle while reporting from another place, it is highly likely that it will get stolen, damaged or completely destroyed. It is also possible that police or military may appropriate it for their own needs. Even if these situations do not occur, even a small vehicle malfunction might mean you must abandon the vehicle and move on in a war zone.

It is best to take public transportation, if it functions and to the extent that it is possible. If public transportation to a location is not available, use the services of local inhabitants.

One ought to be extremely careful when doing so and prepare for it in advance if possible. Check whether there are dependable people you could hire as drivers, together with their vehicle, before of your departure. At times you might have to use one driver and vehicle in one area and another driver and vehicle in another since they might be living on different sides of conflict area. You need to think of the safety of people you cooperate with and whose services you use. Doing so is both adhering to professional ethics and instrumental for your own safety.

### *Belongings (backpack, clothes, shoes, money, documents)*

It is best to take as few things with you as possible so you can move faster, with more ease and do your job with less difficulties. Some of your belongings could be left in a safe place that you or someone you trust could access quickly in case you need to get something. The less you have with you, the better.

If possible, keep one or two waterproof and flame-resistant backpacks on you at all times. You can put one on your back and the other one in front, leaving your hands free. It is best for the rear backpack to have an anatomically-shaped cushion, and for both to have many extra pockets and adjustable straps so you can fold or expand them as needed. This way, handling and carrying you backpacks will be easier, and things you might need (for example: a phone, a camera, a flashlight, some document or a binding band) will be easily reachable without taking the backpack off. You will decrease the possibility of losing or breaking objects in your backpack in case you suddenly need to run or take cover. You will also decrease the possibility of being injured.

Use special protective covers (bags, protective films, etuis) for money and documents. It is best to keep money and personal documents in a protective bag underneath your clothes, except your press ID. Your press ID should be kept in a place where it is visible but can quickly be hidden if necessary. Sometimes in a war zone a visible press ID can save your life, but other times keeping it hidden serves the same purpose. If you do not have an international press card (e.g., the one from the International Federation of Journalists), definitely get one. Depending on the situation, sometimes it is best for your own safety to keep the international press ID visible and the one from the media outlet employing you hidden, and sometimes it is best the other way around.

Regardless of the time of the year and weather, take sturdy, comfortable and warm shoes. Sturdy shoes will be resistant to terrain conditions and will protect you. Avoid new shoes you have never worn before. If shoes are not broken in, they can cause blisters and make it difficult to walk and put your safety at risk.

Wear layers. Your clothes should have plenty of pockets and be made of easy-to-maintain, resistant materials. This way you will have extra space for things you need to keep handy and you will be able to shed or put on layers as necessary. Well-selected clothing materials make washing and drying easier. Clothes will also last longer. If you follow these guidelines you will not need to bring many clothes, not insignificant in case

of a longer stay in a war zone. Carrying fewer things makes it easier to move around and thus increases safety.

### *Food*

While you cannot bring a food supply that is sufficient for your entire stay in a war zone, you do need to have some food with you at all times. You do not know when will you be able to find food, and how much. It is best to bring a few small cans of food with a long shelf life. This way you can keep them for a while if you find other sources, and you will not risk food spoiling in a large open can that you cannot finish in one meal.

If possible, bring vitamin bars and something sweet. The best chocolate is the kind used for cooking. In addition to being sweet, it is less prone to melting than regular chocolate. Bring a vessel for water as well. It is best to use a thermos bottle. They are sturdy and the top can double as a cup for tea, coffee or other beverages.

In order to open cans and cut food you bring with you or find in the terrain, make sure to bring a Swiss Army knife. It also has a bottle opener, a file and little scissors so you can use it for a variety of tasks. For example, in addition to opening cans, you can maintain your nails. Sometimes it is not possible to take care of even banal needs in other ways while you are in a war zone. A Swiss Army knife is very versatile; it can open locks or cut strings. It can come in handy not only to make eating easier, but it can also increase your safety too. In extreme cases it can be used as a self-defence tool.

### *Equipment, electronic communication devices and communication protection*

Technology today is completely different than in previous decades. Laptops, digital cameras and even miniature but high-quality cameras and smart phones, highly sophisticated technology and wireless internet enable reporters to send text, photos and video material from the front line of a battlefield in real time. New technology offers an immense advantage for today's war reporters, as well as reporters in general compared to only twenty years ago.

However, just like any technological advance, these have a downside as well. It is a lot easier to monitor journalists' activity, war reporters included. It is easier to unnoticeably control where they move, who they get to communicate with, which pieces of information they have stored in their laptops or phones. The result is that security and intelligence services, as well as other interested parties in possession of the necessary equipment (which is not always expensive or complicated to handle) can endanger a reporter or threaten him/her.

That is why the laptop or smart phone that you bring into a war zone should have as little confidential data as possible. Such data could harm you, your work and other people should it fall into the hands of someone malicious. All names, telephone numbers and other information indispensable for your work in the field should be written on a piece of paper if you cannot memorize it. If possible, it should be written in a code you yourself

come up with, and stored in a hidden compartment in your backpack, clothes or shoes. The code can be simple, but it is essential that you are the one who created it.

For example, you can write down numbers in the following way: 0 can be a code for 1, 9 for 2 etc. Names can be written down as nicknames or, even better, as concepts that remind you of a particular person but that others find insignificant. For example, you could use “bingo” for someone who likes to place wagers or enter prize contests, “corner” for someone who lives on a corner etc. This will make both you and the people implicated through their contact with you safer. While this method might come across as primitive, it is very effective.

In any case, keep as little data in your war zone communication devices as possible. When you confirm that a report, or that important or confidential information you have sent was received, delete that information from your device. However, do keep some data on your devices. Having no pictures, videos or documents to show, should you be asked, would make you suspicious. It is also possible to split the memory of your device in a way that makes part of its content is visible to everyone, and the rest accessible only with a special code.

The security of your communication and the information stored on your communication devices will be greatly improved if you use encrypted communication. It is possible to encrypt the contents of your email inbox and telephone calls, and you can use alternative communication channels like an email service that is available online but does not leave traces on your devices. It is also possible to install a “wandering” IP address that makes it hard for others to trace you as you appear to continuously switch locations - Canada, Ireland, Nigeria - even though you remain in the same place at all times. Some protection systems are user-friendly and others require advanced levels of technical skill and sophisticated tools. Prior to your departure for a war zone field mission, communicate with a trustworthy expert in order to ensure that you have necessary security systems installed and have mastered the skills to operate them.

*While on a field mission, gather information instead of spreading it around it*

Never forget that you are on a field mission to gather as much useful information as possible, not to share information with the people you meet. Keep information about what you do, what you found out, where and with whom you plan to travel and whom you are meeting with private. Talk about yourself and your activities in the area only to the extent that is necessary. When speaking about those topics give irrelevant information, and try to avoid dangerous conversations related to security such as assessments of military actions, political opinions or disagreeing with collocutors. Refrain speaking specifics but never lie. If you are caught in a lie, even just a small, benign one, your collocutor will lose trust in you and sometimes that can cost you your life.

Before you leave for a war zone, it is of utmost importance that you make sure a few editors of your media outlet are available at all times to confirm your identity as a journalist

on a field assignment. Make sure they will ‘cover’ for you if someone asks questions about you and your stay in a war zone. Leave the names and contact information for these editors in a visible place on your communication devices, and talk about them freely with your collocutors as much as possible. Mention that you are in regular contact so they can be sure you are alright. This also could save your life. Along with editors’ contacts, always keep contact information for employees of international organizations so you can reach out to them should you need to. Let other people in a war zone know about this as well. It is important due to the fact that people in war zones often perceive international organizations’ representatives as having greater authority than editors, which is relevant if those people can harm or imprison you or other reporters.

Since the introduction of television, war zones were entered by teams of at least one journalist and a cameraman with a driver. Newspapers sent journalists and photo reporters together whenever possible, and solitary journalists were much less common. Mostly they were freelance journalists, stringers. Today one person can be a journalist, a cameraman, a photo reporter and a driver. However, if it is possible to travel into and within a war zone with someone it can be of help both with work and dangerous situations. Many war reporters like to do field missions and exchange information with other journalists. It is more important to do solid work and stay alive than to get a breaking story and die.

Avoid being treated as associated with or attached to military or paramilitary units. They can enable you to reach places more easily, or reach them at all, but it will cost your autonomy. Generally, they will perceive you as someone who is around to justify ‘our’ side and criticize ‘theirs’, a promoter of one side of a conflict and not a journalist whose task is to report accurately. If you accept the promoter role, you lose integrity. If you report accurately while protected but controlled by one side, you can easily lose your life.

Do not go to the front line of a battlefield if you can avoid it. No one can guarantee safety there regardless of how well you prepare in advance.

*You survived a war zone. How to report on what you found out?*

If you prepared well for your departure to a war zone, gathered information and avoided all safety traps, the remaining part of the job might seem easiest: preparing and publishing your report. Just like for any piece of journalism, your report needs to be accurate, clear and interesting. Never expose people to additional danger because of your reports, regardless of whether they are soldiers or civilians, from one side of the battlefield front line or the other. Take care to craft your reporting in a way that also does not harm people who may not be in a war zone, but are related to someone there.

Naturally, you cannot know about all connections between all people; yet, it is important not to have something in your report that is not essential and has the potential to harm someone. Do not publish names, locations or any other inessential information. Such practice should be a rule in any journalistic work, but it is especially important for war reporting. It may seem like too large a risk and too much work to adhere to all the rules

stated above, and that then not be able to write down everything you saw and heard. If you are an earnest professional, you will keep these rules. If you are not completely ready for departure to a war zone, the risk of being there and reporting with the highest professional standards, do not consider a career as a war reporter!

### **Examples/Previous experience**

At the beginning of the war in Croatia, when then-contemporary Yugoslavia fell apart in bloodshed, Saša Leković already had twelve years of experience in journalism. Never before did he wish or need to be a war reporter, nor did he know a single war reporter who could give him advice. When he realized the war was inevitable, he decided that he would stay in his city as a journalist without disseminating propaganda, regardless of the cost. However, when war starts to rage, unpredictable situations occur. Some of his experiences as a war reporter follow. He presented some examples from his personal experience of reporting on war, and tried to explain the ways in which he found the advice mentioned in this handbook useful.

#### *How to turn disadvantage into advantage when your own editorial board lets you down*

‘Before the war in Croatia started, I worked at a local radio station in Daruvar, a small town in the northwest of Croatia, for twelve years. I was also a local correspondent for the national daily paper *Vjesnik*, and wrote for another national daily paper *Večernji list* at the same time. The editors at both papers had utter confidence in me. They did not send journalists from the office headquarters in Zagreb to replace me, not even when we were supposed to cover the arrival of the President. But an event that occurred one weekend in the spring of 1991 in Pakrac, a small town 20 kilometres east of Daruvar, marked the beginning of the war. Police officers of Serbian nationality disarmed their Croatian colleagues in a local police station and held them hostage, setting off an armed rebellion against the government.

‘The state reacted by denying access to the area of Pakrac to everyone except those with a special permit from the Ministry of the Interior. My longstanding photo reporter Toni Hnojčik and I didn’t get a permit. Our editorial board practically renounced us. The Deputy Minister of the Interior took editorial control over the content of *Vjesnik*, which was a paper under government control. Without informing us about what was going on, *Vjesnik* sent a journalist and a photo reporter to the field, which was becoming a war zone. The Ministry of the Interior issued them a permit to enter Pakrac. They were supposed to report in a manner that was convenient to the government.

‘As the local radio station in Daruvar was the last station on the road from the *Vjesnik*’s office headquarters in Zagreb to the forbidden area around Pakrac, the journalists from *Vjesnik* came there to seek help. Their driver had to return to Zagreb so they were looking for a local guide who knew the area well to take them to Pakrac. Since I had been working in the same team with my colleague Hnojčik for more than ten years, we both reacted in

the same way. We proposed that Toni could be the driver. Everyone in the region knew him and his car. The journalists from *Vjesnik* accepted the offer.

‘Toni always carried a camera in his backpack. Nobody ever examined him or asked him anything. When he drove the journalists from *Vjesnik* to Pakrac and arranged where and when he was supposed to wait for them. Then they headed to take statements from the local police and civil representatives, while he freely took photos. He reunited with the journalists at the arranged location and time and drove them back to Daruvar. Again, he was not examined or asked anything.

‘While the journalists from *Vjesnik* were waiting for their driver from Zagreb, a driver from *Večernji list* arrived in Daruvar to collect Toni’s photos, which I had arranged with the *Večernji list* editor as soon as Toni headed towards Pakrac. At that time, it was the only possible way to transfer photos. When the journalists from *Vjesnik* arrived to their headquarters in Zagreb, the next day’s edition of paper was already being printed. They carelessly went home believing they were the only ones having the report from the war zone. I never found out how they and their editors felt the next morning when they opened *Večernji list*, which, besides the main headline on the cover page, contained an extensive article with photos on two centre pages.

‘For Toni and me, this episode ended up well, but I would definitely not recommend such endeavours, even when you’re on local territory. If you get caught by the army or police without a permit in the area where the permit is obligatory, especially if it happens while you are taking photos, filming or talking to soldiers, police officers or locals, you risk being arrested, beaten up, accused of espionage or even killed’.

### *A journalist is a human first, and a journalist second: evacuation of the hospital; frightened colleague*

‘After this first episode, many of my other experiences of reporting during the war in Croatia were related to the area of Pakrac and neighbouring Lipik, which was among the most devastated zones in that war. All these experiences involved safety risks because they basically took place on the front line of the battlefield. One day, a colleague from *Vjesnik* (not the one whom Toni drove to Pakrac) came to Daruvar, and asked me to help him reach Pakrac, which at that time was almost entirely surrounded by the Serbian rebel forces. I knew the only way that was passable. When we set off, I realized that the situation on the battlefield had changed. But by then we couldn’t go back. We came across local Croatian forces, and I agreed to be taken with my colleague in a van that was supposed to transfer the food by forest paths.

‘I realized that I had to make decisions for both of us. My colleague was frightened and inexperienced in this kind of situation, but, even if he wasn’t, in crisis situations there isn’t much time to reflect and coordinate. Somebody has to take the responsibility, both for himself and for others. When we reached our goal, a hill overlooking Pakrac, I noticed that something strange was going on. There was complete silence. They told us we couldn’t

go back because a military action was being prepared. When someone tells you in the middle of the war zone that you cannot leave, you don't ask unnecessary questions.

'We were told, "wait where you are and don't ask anything". After several hours of waiting, I spotted a local guy I knew amongst the soldiers. He explained to me that an evacuation of mentally ill persons from the Pakrac hospital was being prepared, because that department, with several dozen patients and a few doctors and nurses, had been cut off. A truce had been arranged with the other side until the hospital could be evacuated. They were waiting for the darkness to fall because the hospital was perfectly visible from the surrounding hills. Despite the ceasefire, nobody could guarantee that there would be no shooting during the day if the enemy soldiers were seen.

'When it got dark, my acquaintance asked me if my colleague and I wanted to participate in the evacuation of the patients. The colleague was already shaking with fear but I accepted on behalf of us both. If in a war zone you have beside you a person that is frightened and you can't predict his/her reactions, stay close to him/her all the time. Buses descended to the rivulet on the opposite side of the hospital with their lights turned off. We helped the patients and hospital staff across the rivulet, even carrying some who couldn't walk, placed them inside the buses and drove them to safety. My colleague and I published a few articles about this event. It was the only time during the war that I didn't participate just as a journalist-observer. That is because this was a humanitarian, rather than military action. Before anything else, journalists are also people. I think the war should make no exception.

'It is important to bear this in mind while reporting. No story is worth destroying someone's life. Even in the most severe conditions, a reporter must pursue the highest professional standards'.

*Most probably no one will dig through your dirty laundry: it is an excellent hiding place*

'After the incident when Toni entered the forbidden area using his wit, we found ourselves in a new situation. Toni and I were in the war zone before the access to it became restricted because of the outbreak of military actions. Afterwards, everyone who wanted to depart the area was thoroughly controlled, while journalists were deprived of their footage and notes before they left. This happened in the spring of 1995. We already had four years of war reporting experience behind us, so we were excellently prepared for similar situations.

'Since it was impossible to reach this area, before closing it to a war zone, by car without a huge risk, we did exactly that. When departing from the war zone was forbidden, we decided to split up. Toni stayed to continue filming, while I hid the already-made footage in my bag with dirty laundry. I had it for exactly that reason. When soldiers and police officers searched me on my departure from the zone, they wouldn't find any filming equipment in my possession. Even if they looked inside the bag with dirty laundry, there was only a slim possibility that they would search for films inside the pockets of dirty and smelly pants and shirts on the bottom of the bag. And really, they didn't find the footage. Today,

generally it's not necessary to transfer the footage in a similar manner, but this trick can be useful if you carry a document or anything else that is important for your reporting'.

*Sometimes you have to lie and cheat to survive; but don't do it when it's not necessary*

'As a local war correspondent, sometimes I reported for news agencies that didn't have any journalists in the war zone. One of them was a popular radio station from Zagreb, *Radio 101*. Once they told me that a colleague from Zagreb would come to the field and asked me if I could take her to a village near the battlefield line. That village was interesting because a controversial volunteer unit was based there. The majority of population that was loyal to the government considered these fighters to be heroes. At the same time, there were suspicions that they committed war crimes against civilians.

'That day, my photo reporter was on a different assignment so I headed to the village with my *Radio 101* colleague. I gave her a brief introduction to safety measures, but I didn't want to stress her out too much. For the beginning, I wanted us to visit the unit and then have an extensive conversation. When we got into the car, to my colleague's surprise I asked her to record what I was going to say. I didn't talk for long. All that I said was that the unit to whose headquarters we were heading was a group of heroes, admirable people who were defending their homeland and that it was a lie that they ever committed any crime, especially towards civilians.

'I made this performance just in case. When we arrived in the village, I realized that the recording could in fact save my life. They brought us to the headquarters, and there was a man in charge whom I hadn't seen before. He was evidently drugged and drunk but everybody obeyed him. It seemed like they were even afraid of him. He started interrogating us. When we told him that we were journalists, he demanded our editors' names and telephone numbers. We provided him with this information, but he was not content. He believed I was a spy and decided that I had to be killed. He ordered two of his armed soldiers to take me out and guard me while he talked with my colleague in private.

'I will never find out what made him change his mind. Was it because she was a woman, because she came from the capital city or because she was there for the first time? Or maybe in the meantime, his rage diminished for another reason. Anyhow, the colleague played him the audio tape with my comments about his unit and it turned out to be the reason he spared me. On that occasion, deceit and a deliberate lie saved my life, but never lie and deceive if it isn't necessary. Do not do it while you are gathering information, and not in your public reports'.

*Soldiers shoot first and then ask questions later: how to prevent them from shooting at journalists*

'There was another occasion when I was in a war zone and almost executed, but I was saved by good preparation and luck. In war, unfortunately, the best preparation isn't

enough without some luck. But without the best preparation, you are doomed even before you enter the war zone. One day, I took two colleagues from another media outlet to a place that was almost destroyed and empty. Since there was the possibility of an attack, only a few older inhabitants were left besides policemen and soldiers, and their evacuation was underway.

‘When we arrived in this place we contacted the chief of police with a request to provide us with an escort during our stay, since we intended to cover the evacuation. He designated two policemen to go with us. My colleagues, accompanied with one policeman, entered a nearby house from which one old lady had to be evacuated. As she resisted the evacuation, the policemen that went into the house returned to seek help from the officer who was guarding me. I hadn’t been left alone on the street for more than 30 seconds when suddenly a group of armed soldiers surrounded me claiming that I was a spy and that they were going to shoot me.

‘My attempt to persuade them that I was a journalist was in vain, so I started calling the policemen that had entered the house by their names as loud as I could. They told me their names when we met. That confused the soldiers and, after a few shouts, the policemen appeared. They confirmed that I was a journalist and they told the soldiers that they had an order to shoot at anyone who endangered me. The soldiers changed their previous intention to annihilate me as they explained that I matched the description of a person they were told was enemy spy’.

### *Don't be naïve; in war journalists never control the situation*

‘I got an opportunity to report from Bosnia and Herzegovina after already having more than a year of experience of war reporting in Croatia. My first undertaking was completely crazy. The unfortunately late photojournalist Goran Suljić and I decided to sneak into western Bosnia. It was controlled by Bosniak/Muslim forces that didn’t obey the authorities in Sarajevo. They did cooperate with Serbian forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatian forces in Croatia, armies that were in war with each other. In those days we were working for a weekly paper called *Arena*.

‘That was in fact a good thing, since *Arena* was a family weekly newspaper that was popular before the war in all regions of the former Yugoslavia. It didn’t have a strong political connotation that would irritate any of the conflicting parties too much. But a schizophrenic situation where you never know who is fighting against whom isn’t ideal for an undercover journalistic journey through a war zone. We had to traverse one area controlled by one side and then through the area controlled by their enemies, to end up in an area controlled by a side whose relation with the others varied from day to day.

‘We concluded that it would be impossible to get to the destination on our own. We decided to join a group of people from western Bosnia who worked abroad and wanted to take advantage of the ceasefire to visit their families. But there was no way to get onto the buses that were supposed to transfer them to Velika Kladaša, in the centre of the West-

ern Bosnia, and return them to Croatia several days later, without going through extensive passenger control. The only way Goran and I could have boarded was by asking for a favour from the convoy's organizer.

'The organizer was the brother of Fikret Abdić, a man who was the ruler of western Bosnia. After the war ended he served a prison sentence for war crimes. Goran and I were put on the very same bus as Fikret Abdić's wife. That bus was obviously given special treatment. Nobody asked us anything at the checkpoints. During several days spent in Western Bosnia we witnessed on numerous occasions that everybody traded things like petrol, food and weapons with everybody else, including people whose armies were engaged in the conflict.

'After we returned we published everything we could back up with evidence, regardless to whom it was related. We did not keep quiet about uncommon actions of Abdić's administration and army in order to repay them. No one asked that of us, and we would not have complied if we were asked. I have a vivid recollection of one face from the return trip 20 years later, even though I saw it then for only for a moment. At a Serbian checkpoint, a young soldier boarded the bus. He strolled down the bus and at the exit he bent down towards me and whispered: "You are insane. I wouldn't dare." I do not know with what Abdić softened or blackmailed the rulers of various armies to leave Goran and me alone, but at that very moment I realized that everybody knew who we were. All it would have taken was one second in front of the barrel of an anxious soldier who shoots without question, and we would have ended up in a coffin. Do not try to repeat our undertaking at any cost'.

### *Experienced intelligence officers and inexperienced journalists and one rotten one*

'During the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, together with my colleague Suljić, I got an opportunity to be in a larger group of journalists permitted to take part in convoy Bijeli put [White way], carrying humanitarian aid sent from Croatia to Bosnia. Croats in central Bosnia had been waiting for help for months, surrounded by Bosniaks/Muslims. In the middle of that ring, in the old part of a small town called Vitez, Bosniaks/Muslims were surrounded by Croats. The trip to central Bosnia and back would usually take two or three days. In the middle of winter and war it took fifteen days.

'A truce was arranged to let the convoy pass. In each truck carrying humanitarian aid there was a backup driver along with the main one, and a few other convoy participants such as doctors and medical staff in addition to the journalists. Even the choice of trucks indicated that many of the journalists were completely unprepared. This was reasonable since their editors, who mostly lacked comparable experience themselves, sent them along as if they were going on a school trip. Some of the journalists in the convoy had only reported for a city column until then.

'In any case, the ones who picked their truck according to driver's good mood, music taste or other silly logic regretted it many times over. When we were stopped by

Bosniak/Muslim soldiers at the top of a mountain between the Croatian-Bosnian and Herzegovinian border, we were kept there for several nights in temperatures so low that fuel in some of the trucks froze. Goran and I picked a strong, new truck with a spacious cabin and alternative heating system. We were not concerned that the driver and his companion were curmudgeons annoyed at having to take journalists in their truck. We might not have been in one of the safest places in the world, but we were in one of the safest places in the convoy. Towards the end even we, reporters with war experience under our belts, had to wear clothes that were turned inside-out because they were so dirty. In such conditions that was not just a matter of hygiene but a legitimate health concern. It was a safety problem.

‘During few days on top of a mountain Bosniak/Muslim soldiers searched the convoy looking for hidden arms or anything else that could not be classified as humanitarian aid. Nothing worth mentioning was found, but we could have met with misfortune because our journalist colleague vilified Bosniaks/Muslims with hate speech in his reports prepared far from the front line of the battlefield. They included made-up news of Bosniak/Muslim soldiers harassing members of a detained humanitarian convoy. That was us. Yes, we spent a few days on top of a mountain; yes, we were detained by Bosniak/Muslim soldiers but we were not harassed. Yet they listened to those reports just like we did, and no one could guarantee us that the soldiers would not lose their tempers. The colleague and his editors had done something journalists must never do.

‘More experienced reporters in the convoy knew that most of the backup drivers were intelligence officers. That could have been deduced from their behaviour during the trip. They were mostly quiet, or talked among themselves far away from others. They moved from one truck to another. While the convoy was detained they paced up and down its length listening to and monitoring what was going on. During wartime intelligence officers openly approached me and asked for information. I never shared anything that I hadn’t already published. These intelligence officers were not doing that. Their task was to observe everything they saw and heard along the way. They must have had a detailed plan of action upon arrival. Journalists could be potentially interesting sources for intelligence officers only on their way back, during conversations about what had they heard or seen in central Bosnia. In this first phase of the trip intelligence officers regarded them only as a potential security threat, if they said or did something that would give Bosniak/Muslim soldiers a reason to repeat the convoy search or use force. In any case, you must know that there are always intelligence officers present in organized groups crossing battlefield lines during war. They, like journalists, search for information; however, they are not colleagues with whom we should share information.

‘During the return journey the convoy was attacked. One driver was killed, a few people were wounded and, a Croatian television crew was briefly stopped and harassed. It is hard to identify the real reason, but the TV crew was easily recognizable by their big camera, and the face of the *HRT* [Croatian Radio television] journalist was familiar from TV. It is possible they were attacked as members of a television crew that was per-

ceived as belonging to the enemy. In similar situations, it is always better to send journalists who are not easily recognized. Journalists should not stand out in a group, by their appearance or their behaviour. If a colleague is attacked despite all the precautionary measures, provide him with every possible protection. Do not fight with the attacker. Ask to speak to the attacker's commander. Tell the attacker that you know his name and that you already sent a message with information about his identity and his attack on a journalist. If necessary, bluff. Lie. It is important to stagger his sense of security. Of course, whatever you do might not end up being helpful. However, if you surrender, then both you and your colleague have less chance to make it. Retreat from conflict if possible. That is the best solution'.

### *Reporting in war conditions outside the war zone*

'Even though the war between Croatia and Serbia was never officially declared, the Serbian government and a large part of their population supported the Serbian rebels in Croatia at the time, who were also aided by volunteer soldiers from Serbia. There were no traffic or even telephone connections between Croatia and Serbia for a long time, and the atmosphere was such that Croatian journalists in Serbia, and Serbian journalists in Croatia, were mostly regarded as enemies. When I decided to go to Serbia in spring of 1993 to report for the Croatian weekly paper *Globus*, it was as if I was heading to a war zone.

'I had to have a good cause to be able to enter Serbia as Croatian journalist. I also had to do everything possible to protect myself once I got there. First I went to the nearest settlement in Hungary, searched for a phone booth, and called a few of the most prominent politicians in Serbia. I arranged interviews with some of them and taped the conversations. Then I sent a telefax to the *Associated Press (AP)* office in Budapest from its office in Zagreb, with which I occasionally cooperated. The fax contained information about when I was supposed to arrive in Serbia and who I would interview there. The information was then forwarded to *AP* office in Belgrade. That was the first precautionary measure.

'To enter Serbia, I left Croatia in one bus that headed to Hungary and took another bus that was going to Belgrade at the Hungarian-Serbian border. An intelligence officer interrogated me for almost two hours on the Serbian side of the border. I showed him the telefax message and told him that, besides the colleagues at the headquarters of *Globus*, three *AP* offices were informed about my travel. I also told him that I had an arrangement with the radio-amateurs from Croatia, who even during the war communicated with the radio-amateurs from Serbia, that I would regularly contact them and that they should raise the alarm if I failed to do so. That was true. In the end, the intelligence officer allowed me to continue with my travel after I declined his offer to exchange dictaphones/audio recorders. He even made this proposition while laughing, since it was clear to him what my reply would be. Never take anything from anyone if you don't know that person well. It could come at a high price, since you don't know what is hidden in the object you took. It could be drugs. And that is a reliable way for you to get arrested, interrogated, blackmailed and if you don't cooperate, imprisoned.

‘In the end, almost all the politicians I arranged interviews with cancelled. I believe that when they initially agreed, they didn’t expect me to really come to interview them. When I appeared, many of them decided to cancel the agreement. Anyhow, the interviews were just an excuse for me to enter Serbia and stay there without problems. What I was really interested in were the stories about ordinary people’s lives. This was a topic that only a small percentage of Croats were acquainted with because everyone was focused on the politics.

‘I got an opportunity through colleagues at *AP* to interview Vojislav Šešelj. He was suspected of war crimes at the International Criminal Tribunal at The Hague, and temporarily at large/released because of serious illness in 2014. At the time he was the head of the ultranationalist Serbian Radical Party. In those days he asked that journalists pay for interviews with him, so they boycotted him. I also did not want to pay him, but because of the boycott, he wanted to be interviewed by someone, especially by a journalist from Croatia. He knew such an interview would garner attention. That is why he agreed to be interviewed for free, but with one condition. He asked me to bring an earlier interview with him that was published in *Globus*. He claimed he never read it before, which I knew was a lie.

‘In the title and subheading of that interview he was described as a fascist and a war criminal. Obviously, he decided to play with me, to blackmail and intimidate me. The Belgrade-Budapest-Zagreb “*AP* connection” functioned again. Colleagues from *Globus* sent me the interview with a changed layout that, in this unique “special” edition, became neutral. I left for the interview with the doctored article. Five cab drivers rejected me, but the sixth one agreed to drive me to the SRS headquarters. I introduced myself to everyone, told them where I was about to go, and gave them my card. It was important for as many people as possible to remember me, what I looked like and where I went, since I did not know how Šešelj would react upon seeing the doctored interview.

‘First he offered me coffee and, smiling cynically, remarked that it was not poisoned. He is a villain, potentially crazy but definitely not stupid. And no smart person would poison a journalist in their own house, especially after the said journalist made sure everyone knew where he went and why, of which I informed him. He glanced over the interview briefly. He knew he received a doctored version, and I knew he was aware of that. He made no comments.

‘When the interview was over, Šešelj’s party colleague attacked me and claimed I had tortured and raped her in some Croatian prison. Although I knew it was an attempt to intimidate me, I still did not feel at ease about it, especially because a few angry men started to approach me. I just courteously kept repeating that I had never been to a concentration or detention camp and that I never tortured or raped anybody. That calmed them down since they did not feel fear. In any case, if you are crazy enough to go into the “wolf’s den”, at least make sure everyone knows it. And make sure that the “wolf” is aware that everybody knows’.

*Other specific examples from war zones***Afghanistan: The personal cost of surviving a story**

Aasif used to work for one of Kandahar's most prominent media outlets. A young and committed journalist, he reported critically on the Taliban and the Afghan government. He was aware that his writings might cause him and his family trouble, but he was dedicated to his trade and felt compelled to continue his work.

After months of continuous threats from the Taliban and the Afghan intelligence agency, including warnings that he would be stoned to death unless he ceased his reporting, the intelligence agency paid a visit to Aasif's workplace while he was away on business. They also stopped by his home and threatened and mistreated his wife. Following this escalation of threats, Aasif's employer contacted the coordinator of the IMS-founded Afghan Journalists' Safety Committee in Kabul.

After investigating the case and verifying the threats against Aasif, using its network of provincial representatives, government authorities, tribal elders, and other sources, the Safety Committee determined his threat level at five, the highest level on a scale from one to five. This warranted immediate protection and the evacuation of Aasif and his wife.

While they sought refuge in a safe house at a secret location, the Safety Committee and IMS arranged the practical details of their evacuation from the country. Aasif and his wife were provided with new passports, but fearing that their family members might suffer revengeful attacks, they were torn between whether to stay or go.

After days of unbearable contemplation they decided to flee. The couple now lives in Europe, but remains traumatised by their experience. Members of their family have since been killed as an act of retribution by the Taliban.

*The IMS Afghanistan safety mechanism*

The Afghan Journalist Safety Committee manages a country-wide safety mechanism which includes a Freedom of Expression monitoring unit that documents violations against journalists; a provincial safety team; a 24-hour telephone emergency hotline; safe house facilities; a safety fund for emergency support and practical safety training for journalists that includes trauma counselling and conflict-sensitive journalism training.

*(Source: International media support (IMS) : Taking action to protect journalists)*

**Three weeks a hostage in Slovyansk**

*Serhiy Lefter, a Ukrainian journalist working for a Polish NGO, spent nearly three weeks in captivity by pro-Russian militants in the city of Slovyansk in the self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic. Shortly after his release on May 6, Lefter spoke with RFE/RL Russian Service correspondent Dmitry Volchek about his ordeal.*

‘At first they really suspected me. They suspected all of us; that some of us were from the nationalist political movement Right Sector or were ‘Banderovtsy’ [a reference to the World War II-era Ukrainian nationalist leader Stepan Bandera], especially if someone was from the right bank of the Dnepr. They suspected everyone, especially if you weren’t a local. Then they started checking up on you. There were interrogations. They checked documents very carefully. In my case, they suspected that I was a spy because they detained me. I was reporting some information about what was going on in Donetsk to my coordinator at the Open Dialogue foundation. Later, during interrogation, you could tell from their questions that they knew I was a journalist, but they were trying to find out some sort of information about possible contacts with the Right Sector. Even though they knew I was a journalist, they began researching me on social media. They saw that I had been on Maidan [the Kyiv square that was the site of months of pro-European demonstrations], which was already a bad thing from their point-of-view. That’s how it was’.

### **An American photographer tells how he was captured, whipped and beaten by Syrian rebels who accused him of working for the CIA and imprisoned him in dark cell for seven months**

Matthew Schrier, 35, from Syosset, New York, was captured by Jabhat al-Nusra, a militant group aligned with al-Qaeda, as he travelled in Syria last December during his first trip to a war zone. He was taken to a compound near Aleppo and locked up with an American cellmate, who may still be in captivity, before escaping from a gap in a basement window on July 29, he said.

Before he fled, Schrier said he was beaten with a metal cable across his feet and given electrical shocks. He also said the rebels cleaned out his bank accounts and emailed his family pretending to be him and assuring them he was well.

The paper chose not to identify the other American captive at the request of his family.

While Schrier’s abduction has not been reported before, he was one of several Westerners in rebel-held territory since the civil war began. He said he was traveling without a commission from a media organization and had attempted to leave Aleppo by taxi on December 31. But the vehicle was stopped and he was taken by the rebels.

*(Source: The New York Times)*

### **German journalist Jurgen Todenhofer on surviving ISIL**

German journalist Jurgen Todenhofer, 74, embedded with the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, spent 10 days in Mosul in northern Iraq with its fighters. Todenhofer is the first western reporter to do so and live to tell about it.

‘Everything was uncomfortable. Sometimes there was no food or water, like the last day we had nothing to eat. It was very simple because they chose houses where nobody thinks they are or may be. They have to hide because there are American bombs out there.

‘One of the most difficult situations was in Mosul when a drone identified some who were with us, and the bomb came down, pinpointing military and humanitarian aid from nations in the international struggle against the armed group.

‘It was also very unpleasant when we returned to Raqqa after some days in Mosul. We were three days late and two days before that, when we were supposed to be there, our apartment where we lived was destroyed by Syrian bombers. No more windows, no more doors. There was glass everywhere. We knew that if we were back in time, we would have been dead.

Crossing the border at the end was also extremely scary. A few days before we were to cross, there was some shooting and at the end, close to the border, you have to run about 1,000m to cross the border with all your clothes and equipment in order to get to safety. Running 1,000m is very far when you’re running for your life and there are gun towers’, said Todenhofer.

*(Source: Al Jazeera)*

### **Syria: the most dangerous place in the world for journalists**

The murder of James Foley by Islamist militants in 2014 after his 2012 kidnapping in Syria has focused attention on the dangers of reporting from the country.

It has been the most dangerous place in the world for journalists for more than two years, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), a New York-based press freedom lobby group.

At least 69 journalists have been killed as a direct result of covering the Syrian conflict since it began in 2011, says CPJ. Most were killed in crossfire or as a result of explosions, but at least six were confirmed to have been deliberately murdered.

Nearly half of the journalists killed in Syria were freelancers; that is, journalists who work for more than one organisation and who are paid fees per piece delivered, rather than salaries. Some were volunteers or activist ‘citizen journalists’.

Journalists who work for large international organisations have some advantages over their freelance colleagues. They are often issued body armour by their employers, for example, and some have ‘hostile environment’ training, including for first aid.

Crucially, writers and broadcasters who earn salaries may be under less pressure to ‘deliver’ from potentially dangerous situations and therefore might take fewer risks.

Indeed, in Syria, large established media organisations are increasingly relying on free-lancers because they deem the country to be too dangerous for ‘their’ people.

*(Source: BBC NEWS Middle East)*

## **B. Reporting during demonstrations, social unrest and other violent situations**

### **What it is**

If you are capable of preparing well for war zone reporting conditions, you will know how to best protect yourself in other extraordinary situations. That is why the remaining sections will address only the main challenges and security problems specific to various exceptional situations. For example, reporting from demonstrations, especially violent ones and other kinds of social unrest. If demonstrations are peaceful, there are generally no risks for journalists’ physical safety. In such cases a journalist can focus all his/her attention on doing his/her job in a professional manner; to be present at the event, to take statements and collect documents if they exist, to gather facts and describe the atmosphere. It is important that a journalist knows what can happen if a demonstration is violent. It is very important to know how to protect yourself from tear gas. Police and other security forces are allowed to use tear gas, but must also respect international guidelines regarding the way it can be deployed against civilians. You can find some good advice on the International News Safety Institute (INSI) website at <http://www.newssafety.org/safety/advice/protecting-yourself-from-tear-gas/>

Important details:

There are factors that determine how many journalists will cover an event. These include the scale of demonstrations, the necessary reaction speed and the resources of the editorial board. There are generally no safety risks during peaceful demonstrations. But take note that peaceful demonstrations can turn violent in a heartbeat. That is why you should prepare for peaceful demonstrations in the same way you would for violent ones. Such demonstrations sometimes resemble a war zone situation.

While reporting on violent demonstrations, a reporter can be faced with multiple security problems. Essentially, we can group these problems in to three basic types:

- 1) A reporter can be too far away from the focal place of events and may need to get closer, but demonstrators prevent him/her from doing so. This can pose a security risk for the journalist.
- 2) A reporter can be too close to the epicentre of disorder, surrounded by a violent mass that prevents him/her from doing his/her job and putting his/her safety at risk.
- 3) A reporter can be intimidated and directly attacked.

## **How to report**

Just like in other extraordinary situations, if an editorial board does not send more journalists to report on demonstrations, it ought to have backup reporters to join in if necessary. This is especially true in the event of demonstrations that turn violent. Regardless of their media affiliation (whether sent by editors or freelance), journalists ought to connect and exchange cell phone numbers. If possible, they should split the territory into sectors and divide those sectors among themselves to decrease the need to move around the entire area, minimising safety risks.

If a reporter should find himself/herself at the edges of an event and it is dangerous to try to reach the epicentre, s/he should stay put, make contact with other reporters at the demonstration and exchange information with them. Sometimes when one is far from the centre of happenings it is easier to see and hear clearly what is hard to understand at the epicentre. For example, seemingly spontaneous violence may actually be confirmed as well-organized. Do not try to reach the centre of a violent demonstration at all costs.

If you find yourself at the epicentre of a violent demonstration, it is best to peacefully try to get as far away from there as possible. If you stay, there is a greater possibility of being hurt than obtaining an important piece of information for your report. If you decide to stay, do not show that you are a journalist. In such situations your status as a journalist is a liability, and it will almost certainly not bring you any professional benefits.

During violent demonstrations a reporter can be intimidated or even directly attacked by demonstration participants, especially if the violence is not spontaneous but organized. Spontaneous violence is most often directed against those who caused people to demonstrate in the first place, or it is created as a result of an event during demonstrations like retaliation due to police brutality. Organized violence often targets journalists, for example, during assemblies of radical political parties or other organizations that include 'professional' hooligans, often disguised as soccer fans. Such demonstrations require extreme caution. It is best to not show that you are a journalist, to refrain from asking too many questions and to be as far away from epicentre of the disturbance as possible.

During violent demonstrations police and security also pose a threat to journalists. Depending on the identity of the organizer and the opinions his/her collaborators have on your media outlet or you personally, you can be a target of organizer's security guards. They may work primarily in the interest of the person who pays them, and not the public interest. Police can target you if you report from an assembly in an authoritarian or totalitarian state where state authorities perceive journalists, especially those reporting on anti-regime demonstrations, as enemies. Sometimes they may even lash out because they themselves are angry and intimidated by the situation. In any case, if someone threatens or attacks you, alarm other journalists immediately and try to leave the scene.

If the police try to arrest you in the chaos of violent demonstrations and you cannot escape, tell them you are a reporter and show them your press ID. If that is not ef-

fective, it is best not to resist. Try again in a more peaceful place, far away from demonstrations, even if that means in a police station. There you will be heard by someone who is under less stress and has more authority. In any case, it is best to take statements from the organizers and gather the most important information before demonstrations start if there is time. This part of the work can be done by another journalist in a newsroom far away from the scene of the events through telephone calls, fact-checking and monitoring other reports. It is important for a journalist who is reporting on a violent demonstration to be inconspicuous in his/her immediate surroundings, in order to observe events in the field.

### **Examples/Previous experience**

#### *When reporter is too far away from the scene of events*

In the past, the Gay Pride Parade in Belgrade, Serbia, was cancelled due to attacks from extreme conservative organizations and soccer hooligans and high security risks. The first public manifestation of LGBT population was held in 2010. That was possible because the Pride Parade route was extremely short. Police security blocked the entire neighbourhood in which the parade was held, and anyone who entered it was identified and controlled. There was no possibility for bitter Pride opponents to attack the procession, and journalists covering the event were safe as well.

However, that did not mean that riots were avoided. Outside the police ring conservatives and football hooligans trashed cars, threw rocks and ‘Molotov cocktails’ on police officers and pushed burning trash containers around. Journalists found the riots interesting, and focused on them instead of the LGBT parade. A Croatian journalist decided to cross to the other side of police barricades together with a colleague from a Belgrade weekly *NIN*, in order to witness what he could not see from the well-protected area of the parade. Therefore, this time, in order to be in the epicentre of what was going on, he needed to get out of the formal centre to the more interesting edges.

Taking into account the fact that a Croatian journalist would be perceived as a ‘red cape’ by Serbian hooligans as much as members of the LGBT population, he followed his colleague in silence while he presented them both as journalists of *NIN*. The trick worked. They could watch hooligans’ vandalism from very close by, and they got statements and even listened to the communication between the rioters that made it clear that the violence was not spontaneous. The LGBT gathering was just a good occasion to break things and send a political message on behalf of the riots’ organizers.

A group of about 20 hooligans attacked the RTV *B92* media company building in during the 2014 LGBT parade in Belgrade on 29 September 2014. *B92* journalists are a common target of nationalistic hooligans, but this time the police protection was strong. One policeman was injured but none of the journalists were harmed.

*When a reporter is in the epicentre of events*

A Croatian journalist reported from an Interpol conference in Rome. He had some free time and decided to go to the city centre with another colleague who was also reporting on the conference. There they encountered demonstrations, which at the moment were very loud but non-violent. It was a protest against Silvio Berlusconi, then serving one of several terms as prime minister. Journalistic curiosity took them to the centre of the mess, where the loudest and visibly angry protesters gathered. The crowd on the square was surrounded by policemen in full protective gear and there were a few snipers on rooftops surrounding the square.

The presence of so many police officers made protesters even angrier, and it seemed that the mass could start acting violently. Policemen were verbally assaulted first, and then various objects started flying towards them. In one moment people close to the two Croatian journalists turned towards them and started screaming. At first they could not understand what was happening. Protesters had no way of knowing who they were and, even if they did, they would not be bothered by Croatian journalists who did not give any cause for ire through their behaviour. Then one of the journalists noticed that his colleague had POLIZIA (police) written on the sleeve of his shirt. All the attendees of the earlier police conference were given a souvenir that this reporter wore without realising he would later run into protesters angry at the police. He was not even aware of his shirt until protesters started pushing him around and pulling on it.

While one of the Croatian reporters shouted that they were not policemen and tried to take his colleague away from the crowd, the other journalist made another mistake. He took his passport out, offering it to protesters so they can check that he is not even an Italian citizen. No one listened to him. Not only did he almost lose his passport, but he made the attackers even more furious. Suddenly, the entire crowd started heading towards them. The first punches were landed. Then a group of special police officers reached the area and took them to the one of the gathering points in surrounding buildings. From a safe distance and in police company, they watched the demonstrations from a balcony for the next couple of hours, until the policemen decided it was safe to let them go.

Always take care not to draw extra attention to yourself with a poorly thought-out detail. You can never know where your journalistic instinct will take you, or how many problems you might get yourself into over something you did not even think about.

*When a reporter is directly intimidated and attacked*

In the centre of Belgrade in 2008, radical ultranationalists organized a protest gathering over the arrest of Radovan Karadžić. He was accused of war crimes in Bosnia and Herzegovina and extradited to The Hague. Such a gathering was bound to be marked by violence, and it could have been expected that journalists reporting from the scene would also be targeted by hooligans, especially if they came from media outlets that did not support nationalism and war crimes. That is how it went. A reporter from *Fonet* agency was at-

tacked, and his camera was broken. That attack was filmed by Boško Branković, a *TV B92* cameraman. *TV B92* journalists were attacked multiple times because they advocated for peace and condemned war crimes. The crowd's rage turned against the cameraman. His camera was broken, and so was the reporter's leg. He could not work for several months. He paid dearly for his solidarity with his colleague, but what he did was the only possible move for a professional reporter.

## **C. Reporting on natural and man-made disasters**

Being close to situations where nature or humans create major problems that could threaten lives, monuments of nature, property or buildings is one of the biggest challenges a professional journalist can face. Such situations can catapult her/him to glory but can also endanger her/his very existence. Besides being aware of the main challenges, one basic rule should at all cost apply here:

Stay at a safe distance!

No journalistic success could make up for a serious injury, disability or even death. It is absolutely essential to follow any instructions given by persons in charge during a disaster to avoid further complicating the situation. Informing the public about a disaster is extremely important, but dealing with its consequences as they unfold is far more essential. A journalist should try to be of assistance as part of the solution, and never create additional problems.

### **What it is**

A natural disaster is a major adverse event resulting from natural processes of the Earth that can cause loss of life or property damage, and can leave severe economic damage in its wake. The severity of the aftermath depends on the affected population's resilience. Major examples of natural disasters are:

Earthquakes; floods; wildfires; avalanches; volcanic eruptions; tsunamis; typhoons / hurricanes / cyclones / blizzards; droughts and heat waves; major epidemics like Ebola virus disease in parts of Africa in various episodes from 1976-2014, or diseases like Human immunodeficiency virus infection and acquired immune deficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS).

Man-made disasters are:

Industrial hazards; radiation contamination; major transport accidents; structural collapse, for example, road infrastructure.

Natural and man-made disasters can strike at any time with little to no warning at all. They represent an opportunity for professional journalists, regardless if they belonging to

a newsroom or act as a freelancer. Nevertheless, the challenges and risks are also grave and include but are not limited to:

- Communication breakdown
- Transport difficulties or complete standstill
- Partial or complete electrical power breakdown
- Risk of disease or infection

In order to address the above and respond in the most efficient manner, journalists and media workers must follow specific rules. These will enable journalists and media workers to perform their duties in a safe, quick and efficient manner, without compromising themselves or obstructing the work of emergency action personnel.

Establishing redundancies to maintain communications with colleagues is essential. Two-way radios may be necessary, for example, if local cell phone towers are down. Newsrooms should prepare in advance for the possibility of disasters in their vicinity by creating and updating a detailed contingency plan, while journalists assigned to cover catastrophes in more distant territories or away from their newsroom should review field safety protocols before departure.

It is very important to have adequate equipment. Generators, emergency lights, batteries, two-way radios with back-up batteries, GPS location devices, first-aid kits and extra first-aid equipment should be part of a journalist's backpack. Packaged or canned food, bottled drinking water, cots and blankets may also be needed in disaster-affected areas.

Press vehicles should be equipped with emergency gear including a first-aid kit, road flares and blankets. Large maps should be kept in the newsroom, marked with the locations of hospitals, emergency clinics, paediatric clinics, shelters, transportation centres, schools and other buildings that could be used to harbour families or refugees during a crisis. Topographic maps should be on hand to help identify hazards such as low-lying areas where flooding is likely.

Stealth hazards like radioactivity or viruses should be also taken seriously because of their very nature. According to *the New York Times* prevention manual, introduced in 2011, 'distance, time and shielding are the only protective devices a reporter has' against these threats.

### **How to report**

In cases of natural or man-made disasters, a professional journalist must stay calm, make sure her/his own safety is not at risk and then start working. S/he should avoid being an activist rather than a reporter, but must not neglect help to others if an extremely critical situation arises. Most importantly, s/he should always keep in mind that emergency situation does not mean emergency journalism, but quite the opposite. One must try and overcome difficulties and her/himself to produce the best possible result and inform the public opinion in the most accurate, effective way.

As mentioned earlier, journalists should avoid putting themselves at risk and potentially becoming a burden to emergency crews and colleagues at all costs. They should work in teams of at least two, preferably three people during disaster coverage, and ensure that one team member carries a small first-aid kit. Information cards that include blood-type and potential allergies and a whistle should also be worn.

Only after securing themselves should journalists start working. Given the surrounding circumstances this work is a highly demanding, but they should always keep in mind that all basic principles of ethical and objective journalism are equally or even more important during a disaster.

Since the people in the affected area and the rest of the world at large expect an accurate picture of what is happening, a professional journalist must always be precise, without exaggerating or underestimating the situation and file reports that include more than one statement from state officials and/or rescue teams. Remember that eyewitnesses play an important role, and respect linguistic and cultural boundaries. A disaster knows no borders and can rapidly spread among different regions and/or countries.

A professional journalist should always report with respect for the different ethnic, linguistic and cultural backgrounds that exist in the affected areas. Show sensibility and awareness. Reports about killed, injured or displaced people should always be transmitted with utmost respect for all people involved. In such moments, a professional journalist should not be intrusive, but at the same time should look for stories that are important and unique.

Victims and families have undergone great shock and may be suffering the effects of trauma. The journalist must be careful not to inflict further harm. S/he should explain the nature of her/his work, and why it is important that they consider sharing their story. If they do not grant permission for an interview, it can be helpful to approach people without microphones or cameras to build rapport and trust. We should also be aware that sadness and other emotions can be conveyed even at a distance or via indirect shots. Getting too close to a mourning family is not always the most effective way to cover a disaster.

Report and do not become an activist. A professional journalist is a human being but at the same time s/he should never forget the reason for her/his presence in the affected area. In this respect, s/he should avoid engagement in relief work and instead contact experts and find out about any possible negligence from the authorities, keeping in mind to relate both sides of the story.

Even in a breaking news situation, a journalist must question and doubt every press release, even if it is generated by an official government agency or law enforcement body. Try to investigate their claims. Remember that in disaster reporting, being first means nothing if the report is not accurate.

The circumstances outlined above make it clear that newsrooms should adopt disaster reporting guidelines. Trainings should be organised for journalists sent to cover disasters to make sure that they are prepared in the best possible way. A major part of both guidelines and trainings should be dedicated to issues which cannot be learned while covering an incident, such as the psychological trauma of the affected, follow-up and post disaster stories.

## **Examples/Previous experience**

Natural disasters

### **The Haiti earthquake, 2010**

‘We want the media to value the lives of people who are “not us”. As I waited for eight days to hear that my own mother and grandmother in Port-au-Prince were safe, I wanted to hold on to good memories of the person who brought me into the world and the one who taught me to be generous and tenacious. Let’s seize the opportunity of this horrific tragedy to demand better from our news sources: dignity for everyone’.

*Manoucheka Celeste, Haitian journalist*

### **Indonesia Tsunami 2004**

‘I’ve never been anywhere like it. I’ve covered several earthquakes and it is easily the worst thing I’ve ever seen happen to a community anywhere. Nobody there was left untouched. Everybody you met had lost somebody or had had some experience during the Tsunami itself. Now all of us as individuals want to help the individual in the place that we are, and all of us do occasionally take the wounded soldier to the hospital or help an individual. But if you’ve got a city where there is that much effect, then actually remaining disengaged is quite a good thing. It’s unprofessional to help everybody’.

*David Loyn, BBC World correspondent*

### **Serbian Floods, 2014**

‘The authorities kept us outside Obrenovac for hours. After seeing what I saw when we finally entered the city, they were right do so. There was only water, us, the police and the army. I had never witnessed floods to erase cities with dozens of thousands of inhabitants. But this is what happened here.’

*Manuela Strinu, Romanian journalist*

## Man-made disasters

### **Chernobyl nuclear power plant explosion, 1986**

“I was in St. Petersburg, reporting on the return of Vladimir Horowitz, the concert pianist doing his first debut return after, I think, 40 years away from Russia. And when I got back to my hotel to file the story about that, I had a telex from my bureau, the Moscow bureau of the Washington Post, saying that in short that there had been a minor nuclear accident in the western Ukraine, It said there were some casualties. By that time I’d in Russia for long enough to know that if they said that little bit, then it was a major incident that took place and that it should require my direct attention - and it did, for about three month.”

*Gary Lee, former Washington Post correspondent in Moscow*

### **Fukushima nuclear power plant explosion, March 2011**

‘The radioactivity meter is going up, but you don’t feel a thing. You don’t smell anything, you don’t feel heat, you just don’t feel a thing. And that’s actually the most scary part of the whole trip’.

*Tetsuo Jimbo, Japanese journalist and founder of Videonews website.*

## Part 2

### Reporting under pressure

#### General applicable rules

Even when s/he is not being shot at in the middle of a war zone or reporting from the centre of a violent demonstration, a reporter can be under great pressure. Journalists investigating topics in the public interest are often appreciated only by their sparse readers, viewers and listeners who understand the importance of the work those journalists are doing. They are not loved by criminals nor corrupt politicians, and sometimes not even by the owners of the media outlet they work for, their colleagues and their own editors. Reporters are people faced with various kinds of pressure. It ranges from pressure not to publish articles and bribery attempts to open threats and assaults. They are under pressure because of people with power in the political and financial realms, and because of corrupt parts of the system. Sometimes their lives are real nightmares.

#### A. Internal pressure from colleagues, superiors, employers and media owners

##### What it is

In South East European countries in transition, many media owners are linked in a chain of corruption. They are connected to politicians and tycoons; media ownership serves them for goals that have nothing to do with public interest. Therefore, they are not interested in investigative journalism or analytical reporting on topics that truly matter. In such media outlets editors are not the most experienced, and the most competent journalists are but an extended hand of the owner. They are not concerned about the quality of the media product but about owner's interests. They prefer obedient journalists to keep things running smoothly, while the best professionals are ignored or openly prevented from doing their job.

Here are some of the most common ways for employers, editors and colleagues from other media outlets to exert pressure on journalists dealing with topics of public interest:

- 1) Complete ignoring, not giving them any work or not publishing stories;
- 2) A pay cut;
- 3) A threat of losing a job;

- 4) Bribery attempts, for instance, increasing one's pay conditionally, as long as the journalist writes about irrelevant topics;
- 5) Attempt to discredit a journalist via other media outlets.

### **How to report**

If a journalist is employed, it is hard to deal with a situation in which one's stories are not being published or work is not being assigned. Usually a work contract with an employer prohibits a journalist from working for other media outlets. It is harder to press freelance journalists in this way, but they are few to begin with since most media outlets are not interested in topics of public interest. The ones who are interested usually are not rich and cannot adequately compensate serious journalistic work, so journalists are slow to quit their jobs, despite the pressure, and work independently.

Similar situations may occur if an employer lowers a journalist's salary. Many journalists think that some pay is better than no pay. There are more and more unemployed journalists every day. That is what makes threatening job loss such an effective means of exerting pressure.

Receiving the same or even more pay for less work that also happens to be irrelevant and not in public interest should not be accepted by journalists with integrity. However, punishment follows bribe rejection all the way to being fired. It is virtually impossible to endure such pressure within media. Crossing over to another media outlet or freelancing is the only way to resist pressure. Yet options for freelancers are scarce.

The best protection against employer's and editors' pressure is solidarity, the mutual support of journalists willing to work for public interest and loyalty to the profession rather than loyalty to a corrupt employer. Furthermore, journalists who are able to work freely ought to report about pressure exerted by media owners on their colleagues.

Other media outlets that to promote and protect the private interests of their owners sometimes attack journalists working in public interest directly, claiming that the work of those journalists is disguised corruption created to protect some and attack others. Not even journalists' private lives are spared. The best defence is adhering to professional standards in work. Colleagues and media outlets meeting professional standards should stand up in defence of an attacked colleague.

### **Examples/Previous experience**

Once again we will refer to the experience of Saša Leković, who will put forward a series of examples from his personal practice of working for different media outlets and owners that he felt might be useful for this handbook.

'After almost ten years of work for the same employer, I found myself in a position of being paid exceptionally well but pressed by editors in two ways. They either did not

publish my stories or they tampered with them while leaving my signature. I did not want to lose my integrity, so I quit.

‘A few years before that I was subject to another method of pressure, the lowering of an agreed-upon salary. I reacted by switching to another paper, owned by the same owner, that needed a journalist of my profile. After that I had no problems with the level of pay. I could solve my problem in such a way back then within a company owning many newspapers. Today, in times of crises and with the uncertain employment condition in media doing so would be much more difficult.

‘I was attacked directly and indirectly a few times by other media. Each time a media outlet broke ethical and professional principles by spreading hate speech and exerting pressure on media owners they considered enemies. An example of an indirect attack was a comic in one newspaper that, under the pretence of humour, targeted various persons. Once there was a character very similar to me, with a name very similar to mine, accused of being provided with “money and boys” by a famous criminal.

‘An example of a direct attack was an article published on a web portal after I had published a story about offshore companies laundering money. This article was allegedly the “real investigative research”, claiming that I purposefully left some culpable companies out of my story because I wanted to protect their owners. In another case, the same web portal accused me of “doing dirty work in media” on behalf of one politician. In the first case, I ignored the attack since everyone who knows me could immediately tell it was clearly nonsensical. In the other case, I used arguments to deny the attack, but through social networks since by then I was a freelancer. I did not have a board of editors to back me up, and reaction from the media was missing as well’.

## **B. External pressure from politicians, companies, advertisers, religious groups, criminals/Mafioso and public persons**

### **What it is**

Often the pressure coming from owners is actually a result of pressure from politicians, businessmen and especially large advertisers. Politicians, state officials, advertisers or most-often-reported-on companies’ owners and employees most often do not contact journalists directly. They contact the owners, who in turn press on journalists, often through an editor as an intermediary. In such cases a journalist has little chance of proving where the pressure is coming from, or that there is pressure in the first place.

Here are some main challenges:

Powerful politicians can exert pressure through direct demands to have something published or not published. For example, they can refrain from being interviewed by certain

media outlets, or ‘punish’ them by giving exclusive information to someone else. State officials also exert pressure on journalists by not providing information they are legally bound to share.

Advertisers can lower the amount of ads or completely cease advertising in a given media outlet, influencing owners’ and editors’ decisions to, for example, refrain from publishing negative information on them, their companies and their partners.

Along with previously stated kinds of pressure, bribery is very effective as well. It can take the form of paying hidden advertising, travel and other benefits.

### **How to report**

A journalist should refuse all kinds of bribery and other forms of pressure, and adhere to professional standards in his work.

Don’t depend on small number of high profile sources of any kind.

Don’t have ‘black spots’ in your professional or private life. You are going to become vulnerable very soon.

If you are under the pressure but can’t prove it publicly, spread the word about it among journalistic circles. Those who are attacking you will know you are not scared of them.

Keep any proof of the pressure, like SMS, email, document, audio or video clips in a safe place, and share it with people you trust.

In cases of direct pressure of any kind that is possible to prove, a journalist should inform journalists associations and the public. If a criminal act, like a threat, is in question, inform the police.

### **Examples/Previous experience**

#### **Another case from the experience of Saša Leković:**

‘Once a former Minister of Interior Affairs refused to give an interview for a paper I used to work for, because of one of my articles. Since the article in question was completely up to professional standards, I asked my editor to allow me to conduct the interview with the minister once he agreed to be interviewed by the paper again. He did, except that, after the interview was conducted, the minister insisted on his “authorization”, a process he thought entailed changing not only his answers but my questions as well, with some questions being omitted altogether.

‘I urged the editor to publish what the minister had done, and the editor said it would be published. However, he tricked me. I rebelled and not long after that my pay was cut’.

## Floods in Serbia, 2014

The massive floods that devastated Serbia in late May 2014 have also brought to light the pressure and censorship the Serbian government has been placing on media. Namely, the Serbian government instated a state of emergency that gave authorities the right to detain individuals for “inciting panic during a state of emergency”, among other restrictions.

As Internet users began commenting and sharing information on social networks and blogs about the floods, many of them also criticised the government’s lack of due warning for a natural disaster of this size and its poor response in some areas.

They were subsequently brought in for questioning by police forces for criticising government relief efforts. At the same time, the blog “*Druga strana*” (Other side) and portal *Teleprompter* were temporarily disabled while the entire blog of Dragan Todorović was deleted after he republished a text listing the reasons why Aleksandar Vučić should resign.

As a response, journalists and bloggers had come together with a unified blog post (In the Face of Censorship), speaking out against censorship and media intimidation. It was posted and reposted to dozens of media and blogs on the 24 May 2014. The post says the authorities cannot detain everyone who thinks differently from them, therefore it is easier to proclaim them “liars” or “crazy”. The broad dissemination and public acceptance of the post forced the Serbian government to provide at least some explanations for its behaviour during the most critical days.

## C. Reporting under direct threats and law suits

### What it is

A journalist is rarely threatened directly by politicians, advertisers or other businesspersons. They use more sophisticated, previously mentioned methods. Criminals threaten directly more often, but even really powerful criminals prefer to use an intermediary to tell a journalist s/he should ‘take care’ of what s/he is doing, or that they know which school their child attends. The most common type of people to intimidate and even attack directly are so-called ‘small fish’ from criminal the milieu, or regular people who feel threatened by journalistic work. Of course, just because dangerous criminals do not like to threaten directly does not mean they do not organize beatings or even murders of journalists. In countries with authoritative or totalitarian regimes, direct intimidation and physical attacks are organized by the government as well.

Here are some regular challenges in that field:

‘Friendly advice’ or direct anonymous or open threats over the telephone is one method of intimidation. SMS messages and email should be mentioned as well, but they are not as frequent given the fact they can be traced more easily.

Threatening journalist's family members is a very effective method of intimidation. That can shake even the strongest people.

Along with criminals, methods of intimidation are used by secret services. They can be a combination of bribery, blackmail and direct intimidation. Governments threaten with arrest and rigged court cases.

Furthermore, unlike in direct physical attack, powerful criminals and secret services beat and murder in a way that is hard to prove.

Sometimes media outlets turn against their journalists in such situations instead of protecting them.

### **How to report**

Each threat and physical attack against a journalist or a member of his family needs to be reported to police and published. A journalist who is not afraid to stand his/her ground and resist pressure is always a better public message than silence.

Journalistic solidarity is of extreme importance in cases like this. Each case of serious threats and physical attack should be made known internationally.

However, don't forget advice given in the section covering external pressure.

### **Examples/Previous experience**

Journalist Saša Leković received direct phone treats from criminals and indirect threats to family members. His car brakes were tampered with and someone tried to push him from the road while driving. He was not quiet about these incidents and the threats ended. It is useful when the people threatening you know you will not be quiet about the threats, and that you will not change the way you report in spite of them. Yet sometimes even that does not help.

Croatian colleague Željko Peratović went through all forms of pressure. He received various threats, he was attacked on street, editors refused to publish his articles under pressure from secret services and in the end they found an excuse to fire him. No one wanted to hire him yet he did not quit. He is very active as a freelancer and blogger and he keeps on focusing on the same topic that was the reason for his persecution: secret services and their illegal behaviour.

During the time that Croatian journalist Helena Puljiz reported from the office of the President, Croatian intelligence services at first wanted to make her complicit in their agenda. When they failed, they blackmailed her in 2004 by telling her that she was being followed, and threatened that compromising footage from her private life would be published and her brother would be fired from police services. Her board of editors renounced

her and she could not get a job for a long time. Yet, she did not cave in. She pressed charges and won the case in court after ten years in 2014.

Investigative journalist from Azerbaijan Khadija Ismayilova was imprisoned at the end of 2014 under false charges of ‘motivating suicide’. The imprisonment was meant to intimidate and punish her because of her discovery of corruption scandals involving President Ilhan Aliyev. Many journalists wrote protest letters to the Azerbaijan embassies in their respective countries and organized protests asking for their colleague to be released. The World Network of Investigative Journalists decided to organize a continuation of her investigation. This is a proper response to the pressure she experienced.

Unfortunately, in some countries many journalists are currently imprisoned as punishment for their work. In some countries journalist murders are frequent. Some journalists have to live under police protection. For example, Serbian journalist Brankica Stanković has been uncovering criminal and corruption scandals on highest levels for about a decade, in the show *Insider* on Belgrade’s *TV B92*. She is continuously being threatened, and her murder was ordered as well. She has been living under police protection since 2009. She was prevented from doing her job as a journalist by these threats, but she did not quit. Her team is still working and she is their editor. She wrote a book about her experiences.

### **Letter from jail by Fusun Erdogan, Turkish journalist who spent 7 years in jail because of her journalism activity**

January 17, 2013

Hello,

My name is Fusun Erdogan and I am writing this letter from Gebze (nearby Istanbul), Women’s Prison in Turkey. I am married and have a son. I carry both Turkish and Dutch citizenships. I am a journalist and I had always worked as a journalist in Istanbul from my return to Turkey in 1989 to my arrest in 2006.

Now, I am in my 7th year of imprisonment. My case is not over, yet. At each hearing the public prosecutor uses the same general cliché like “based on type of crime and the state of evidence” and requests for continuous custody until the next hearing which usually means three months later. None of these so called “evidence” is proven to be linked to me.

These clichés are accepted by the court and this charade turns into an execution without a fair trial since 2006. And now I felt the urge to bring this injustice to the attention of a broader community. Therefore, I would like to inform individuals and/or organizations about my situation, and look for your solidarity and support.

I am the founder and director of *Özgür Radio* which started broadcasting regionally, around Istanbul and surrounding, in 1995. I resumed this same role until I was arrested. On a broad daylight in the middle of a crowded street in Izmir, I was forcefully taken

into a civilian car and detained by undercover policemen on September 8, 2006. From the moment I was pushed into that vehicle, I lost sense of time and place because I was sandwiched between the front and rear seats, and my eyes were covered. I did not know where they were taking me. We travelled for many hours under these conditions.

After many hours, they brought me to a house and I was taken to the second floor. I was asked to lie down the same way next to other people who were on the floor face down. When refused, they forcefully pushed me down.

During the process, I had wounds on my knees and elbows that were included in the forensic report. After videotaping us, they took me to a car. I did not know exactly what time it was but must have been late because it was dark and the street and home lights were on.

I finally understood where I was once I saw the sign of police station; I was in Nazilli. I spent the night there on a wooden bank handcuffed by one arm. Very early in the morning I was put into an unofficial vehicle to be taken to Istanbul. After four days of detention by the police, I was taken to the court on Sept. 12, 2006. I told the prosecutor that I would not give any testimony as I did not know the reason(s) for my detention. My lawyer also could not defend me for the same reason. On that day, I was arrested.

Because of “classified” clause on my file, no information was shared by the court until the summer of 2007. Neither my lawyer nor I could obtain any information about accusations.

In the summer of 2007 the indictment was made available and the first hearing took place on October 26, 2007. However, police reports were incomplete; as a result, I was not able to defend myself until the third hearing in 2008. So, this meant I was kept in prison for exactly two years without knowing why I was arrested. I wish my victimization would have ended there.

Unfortunately, since 2008, the system continued to keep me in prison based on a computer output prepared by the police as main evidence. All the managers of private radio stations are required by RTUK (English: Radio and Television Supreme Council) to provide a copy of information to the Bureau of Press Directorate of police headquarters.

Type of information includes our up-to-date home and work addresses/phone numbers. Istanbul Police department already knew where I lived and worked. Police had no reason to kidnap me in the middle of the street in Izmir while I was on a work related trip. The only reason I could think was to link me to an operation police was conducting at the time.

An operation against an illegal organization!

My journalist husband and his assistant were also taken into the police custody as part of this operation. In reality, there was only one real reason for our arrest: police was trying to intimidate members of the progressive, independent, democratic and alternative media. In few words, any opposition (radios and newspapers) to the existing system should be silenced. As many of you know, I am not alone and there are many journalists in prisons today.

So, what is my crime? I am accused of being a leader of an illegal organization and the prosecutor is asking for life imprisonment without parole. For a harsh penalty like this, one would expect a very strong evidence and case against the person.

I have studied every single folder (about 40 dossiers and thousands of pages). However, I did not find any single concrete evidence against me. In the entire 300 page indictment there wasn't any tangible evidence against me either. The only information in the indictment was related to my registry query.

Yes, I was the founder and director of *Özgür Radio*. All my activities took place before everyone's eyes in public. Why didn't police search my home and work place right away if I were the member of Central Committee of an illegal organization? They made the search two weeks after my arrest, on Sept. 21st. There is no evidence in the dossiers linked to this search either.

Now, what is in these dossiers used as evidence against me? There were two documents. The main one was a few pages (seven pages to be exact) of computer outputs presented by the police. Supposedly, my name and last name was included at the bottom of these pages. That's all! Never mind the fact that there was no evidence showing that I prepared these pages, or no wet signature or fingerprints found to be belonging to me.

Police insists that they found these pages at the house in the village of Ocaklar, Nazilli and they were outputs of these computers owned by the illegal organization. How was this so called "evidence" collected? Even from the testimony of policemen at the court, it became very clear that these pages were not collected according to the protocol required by the law.

At the time of search, the highest official of the village, village headman, should have been present as a witness. However, the village headman came long after the search was complete and he was asked to sign a blanket document that indicated he has seen all the material.

My share of these seven pages included information on legal demonstrations and assessments of these events that took place in different cities of Turkey in 2005. In addition to these pages, there was another document which was made of numbers and again my name at the bottom. Total of seven lines! This document was used to charge me as the chief financial officer, which was made public on Nov. 1st, 2007.

As a result, bank accounts and/or assets belonging to me, my husband and close relatives were investigated. Even in February 2009 Anti-Terror Unit of Istanbul Police conducted an operation and arrested many people including accountant, office secretary, cleaning personnel and co-founder of *Özgür Radio*, as well as nephew of my husband, accountant of the newspaper where my husband worked, and some other people I did not even know.

All these accused were acquitted when taken to the court. At the moment, the case is before the High Court of Appeal. The prosecutor finds these two documents sufficient enough to declare me as a leader of an illegal organization and charges me with life without parole.

The following additional information about my past was also included in the file: I was detained and arrested in 1996, and released after the first hearing. The charges of aiding and abetting were dropped. One other time I was also detained after taking part in a press release on the massacre of prisoners at Ankara Ulucanlar Prison.

And here is the official version of the charges on page 226 of the indictment:

“...attempted to change the constitutional order by force; being an administrator and also the member of central committee; being responsible for the finances and legal activities of the illegal organization; therefore, being responsible as if a principle offender for all the crimes committed by the organization and its other members according to the Turkish Penal Code (TCK) 220/5 in connection with TCK 314/3.”

Yes, this is it! Nothing less, nothing more! I have been in prison for the last 6.5 years. Is this justice? So, neither police nor the prosecutor can provide any concrete evidence for my involvement of any illegal activity. Based on a document prepared by the police, I am first declared as the administrator of an organization and kept account able for the forceful activities of it.

I have tried to summarize the violent treatment I was exposed to and all the accusations brought against me by the prosecutor. On top of all these legal issues, I have been facing some health problems since my arrest: high blood pressure, hepatitis B, cysts in both breasts and increased myopia (from-2.5 to-5.0).

As if these were not enough, I was diagnosed with thyroid cancer and operated on November 13, 2012. I am on medication now. I don't even want to mention different types of joint problems I face due to being on concrete surface all the time.

For all the abovementioned reasons my detention no longer can be considered as a safety measure by the prosecution but it has become an EXECUTION! This injustice against me has to be made public and has to be reversed. All my rights have to be reconstituted. For this, I invite you individuals and/or organizations to show solidarity with me and be my voice out there, wherever you are in the world.

I would like to thank you all for your interest, empathy, and future support. My next hearing is on March 12, 2013 at 10th Heavy Penal Court in Caglayan, Istanbul. I hope to see some of you there.

Best regards and greetings to you all,  
Füsün ERDOĞAN  
My mailing address:  
Kapalı Kadin Hapishanesi A7  
Gebze-Kocaeli  
Turkey

## Attack on *Apple Daily* building in Hong Kong

One direct threat to media occurred in Hong Kong during the early hours of 12 January 2015. Assaultants threw small bombs at the *Apple Daily* building at Tsang Kwan O and at *Apple Daily* owner Jimmy Lai's home at Ho Man Tin in Kowloon. Following the attack, two burned-out cars were discovered in different parts of Hong Kong.

A few hours after the attack, a robber stole a large quantity of *Apple Daily* newspapers from a vendor in Hung Hom, Kowloon, before driving off. Police later discovered the thief in the car and opened fire on him when it was alleged that he was trying to run them over. One police officer was injured in the incident.

It is not the first instance in which *Apple Daily* and its staff have been threatened. At least four media workers were assaulted or received death threats in Hong Kong in 2014. This is also the third incident in which Jimmy Lai's residency has been attacked since 1993. No culprit has been found to date.

(Source: *International Federation of Journalists / IFJ website*)

## ***Charlie Hebdo* attacks: 'It's carnage, a bloodbath. Everyone is dead'**

Paris, eleven-thirty am. Corinne Rey, known as Coco, a cartoonist who works for the French satirical magazine *Charlie Hebdo*, had just picked up her daughter from a nearby crèche. 'When I got to the front door of the magazine's building with her, two masked and armed men threatened us – violently', she said. 'They wanted to get inside, go upstairs. I tapped in the entrance code... They spoke perfect French. They said they were from al-Qaida.'

The offices of *Charlie Hebdo* are at No 10 rue Nicolas Appert, one of an anonymous row of low-rise, low-rent buildings. The cracked cream facades are splashed with patches of fresher paint that cover the graffiti that is everywhere in this slightly scruffy corner of the 11th arrondissement.

The gunmen Rey admitted had been dropped off outside, carrying Kalashnikovs, by a third man in a black Citroën, registration number CW 518 XV, with dark-tinted windows. They knew their business, police said. They wore balaclavas and bulletproof vests. They held their weapons professionally. They 'moved calmly and appeared determined'.

They chose their moment, too. Wednesday morning is publication day for *Charlie Hebdo*, the occasion for the staff's weekly editorial conference. Inside the second-floor conference room, some 15 staff members – cartoonists, editors, writers – had gathered for the mid-morning meeting. Four of the magazine's most famous names were there: the cartoonists Cabu, Wolinski and Tignous, the magazine's editor since 2012 and the cartoonist Stéphane Charbonnier, known as Charb.

But witnesses to the bloodbath that was about to ensue said that once inside the building, the attackers seemed at first unsure where to go. According to tweets from Yves Cresson, who works for the media production company Bayoo next door to *Charlie Hebdo*, the two attackers initially walked into his offices.

‘At eleven twenty-five am, taking advantage of the postwoman, two armed men wearing balaclavas entered our offices’, he tweeted. ‘They were looking for *Charlie*’. Cresson said the men fired two bullets, which passed through a door and a window.

One witness told *Libération* they asked a receptionist which floor *Charlie Hebdo*’s offices were on. An unnamed woman who worked in an office on the second floor, across the corridor from *Charlie Hebdo*, told *France Info radio* that she and her colleagues had first heard ‘a big bang. Then someone just threw open the door to our office, in one move, and demanded to know where *Charlie Hebdo* was. He had a rifle. We backed away. After he left, we heard gunfire. We went to the windows: there were two men running, with guns... They were shouting outside, and shooting again’.

*(Source: The Guardian, Wednesday 7 January 2015)*

## Part 3

### Essential principles of ethical and objective journalism

According to the Society of Professional Journalists, the most distinguished organisation of professional Journalists in the United States of America, the four core principles of ethical journalism are the following:

- 1) Seek the truth and report it;
- 2) Minimize harm;
- 3) Act independently;
- 4) Be accountable and transparent

In addition to that, a professional journalist must try at all circumstances and by all means to remain unbiased and report solely what comes into her/his attention. If we would, therefore, try and create a definition of ethical and objective journalism that should include the following: ethical and objective journalism includes the core values one should have, in order to perform the duties of a journalist in the most professional way. If we were to elaborate further on those, a professional journalist should always be able to:

- a) Explain ethical choices and processes to audiences
- b) Encourage and not avoid a dialogue with these audiences and other parties directly related to her/his work
- c) Respond quickly to questions about accuracy, clarity and fairness
- d) Acknowledge mistakes and correct them promptly and prominently
- e) Explain corrections and clarifications carefully and clearly

At the same time, s/he should immediately expose unethical conduct in journalism, including journalistic trade organisations and act in accordance with the same high standards s/he expects from others. Does all this look and sound too theoretic? Maybe so, therefore let's try and make them more concrete by giving specific examples of what we should do and what we should avoid.

## **A. Corruption**

### **What it is**

Corruption is a phenomenon that does not need a lot of analysis. Adults from almost every part of the world have at least one example of it to relate. Needless to say that it has become a core obligation of journalists to identify sources of corruption and make them public. But what about corruption within media? Media and its servants are often described as a ‘mirror of society’, meaning that they cannot stay immune from the pathology each society suffers from. Thus, one of the main problems and challenges to tackle in both society and media is corruption. But what is it really corruption in media? Which journalists should be called ‘corrupt’ and why?

The answer to these questions is never simple. For almost everyone, corruption is the acceptance of a gift in return for a nice story or a simple trip offered and paid to the journalist by a private corporation. For most, it is the huge amounts of money provided to a media outlet through advertisement in order to prevent this media outlet from reporting against the advertiser.

While reporting about a corrupt system, state or other organisation/body, or ‘external corruption’, seems relatively simple, it is not. One should take into account the specific circumstances a journalist has to face by considering how democratic or authoritarian a government is, how developed the instruments of a civil society are, how effective are the means used to combat corruption.

It becomes even more challenging to report about corruption within the media profession, or ‘internal corruption’, for obvious reasons like fear of becoming unemployed and relationships with colleagues.

Both cases require a clear head, an objective attitude and absolute devotion to the aforementioned principles.

### **How to report**

#### **Reporting on external corruption**

A journalist must always apply the following tactics:

Recognise the need to serve as watchdogs over public affairs and government.

Ensure that the public’s business is conducted in the open, and that public records are open to all.

Provide context. Take special care not to misrepresent or oversimplify in promoting, previewing or summarising a story.

Gather, update and correct information throughout the life of a news story.

Identify sources clearly. The public is entitled to as much information as possible to judge the reliability and motivations of sources. In cases of anonymity, explain thoroughly why it was granted. It is contradictory to report about corruption and at the same time conceal information without significant reason.

Diligently seek subjects of news coverage to allow them to respond to criticism or allegations of wrongdoing.

Avoid undercover or other surreptitious methods of gathering information unless traditional, open methods will not yield information vital to the public.

Be vigilant and courageous about holding those with power accountable. Give voice to the voiceless.

Support the open and civil exchange of views, even views that s/he does not agree with.

Avoid stereotyping. Journalists should examine the ways their values and experiences may shape their reporting.

Provide access to source material when it is relevant and appropriate.

Never deliberately distort facts or context, including visual information.

Give more voice to the weak, misrepresented, corruption-affected and not to those who endorse corruption and try to justify themselves for using it.

## **Reporting on internal corruption**

The journalist should always keep in mind that her/his utmost primary obligation is to serve the public and not colleagues, friends or their employer. Therefore:

S/he should avoid conflicts of interest, real or perceived and disclose unavoidable conflicts.

At the same time, by all means refuse gifts, favours, any form of cash, free travel and special treatment, and avoid any other outside activities that may compromise integrity or impartiality, or damage her/his credibility.

Deny favoured treatment to advertisers, donors or any other special interests, and resist internal and external pressure to influence coverage.

Distinguish news from advertising and go against peculiar “hybrids” that blur the lines between the two. At the same sponsored content should be always labelled more than clearly.

## **Examples/Previous experience**

In early January 2015, the Balkan Investigative Reporting Network (BIRN) published a story about the way Elektroprivreda Srbije, the state owned electrical power company of Serbia, awarded a tender to renovate the Tamnava mine to a consortium with no prior experience in such operations, thus significantly increasing the overall cost. Serbian PM Aleksandar Vučić not only denounced the story as lie and BIRN journalists as liars, but accused the Network for receiving EU money to speak against the Serbian government. BIRN dismissed Vučić' allegations, claiming the report was 100% true, while the incident caused sharp statement from the EU which urged Serbian government not to stifle media criticism.

## **B. How to avoid and rectify mistakes**

### **What it is**

Mistakes are part of human nature, or better said, only those who do not work make none. A professional journalist, faced all the time with deadlines, pressure or doubts about the credibility of her/his sources is by default prone to plenty of mistakes. It does not matter if s/he is a news reporter, an editor-in-chief or a columnist. It is the way one deals with mistakes and their challenges that makes the difference between journalists.

The main reasons behind common and uncommon journalistic mistakes are:

- Lack of time for double-checking
- Too-tight deadlines
- Misleading/false information
- Pressure from superiors
- Too much confidence in own abilities and instinct
- Foul play

All but the last items in the previous list fall into the category of unintentional mistakes, while foul play happens when the journalist knows in advance that s/he is publishing incorrect information to intentionally create wrong impressions and/or to hurt an individual or an organisation. This kind of 'mistake' directly contravenes the core principles of the profession as described above and requires severe consequences. All others, no matter how serious, can be rectified and corrected.

### **How to avoid and correct mistakes**

First of all, the professional journalist should always have in mind that there are no real excuses for inaccurate or false information. The public, employers and colleagues might forgive a mistake, but will most likely will not forget easily. Therefore, it is always better not to report about something we are not one hundred per cent sure of.

Since mistakes will happen, it is good to know what to do in such cases. The first step is of course to acknowledge the mistake and correct it promptly and prominently. In addition, it is always necessary to explain the correction and clarify the story carefully and clearly. Should there be a request for publishing a reply, this must be granted promptly, without second thoughts and presented to its full extent with no additional comment.

### **Examples/Previous experience**

These are some examples of mistake correction according to the above principles:

#### *The New York Times*

‘An article on Sunday about the diplomatic life of J. Christopher Stevens, the American ambassador to Libya who was killed in an attack there last week, referred incompletely to an account Mr. Stevens gave of a meeting between Cécilia Sarkozy, then the wife of the French president, with the Libyan dictator Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi in 2007. While Mr. Stevens passed along gossip that said Qaddafi had opened his robes during the meeting and was naked underneath, the former Mrs. Sarkozy, now Mrs. Attias, says that Mr. Stevens was not at the meeting and that the anecdote he repeated is not true.

The article also misidentified the country in which Mr. Stevens served with a former diplomat, John Bell. They were in Egypt, not in Syria’.

(Sunday, 18 November 2012)

#### *The Guardian*

‘In an article about the numbers of gay members of the Conservative party, Evan Davis, the author, referred to remarks by Ben Fenton, the *FT* journalist. This was an error: Davis had intended to quote Ben Furnival, the former chairman of the lesbian, bisexual, gay and transgender group ParliOut. We are happy to point out that Fenton made no contribution to this article and that Davis would have had no reason to include him as Fenton is neither gay nor has he ever given any public indication of his political leanings. *The Guardian* regrets the error ‘.

(Glad to be Tory, 21 April 2012, page 37, Weekend)

#### *The Economist*

‘In “The value of a good editor” (January 7th), we unwittingly proved the point of the title by referring to Joshua Rosenthal of the University of Puerto Rico subsequently as ‘Ms Rosenthal’. The gender-identifying appellation had been intended for his colleague, Sandra Garrett. Apologies to both’.

*The Sun*

'*The Sun*'s reporting of the Hillsborough tragedy 23 years ago is without doubt the blackest day in this newspaper's history.

The Hillsborough Independent Panel's report into the disaster lays bare the disgraceful attempt by South Yorkshire Police to hide their culpability behind a smokescreen of lies.

It highlights a concerted campaign by senior officers to smear the innocent by fabricating lurid allegations about Liverpool fans - and then feeding them to the media.

But it is to the eternal discredit of *The Sun* that we reported as fact this misinformation which tarnished the reputation of Liverpool fans including the 96 victims.

Today we unreservedly apologise to the Hillsborough victims, their families, Liverpool supporters, the city of Liverpool and all our readers for that misjudgement.

The role of a newspaper is to uncover injustice. To forensically examine the claims made by those who are in positions of power.

In the aftermath of the Hillsborough tragedy we failed'.

*Note: the tabloid apologised in its front page on Thursday, 13 September 2012*

And an example of insufficient apology coming from a media giant like the *BBC* and its *Panorama of North Korea* TV broadcast

'Discovering stories in difficult or dangerous places is one of the *BBC*'s greatest strengths. There was a real public interest in making this programme in North Korea but, in the Trust's view, the *BBC* failed to ensure that all the young adults *Panorama* travelled with were sufficiently aware of any potential risks to enable them to give informed consent. This was a serious failing, and the *BBC* is right to apologise to the complainants'.

(Monday, 17 April 2014)

Although the station acknowledged the mistakes it made and apologised, it failed to do so on-air despite the fact that the failure occurred on its TV programme. Instead the apology was limited only in a short, written statement.

## **C. Reporting under the influence of ethnic, linguistic, political cultural and sport affiliation**

### **What it is**

Journalists, as part of a broader society, are also subject to ethnic, linguistic, political and other affiliations. This is something absolutely normal and they have every right to be affiliated with anything they wish. The problems start when this directly or indirectly affects their work. According to the principles of ethical and objective journalism, this is strictly not allowed. But how easy is it to avoid?

The main challenge, of course, is that the journalist has to distance her/himself from any affiliation. This is anything but easy. A person, for example, who learns at school that the neighbouring country always wanted to hurt hers/his is prone to report easily against everything that derives from this country. A journalist linked with a political party may find it hard not to express negative views about political concurrences, while a supporter of a sports team might also tend to report in its favour.

### **How to report**

It is obvious that a journalist cannot avoid ethnic and linguistic affiliation. A professional, nevertheless, must at all costs avoid political affiliation. Of course, it is a challenge to remain non-partisan.

S/he should therefore:

- Avoid conflicts of interest, real or perceived.
- Remain free of associations that may compromise integrity or damage credibility.
- Always disclose unavoidable conflicts of interest.
- Be vigilant and courageous about holding those with power accountable.
- Distinguish between advocacy and news reporting. Analysis and commentary should be labelled and not misrepresent fact or context.
- Recognise a special obligation to ensure that the public's business is conducted in the open and that government records are open to inspection.

Complete objectivity may be impossible, but impartiality should still be a primary goal. Even those who are paid to have opinions and not just to report, like columnists, editorial writers, talk show hosts, bloggers, should at least be aware of all relevant points of view and provide them to their readers or viewers.

The main performance indicator for journalists who cover political and/or sport developments should be impartiality. If they cannot be impartial, they should immediately ask to be relieved before committing faults that would compromise their own credibility and that of their employer. This does not mean that a journalist should go to the other extreme, avoiding even to vote. But, when credibility is at stake and in jeopardy here, impartiality is simply a *sine-qua-non*.

The same goes when it comes to issues related to families and close relationships, which create another set of ethical dilemmas. A journalist should at all costs refuse to cover any public activities of such persons. If not, it is very likely to end up with the ‘stigma’ of protectionism even without doing practically anything.

And what shall a journalist do when s/he is working in a newspaper/TV/radio/portal which has a clear political, sport or other affiliation? This is a tough question because not much can be done. A clear editorial policy, known to every employee and to the public, may resolve some of the issues that will occur, but not all of them. Media outlets should be encouraged to publicly endorse candidates or parties, if there is no other way. This is a practice commonly used in North America and relieves the burden a journalist has to carry. Letting readers/viewers know through endorsements which candidates share the newspaper’s vision is part of that discussion. What a professional journalist should do, though, is to take every appropriate opportunity to explain the difference between news and opinion.

Journalists’ unions must also play a crucial role here by pressing both their members and the employers to visibly apply similar standards, creating a healthy and fair working environment.

### **Examples/Previous experience**

#### *Good practice*

The editor/publisher of a Denver newspaper once told his employees not to attend a concert whose proceeds were being donated by the band to a candidate for the U.S. Senate. That applied to all employees, from newsroom to mailroom.

The in-house code of ethics of North American media like *NPR* and *ABC*. It forbids journalists to participate in marches and rallies which concern issues these media cover, meaning pretty much everything.

*Bad practice*

The way that state-controlled media like the *BBC* or *El Pais* reported about the referendums in Scotland and Catalonia.

The way that Greek media report about Turkey and the Republic of Macedonia. A unanimous voice is used by all mainstream media, condemning and naming almost anything that comes from these countries as provocative against Greece and/or Cyprus. Despite their political orientation, Greek media seem to adopt without reservation the official external policy of the Greek state.



## Part 4

### Challenges of new technologies

Technology today is completely different than in previous decades. Laptops, digital cameras and even miniature but high-quality cameras and smart phones, highly sophisticated technology and wireless internet enable reporters to send text, photos and video material from the front line of a battlefield in real time. New technology offers an immense advantage for today's war reporters, as well as reporters in general compared to only twenty years ago.

However, just like any technological advance, these have a downside as well. It is a lot easier to monitor journalists' activity, war reporters included. It is easier to unnoticeably control where they move, who they get to communicate with, which pieces of information they have stored in their laptops or phones. The result is that security and intelligence services, as well as other interested parties in possession of the necessary equipment (which is not always expensive or complicated to handle) can endanger a reporter or threaten him/her.

That is why the laptop or smart phone that you bring into a war zone should have as little confidential data as possible. Such data could harm you, your work and other people should it fall into the hands of someone malicious. All names, telephone numbers and other information indispensable for your work in the field should be written on a piece of paper if you cannot memorize it. If possible, it should be written in a code you yourself come up with, and stored in a hidden compartment in your backpack, clothes or shoes. The code can be simple, but it is essential that you are the one who created it.

For example, you can write down numbers in the following way: 0 can be a code for 1, 9 for 2 etc. Names can be written down as nicknames or, even better, as concepts that remind you of a particular person but that others find insignificant. For example, you could use "bingo" for someone who likes to place wagers or enter prize contests, "corner" for someone who lives on a corner etc. This will make both you and the people implicated through their contact with you safer. While this method might come across as primitive, it is very effective.

In any case, keep as little data in your war zone communication devices as possible. When you confirm that a report, or that important or confidential information you have sent was received, delete that information from your device. However, do keep some data on your

devices. Having no pictures, videos or documents to show, should you be asked, would make you suspicious. It is also possible to split the memory of your device in a way that makes part of its content is visible to everyone, and the rest accessible only with a special code. Latest versions of mobile operating systems (IOS and Android) allow users to encrypt information stored on their mobile devices with an additional high level of security.

In many countries, governments apply filtering systems to the Internet. During conflicts or mass protests or public rallies like those in Turkey's Gezi Park in 2013, the flow of information can be subject to heavy limitations.

Here are some ways to overcome web censorship:

### **Web Proxy Services**

Web proxy services are commonly used to hide your IP address as a means to surf the Web anonymously, thereby protecting your online privacy. Additionally, you can bypass internet filters and firewalls with a web proxy, enabling you to unblock sites such as YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter and so on, which are commonly blocked in some countries.

When you use a web proxy to access a site, the site that you visit will see the IP address of the proxy rather than the IP address of your computer, keeping you anonymous.

There are hundreds of free web proxy services that can provide you with these benefits. But there are security risks to using free web proxy services when browsing the Web.

When using a web proxy, any sensitive data that is transmitted through the proxy is not secure. Therefore, using a web proxy leaves you vulnerable to hackers stealing your passwords or other sensitive information.

You can look for more information [http://en.cship.org/wiki/Main\\_Page](http://en.cship.org/wiki/Main_Page) or, alternatively, turn to someone with more expertise than you to set up this service on your mobile devices.

### **VPN Services**

A VPN or Virtual Private Network is a network connection that enables you to create a secure connection over the public Internet to private networks at a remote location. With a VPN, all network traffic (data, voice, and video) goes through a secure virtual tunnel between the host device (client) and the VPN provider's servers and is encrypted.

VPN technology uses a combination of features such as encryption, tunnelling protocols, data encapsulation and certified connections to provide you with a secure connection to private networks and to protect your identity.

Over time, VPNs have evolved to provide the same level of secure communication between any devices on the internet. Today, using VPN is increasingly popular among jour-

nalists as a means to protect their privacy online, secure their browsing sessions and get unrestricted access to content or websites that are otherwise blocked or censored.

### **Tor Services**

Tor is a free software and an open network that helps you defend against traffic analysis, a form of network surveillance that threatens personal freedom and privacy, confidential business activities and relationships and state security. The simple way to use Tor is to download the Tor Browser, a self-contained web browser which provides everything you need to safely browse the Internet (<https://www.torproject.org/download/download-easy.html.en>).

New technologies are very helpful to journalists but also very challenging. For example, journalists who are working in war zones or report about any other kind of conflicts or natural catastrophes will have many different interests in mind. Those interests may be to hide cause of disaster, deaths or huge mistakes any kind or to hide tragic results of what happened. The situation is similar when it comes to investigative journalists who are keen to go in-depth while researching criminal cases or corruption. They can be a targets even if they are not present in conflict zones.

In all cases journalists must secure their communications with other journalists or sources. There are many techniques that enable media workers to avoid having their phones tapped and online communications intercepted.

Journalists must have special knowledge, skills and tools to protect their privacy. It is not easy to have all of that. Most journalists rely on specialists within the journalist community. Even specialized networks exists for that purpose. However, every journalist can use some simple tricks and tips to protect his/her communication.

For example, there are alternative email services used only by people who have decided to share communication space with each other. One of the tricks is ‘running’ an IP address which enables the user to appear to be working in different countries, while remaining in one location. Changing your IP address can help you to access webpages that are forbidden in some countries. Special software allows you to change from an official local IP address to an IP address in another country. Changing your IP address makes it hard for others to trace you as appear to switch locations. You are sitting for example in Germany, but your IP address makes it look as if you are in Canada, Nigeria, Italy and Romania.

Encrypted communication can also be used for emails and phone calls. There is no way to be absolutely protected from communication surveillance, but journalists must do what they can to avoid security problems.

### **Digital security**

As the Snowden case has shown, digital surveillance has become a real concern for civil society. Journalists in particular can be targeted by national and international authorities

or hackers. After highlighting the importance of personal security, we are now going to focus on digital security techniques and protocols that journalists should adopt to avoid putting themselves, their information and their sources at risk.

Be aware that you can be a potential target of digital surveillance especially if you are researching on sensitive topics such as:

- Terrorist acts and/or people or organizations related to them
- Organized crime activities like drug and weapon smuggling, money laundering and human trafficking
- Geopolitical issues such as those in conflict areas like Israel/Palestine, Ukraine, the Islamic State, Iraq or Syria
- Cases of potential war crimes

In these cases, someone might try to install an advanced and hard-to-detect software or hardware into your computer to log all your activities, like keystrokes or screenshots; it is even possible to use your computer to record what is happening in a room by using its internal microphone or video camera. Obviously, all these activities can be performed in smartphones or laptop computers too. Smartphones are the most vulnerable and dangerous tool to use because it may reveal:

- Internet communication, including the people you are talking to and the content of your conversations
- Telephone communication, including people you are talking to and the content of your conversations
- Geolocation, your physical location.

### **How to report/Practical advice and actions**

The first thing you can do is evaluate the resources you need to protect. These may include sources, collaborators, data, communication and yourself.

Then you must decide what behaviour to adopt to avoid or reduce the impact of digital surveillance activities.

Anonymity is key. The more anonymous you are the better you can move and the safer you are. Therefore you must learn to use tools that improve your invisibility.

One good way to do this is by using human and digital proxies, to ensure that you cannot be easily identified. For example, if you need to buy a computer for safe communication,

it is not wise to buy it yourself, especially on internet by using credit card. It is much better if all the tools that you need to buy can be purchased by a proxy person whom you trust and is not related to you.

Digital proxies are pieces of hardware and software that hide the IP address of your computer, which may be related to your identity, and encrypt the data you send by emails or other software of communication.

You must use different tools related to the threat level you assessed. Consider first the threat level, then the tools you will need.

*Low:* Firewalls, advanced antivirus, VPN (Virtual private Network) rootkit and Trojan scanners, Truecrypt/BitLocker, secure webmail services. Best to use Linux, Apple as second choice, Windows as last resource.

*Middle:* Live distro: Tails, Whonix, Truecrypt, Protonmail. Separated USB Hard Disk.

*High:* Dedicated computer that must be carried on you at all times to avoid hardware bugs, Live Distro, Mail encryption using GPG, Encrypted USB with all key data and Keywords. OTR or Cryptocat for live communications, TOR + end to end encryption.

(Source: *European University Institute e-learning modules: Investigative journalism, 2014*)

**Example:** Hackers attacked the Peščanik website (pescanik.net) in Serbia on several occasions in 2014. The multimedia portal faced heavy DDoS attacks right after publishing articles that revealed that some leading persons in Serbia plagiarized parts of several PhDs.

*Security in-a-box*, developed by the Tactical Technology Collective and Front Line, is a very good guideline for digital security. You can find a free online edition on [securityinabox.org](http://securityinabox.org) in different languages (English, German, Turkish, Russian, Italian, Spanish and many other languages).

The book covers the following topics: How to protect your computer from malware and hackers, How to protect your information from physical threats, How to create and maintain secure passwords, How to protect the sensitive files on your computer, How to recover from information loss, How to destroy sensitive information, How to keep your Internet communication private, How to remain anonymous and bypass censorship on the Internet.

The Introduction of this book says, '*Advocates are increasingly concerned about their digital security, and with good reason. While computers and the Internet can be extremely powerful tools for advocacy, they also expose groups (that may already be quite vulnerable) to new risks. As more advocates have begun to rely on digital technology to achieve*

*their outreach, data-collection, information design, communication and mobilisation objectives, these risks have become greater. If you are an advocate who focuses on sensitive issues, or you work closely with such people, then you have probably experienced (or heard stories about) digital security and privacy threats. Computers and backup drives that were confiscated, passwords that changed mysteriously, local websites that were hacked or overloaded by malicious Internet traffic, foreign websites that can no longer be accessed and emails that appear to have been forged, blocked, modified or read by someone other than the intended recipient. These are true stories, and many of them are set in an environment that makes matters even worse, one in which computer operating systems are frequently out-of-date, software is often pirated and viruses run rampant'.*

## Part 5

### General advice

#### **Protecting a media company from a terrorist/criminal attack**

Professional journalists and media can be targeted by threats or attacks even if they work far from a conflict zone. Media outlets in ‘peaceful countries’ have been targets of terrorist or criminal assaults or attacks during demonstrations.

Some general advice for media organisations:

1. Organise a security check for all persons that enter your newsroom or office. It does not always need to be expensive. It could be a security camera in front of the door and regularly checking who enters the office. Do not open the door to unknown persons. Have a special meeting room outside the secured area. Organise meetings with unknown persons and unknown sources out of the company building in a public place, like a café.
2. Be careful when opening packages and letters. Remember that letter bombs can always be sent to a media organisation. They can be made by an amateur, are dangerous and can kill. A bomb can be disguised as holiday or Christmas card, in a letter or a package. A book or some documents sent to a newsroom can include an explosive device. In most cases these letters contain plastic explosives. Even a normal letter can be used for an anthrax attack or some other form of bio-weapon. There is always a danger of receiving a radioactive package. Generally, measuring the radioactivity of every letter or package sent to a newsroom can be very useful. For example, letters containing anthrax spores were sent to several media offices and politicians in USA in 2001, killing five people and infecting 17. If you have any doubt about a letter, contact the police for a help.
3. Take every threat seriously. Inform the police about the threat. It is good also to inform the public, domestic journalist associations and press freedom and human rights groups, international press freedom and human rights organisations like SEEMO and IGOs like the OSCE and the COE.
4. A meeting with an unknown person or source out of the office should always be attended by two journalists. One journalist should meet the source and the colleague should be close to the meeting place to monitor what is happening, and call the police if necessary.

5. If possible have a system to automatically record all incoming phone calls.
6. Save all incoming emails and allow for the possibility of colleagues to access them in an emergency situation.
7. If any report in your media has provoked a negative reaction by a group or individual, contact international press freedom organizations, domestic journalist associations and police for advice.
8. Support other media by solidarity. If a media organization you know has a problem, report about the case. Copy details about reports, photos or cartoons that were attacked as problematic and help the media organization by distributing information about the case.
9. If you have a feeling that a report could provoke a dangerous reaction, for example by a local criminal group, organise its publication in cooperation with a media company outside your country. The foreign media should first publish the story, and you should quote that media as source. This can help in protecting your staff from threats. Criminals, of course, also have a good cross-border cooperation, but in most cases a local criminal group can more easily threaten a local journalist than a foreign media outlet.

### **Protection from intelligence services**

Journalists are very often the target of observation by intelligence services. In every country there are several active domestic intelligence services (civil, military and special by institutions like foreign ministry) and there are others from abroad. Some foreign agencies are active over diplomatic missions, some are directly active in a country with their own staff and in some countries there are official branches of foreign intelligence agencies and police institutions.

1. Remember this detail when you use your mobile phone or PC/laptop. Always use an additional laptop/PC with no internet connect (no w-lan connection) for work that should be protected from ‘other eyes’.
2. Be aware that every USB stick, even a new one, can have a special ‘spy software’. Similar software can be installed also on CD/DVD and other devices.
3. If you are contacted as a journalist by an intelligence service staff member, police officer or some other state representative for an ‘informative talk’ or with an ‘offer for cooperation’, use the power of media to inform the public what the state representative did. If you think that a meeting with this state representative can help you for getting some useful information, do not forget that you are a journalist. That means you can use every source that is available to you, but you should never share important information with these state representatives. This is especially true about information that could be used to destroy the life of another person.

Meet this state representative only in a public place. If possible, have a colleague with you that will observe the meeting from a distance. Never accept any payment or sign any documents. Never agree to work according to the wishes of a state representative. You should always stay independent, and during a meeting with a state official you should control the meeting. Do not give the state official a chance to control you or your work.

4. If you are travelling, be aware that a small camera could be in every hotel room. Today it is very easy to install a camera in a hotel room.

5. Do not leave any documents or your laptop in a hotel room, not even for five minutes, if you are just going to the reception. This time can be used by intelligence service staff members to copy what you have.

6. If you have a meeting, whether it is in a meeting room or a public place like a restaurant or café, remember every place can be under observation. There can be a person sitting next table to you, but you may also be recorded by a camera or microphone. The new generation of mobile phones offer the possibility of easily using a camera or recorder, so every talk you have can be recorded, sometimes also by a colleague.

7. A hotel safe is very easy to open in most cases. Do not leave any important documents in a hotel safe.

8. Your laptop and mobile phone should always be protected by a pin code or a password. There is no guarantee for protection from state officials like those working in intelligence services or some criminals, but at least it will take some additional time. Very often persons who might take information from you do not have time.

9. Use software that changes your IP address.

10. If necessary, use different mobile numbers and phones in your work.

### **Additional advice**

1. If you are travelling abroad carry two passports with you, if it is possible according to the laws in your country. Have one with you, and keep the other in a safe place.

2. If you go to a demonstration never carry the original of an important document with you. Take a copy if possible, and leave the document you have at home, in the office, hotel or other place where you stay. If you are out of your living or working place, keep all in a safe that belongs to the hotel reception or rent a safe in a bank if possible during your stay to keep important documents. If you are in contact with local media, keep all important documents you have in the office of your colleague.

3. Keep a copy of all documents you take with you at home, and if possible in a news-room. In a case of emergency you can easily have a copy sent by fax or scanned by email.

If possible have scanned copies of your important documents on an internet server or email server, so that you can access them easy. But do not forget that criminals, intelligence services and hackers can also have access to the copies that you keep it online.

4. Always carry an international press card with you. These cards are issued by IFJ and by SEEMO. Carry a press card issued by your media company or local journalist association with you.

5. Never wear the uniform of the police, military or other state institution if you are working as a journalist.

6. In some situations, it is good to make it clear that you are working as a journalist with 'PRESS' on your car, but sometimes it is better not to. Please check the political and criminal situation of the area or country you visit.

7. Do not to show live pictures of police S.W.A.T. in cases of hostage-taking or a suicide attempt. Avoid sensational coverage of suicides, hostage-taking, war, terrorism or criminal acts. Media reports can influence people to take their own lives, or to undertake terrorist or criminal activity, a phenomenon referred to as 'contagion'. You should always present the facts.

8. Never report the names of victims, and never identify any victim of a crime in any way unless that person comes forward and wishes to identify him/herself.

9. Do not use self-censorship. Speak about a problem or case where you have to use self-censorship with your colleagues and inform press freedom and journalists organisations.

10. If you are reporting under special conditions, like as a war reporter from one side of a conflict, or you are working as embedded journalist (news reporter being attached to military units involved in armed conflicts) or reporting on police activity with a police team, you must make this information clear in your report. The readers/listeners/viewers must know that your report was produced under special conditions and with some form of censorship. Do not forget that you can more easily be the target of an attack as part of this reporting.

11. If you are forced to leave a country for security reasons, contact foreign diplomatic representatives (embassies) for help. If you receive death threats and have no protection in your home country, please contact foreign diplomatic representatives, international press freedom and journalist organisations, or international organisations like the OSCE or the COE. Look into the possibility of being granted 'journalist asylum' abroad. Leaving a country in an emergency case for several months can often protect the life of a journalist. 'Impunity' means exemption from punishment or loss, or escape from fines and a failure to bring perpetrators of violations to justice. It very often takes root in countries with high levels of corruption or where members of the security forces, police, military or intelli-

gence services are protected by special jurisdictions or immunities in criminal, civil, administrative or disciplinary proceedings.

12. Check the legal system of the country where you are working. If you are working abroad, check the local laws and regulations. The law does not always ensure the protection of journalists and safety of journalists. Police do not always protect journalists who are attacked. Check if legal regulations can be used against you. Check if the state authorities in the country where you are working respect the confidentiality of journalists' sources. Check legal regulations on defamation, calumny, vilification, traducement, libel, slander, criminal defamation especially, but also the legal regulation of access to information and protection of privacy. Very often state security and anti-terrorism laws make the work of journalists difficult. Journalists must have access to officials, government spokespersons, public events and press events without discrimination, but very often this is not a case.

13. You should always know that when working as journalist, a threat can happen even under 'normal conditions'. Protect your family and yourself before they happen. Your family or friends can be the targets of threats because of your work. Do not put details about your home address, family members (especially children) or friends in public or on social media. Avoid private details and private photos on social media like Facebook, twitter or LinkedIn. Do not give your exact birthday in public, if possible, (for example you can write November 1950, but not the day). When you give to someone your contact information, give always the address and phone number of your newsroom, not a private address or phone number.

14. Journalists who regularly work in high-threat locations or as war reporters are more at risk of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). According to different studies up to thirty to forty per cent of war correspondents may suffer from PTSD throughout their lives. One good contact for more information about PTSD is the Dart Center for Journalism and Trauma, a project of the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism. The Dart Center is dedicated to informed, innovative and ethical news reporting on violence, conflict and tragedy. More about PTSD can be found in the guidelines for organisations whose staff work in high-risk environments: <http://www.ukpts.co.uk/site/assets/UKPTS-Guidance-Document-120614.pdf>



## Part 6

### Additional documents and publications

1. UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the issue of Impunity <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/freedom-of-expression/safety-of-journalists/un-plan-of-action/>. This plan was endorsed by the UN Chief Executives Board on 12 April 2012. The Plan was prepared during the 1st UN Inter-Agency Meeting on this issue, convened by the Director General of UNESCO at the request of the Intergovernmental Council of the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC). Resolution of the UN General Assembly on the Safety of journalists and the issue of impunity was adopted on 18 December 2013.
2. Resolution Safety of journalists and the issue of impunity from 2013 <http://www.mfa.gr/missionsabroad/images/stories/missions/un/journalists.pdf>
3. OSCE Safety of Journalists Guidebook <http://www.osce.org/fom/85777>
4. Human Rights Council - The safety of journalists [http://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/HRC/27/L.7](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/HRC/27/L.7)
5. CPJ Journalist Security Guide <https://cpj.org/reports/2012/04/journalist-security-guide.php>
6. Information security for journalists by The Centre for Investigative Journalism <http://www.tcij.org/resources/handbooks/infosec>
7. UNESCO - Safety of journalists <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/freedom-of-expression/safety-of-journalists/>
8. Report on Digital and Mobile Security for Mexican Journalists and Bloggers <https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/Digital%20and%20Mobile%20Security%20for%20Mexican%20Journalists%20and%20Bloggers.pdf>
9. Digital Security and Journalists by the Internews Center for Innovation & Learning [http://www.internews.org/sites/default/files/resources/Internews\\_PK\\_Secure\\_Journalist\\_2012-08.pdf](http://www.internews.org/sites/default/files/resources/Internews_PK_Secure_Journalist_2012-08.pdf)

10. Security for journalists: <https://source.opennews.org/en-US/learning/security-journalists-part-two-threat-modeling/>

11. Mapping, digital and mobile security for journalists and bloggers  
<http://www.icfj.org/our-work/mapping-digital-and-mobile-security-journalists-and-bloggers>

12. Online security for journalists: never assume you're secure  
<http://onlinejournalismblog.com/2013/02/06/online-security-for-journalists-never-assume-youre-secure/>

13. News Innovation Platform <http://www.ipinewsinnovation.org/>

14. Advanced digital security for journalists  
<http://www.kbridge.org/en/advanced-digital-security-for-journalists/>

## Part 7

### Country advice

There is no country where pressure on journalists does not exist. In each one there is some kind of pressure on the safety of newsmen. This pressure can be exerted by legal regulations or directly from a person or group; for example, business persons, criminal, mafia, companies, religion groups, prison officers, police officers, intelligence service members, politicians, other public persons, and unknown individuals, like the first neighbour who is not happy with a fact that a journalist has reported about a case.

#### Contacts in case of emergency:

In case of a threat/attack journalist should contact:

Local journalists association;  
 Additional important local press freedom organisation/local press freedom monitoring group;  
 Police;  
 Ministry of Internal Affairs;  
 Legal experts/lawyers;  
 Lawyer association

#### Other important contacts:

##### **Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media**

Wallnerstrasse 6  
 1010 Vienna, Austria  
 Office: +43 1 514 36 6800  
 Fax: +43 1 514 36 6802  
[pm-fom@osce.org](mailto:pm-fom@osce.org)

##### **South East Europe Media Organisation (SEEMO)**

[www.seemo.org](http://www.seemo.org)  
[info@seemo.org](mailto:info@seemo.org)

**IFEX**

Members of IFEX [https://www.ifex.org/our\\_network/](https://www.ifex.org/our_network/). IFEX was created in 1992 in Montréal, Canada, when a dozen leading free expression organisations came together to create a coordinated mechanism to rapidly expose free expression violations around the world.

**Europol**

<https://www.europol.europa.eu/>

**Interpol**

<https://www.europol.europa.eu/>

**Media Support**

<http://www.mediasupport.org>

**International News Safety Institute (INSI)**

<http://www.newssafety.org/home>

## Notes about authors

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Radomir Ličina is one of the founders and owners of *Danas*, the independent political daily from Belgrade, Serbia. He has more than forty five years of journalistic experience at former Yugoslavian dailies *Borba* and *Naša Borba* and in Serbia. As a journalist and editor, he reported from different European, South Asian and Middle Eastern countries as well as the United States. Besides his work for the Serbian media, he contributed numerous reports, commentaries, analyses and interviews to various media in the region and the world. Mr. Ličina has participated in a range of regional and international events and forums dealing with press freedom and cooperation among media workers. He initiated the South East Europe Media Organisation (SEEMO), together with Oliver Vujovic, and is one of the Founders of the South East Europe Media Organisation.

### **Saša Leković**

Freelance investigative journalist and trainer, Croatia

Saša Leković has worked as a professional journalist since 1979. He has been a freelance journalist, running non-governmental, non-profit organization Investigative Journalism Center/IJC ([www.cin-ijc.com](http://www.cin-ijc.com)), based in Zagreb (Croatia) but active all over the South East Europe since 2003. Mr. Leković is a reporter and editor/mentor as well as licensed investigative reporting trainer and lecturer. He has worked with hundreds of journalists and journalism students, mostly in SEE countries as well as in Armenia and Nigeria. Mr. Leković teaches investigative journalism students at VERN (Zagreb) and as part of the Faculty of Media and Communications at Singidunum University (Belgrade, Serbia). Mr. Leković is an advisor in the South East Europe Media Organisation (SEEMO).

### **Georgios (Jorgos) Papadakis**

Journalist, Greece

Georgios (Jorgos) Papadakis started his journalistic career on *Antenna TV* and *Radio* in Thessaloniki, Greece. His later professional assignments included work in various countries for Greek, regional and international media such as the newspapers *Express* and *Eleftherotypia*, the Macedonian news portal MKD.mk, the *Eurolang* news agency and many more. He is currently Director of Communications of the *European Free Alliance* ([www.e-f-a.org](http://www.e-f-a.org)) and a columnist for minority newspaper *Nova Zora* (Macedonian) and

*Trakyanin Sesi* (Turkish) in Greece. Mr. Papadakis is a spokesperson for the UNDP, and his communications career includes working for private companies in Greece and abroad, extensive public relations engagements and advisory positions. He has also served as SEEMO Board member and Special Advisor to the SEEMO Secretary General on Minority Media.

**Sladana Matejević**

Sladana Matejević has worked on different projects with SEEMO since 2000.