



**LEGAL**



**Topic:** Establishing international laws and guidelines in order to protect the journalists officiating in conflict zones and on dangerous fields

**Committee:** GA6 - The Sixth Committee (LEGAL)

**Name:** Bahri Çağrı TOYGAR

**Position:** Deputy Chair

## **A. Welcome Letter from the Student Officer**

Greetings,

I am Bahri Çağrı Toygar, a student from The Koç School and I will be serving as your Deputy Chair for this year's Kabatas Model United Nations! It is my great pleasure to tell you that having the opportunity to attend a Model United Nations (MUN) conference is extremely valuable and I am thrilled on your behalf to be a part of this event. This year in LEGAL of the United Nations (UN) you are going to be delegates of a plethora of countries and endeavor to tackle the most pressing issues of our contemporary globalized world. Feel free to approach me during the entirety of the duration of the conference.

You can contact me via the email address:

[cagrit2027@stu.koc.k12.tr](mailto:cagrit2027@stu.koc.k12.tr).

## **B. Introduction to the Committee**

LEGAL is the Sixth Committee of the United Nations General Assembly (GA) and serves an integral purpose in the quintessential presence of the United Nations. As stipulated in the UN Charter, the General Assembly of the UN has been charged with supporting the steady growth of public international law. The General Assembly is able to "start studies and make recommendations for the purpose of promoting international co-operation in the political field and encouraging the progressive development of international law and its codification" as per Article 13 of the Charter. This section has been interpreted in practice over time as granting broad authority to draft new treaties covering a wide variety of topics, adopt them, and suggest them to nations for signature. Depending on subject matter of the talks, other bodies of the UN host international law-making actions but the Sixth Committee is typically the committee for discussions concerning general international law.

### **C. Introduction to the Agenda Item**

There are several major dangers that journalists who work in risky or conflict areas are faced with. These risks jeopardize their safety and prevent the media from becoming freer, hence resulting in a collapse of the system of valid information. Since the information delivered by the on-site journalists are extremely consequential, it can be evidently seen that the dangers that the journalists face in war zones have an extremely detrimental effect to the information shown to the general public. These dangers that the journalists of the world face in conflict areas include murder, kidnappings, threats, and targeted violence, which are frequently carried out by criminal organizations, state actors, and illicit businesses. This demonstrates that some states also engage in corrupt actions and endeavor to silence the true information being leaked outside of their country or their administration. Inconsistent national legal protections and a lack of implementation of international humanitarian law increase the threats they experience.

### **D. Key Terms**

**Conflict Zone:** Conflict zone refers to war or political instability that disrupts essential services such as housing, transportation, communication, sanitation, water, and health care which requires the response of people outside of the community affected.

**Press Freedom:** Freedom of the press is the principle that communication and expression through media is a fundamental right. Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states: “Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.”

**Impunity:** Freedom from punishment or from the unpleasant results of something that has been done

**Hostile Environment Training:** Hostile Environment Awareness training (HEAT) is a form of high fidelity stress exposure training that combines theory with high-stress and highly realistic simulation training. This is a well-researched concept in the field of psychology that is commonly used to train people working in high stress environments, like airline pilots and first responders.

**Geneva Conventions:** The Geneva Conventions are a series of international treaties concluded in Geneva between 1864 and 1949. Two additional protocols to the 1949 agreement were approved in 1977. The conventions are intended to ameliorate the effects of war on soldiers and civilians.

**Non-State Actors:** The term non-state actors is a superordinate concept that covers all those actors in international relations that are not states. It comprises individuals (Individuals in International Law) as well as entities, the latter spanning a large range of organizations and institutions on the global, regional, sub-regional as well as the local levels.

**Universal Jurisdiction:** Universal jurisdiction refers to the idea that a national court may prosecute individuals for serious crimes against international law, such as crimes against humanity, war crimes, genocide, and torture, based on the principle that such crimes harm the international community or international order itself, which individual States may act to protect. Generally, universal jurisdiction is invoked when other, traditional bases of criminal jurisdiction are not available, for example: the defendant is not a national of the State, the defendant did not commit a crime in that State's territory or against its nationals, or the State's own national interests are not adversely affected. National courts can exercise universal jurisdiction when the State has adopted legislation recognizing the relevant crimes and authorizing their prosecution. Sometimes this national legislation is mandated by international agreements, such as the Convention Against Torture and Inter-American Convention to Prevent and Punish Torture, which require States parties to adopt the laws necessary to prosecute or extradite any person accused of torture who is within the State party's territorial jurisdiction.

**Rapid Response Mechanisms:** The Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM) is designed to monitor humanitarian action, conduct multisector assessments (MSAs) of needs and to implement several types of emergency responses, including distributions of essential non-food items (NFIs) and high emergency biscuits (HEBs), emergency water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) interventions, as well as cash transfer programming (CTP).

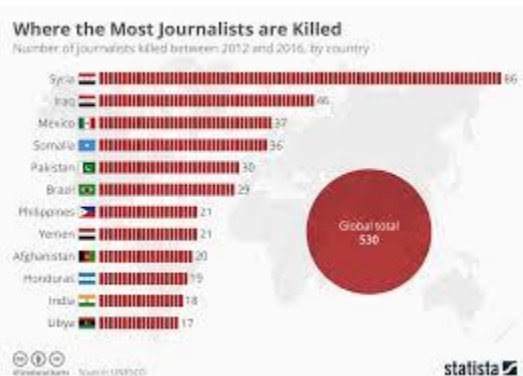
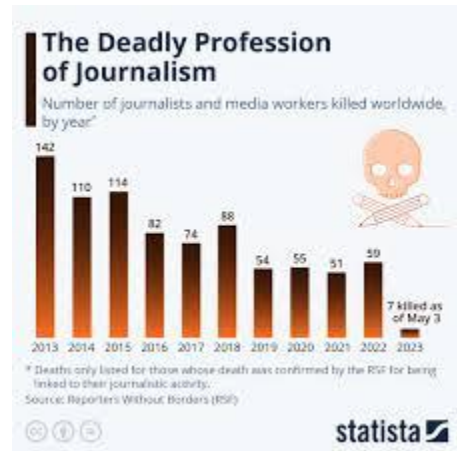
**News (Media) Blackout:** News blackout a situation in which a government or other authority imposes a ban on the publication of news on a particular subject.

**Embedded Journalism:** Embedded journalism is the practice of placing journalists within and under the control of one side's military during an armed conflict. Embedded reporters and photographers are attached to a specific military unit and permitted to accompany troops into combat zones. Embedded journalism was introduced by the U.S. Department of Defense during the Iraq War (2003–11) as a

strategic response to criticisms about the low level of access granted to reporters during the Persian Gulf War (1990–91) and the early years of the Afghanistan War (which began in 2001).

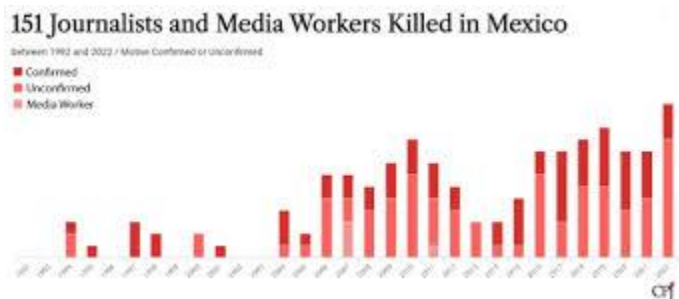
## E. General Overview

Reporters Without Borders estimates that 50 journalists lost their lives in 2022, the majority of them in conflict areas including Syria, Afghanistan, and Mexico. Journalists are frequently utilized as players in military and political discussions, and kidnappings and abductions are also frequently occurring on a global basis. For example, in 2012, American journalist James Foley was kidnapped in Syria and held captive by ISIS for close to two years that resulted with his execution by the organization. Another instance was Journalist Mohamed Ibrahim Rageh was abducted and held hostage in Somalia by Al-Shabaab



terrorists, who have a history of attacking journalists in an effort to silence opposing views and instill fear. There is an extensive amount of harassment and intimidation of journalists, both online and off, with the intention of silencing their information and preventing them from covering particular stories. Particularly female journalists experience threats and violence based on their gender. Because of the pressure that the journalists face in the

conflict areas while persistently endeavoring to provide the public with news and information demonstrate an imperative need to acknowledge the governmental pressure that the occupation faces.



## F. Timeline of Key Events

Date	Description of the Event
August 19, 2014	The video of the execution of James Foley was released by the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS).
April 5, 2015	The United Nations condemns the murder of Journalist Mohamed Ibrahim Rageh
September 2, 2014	The video of the execution of American journalist Steven Sotloff was released.

## G. Major Parties Involved

### a. Syria:

Syria is one of the most dangerous countries for journalists due to the ongoing civil war. Numerous journalists have been killed, kidnapped, or injured by various factions, including government forces and militant groups.

### b. ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria):

ISIS has been responsible for the execution of journalists in territories it controls particularly in Syria and Iraq. ISIS' savage actions have made these areas extremely threatening for the media and journalists.

### c. Taliban:

The Taliban in Afghanistan have targeted journalists through threats, kidnappings, and killings, especially those reporting on human rights abuses and the conflict of the Taliban authorities.

### d. Al-Shabaab:

Al-Shabaab is a Somali militant group that primarily targets journalists that publish news related to the wrongdoings of the Somali state. Al-Shabaab has been responsible for numerous attacks and killings of journalists in Somalia.

## **H. Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue**

The United Nations (UN) has endeavored to find solutions to the most pressing issue of the harm that the journalists face in conflict areas. Particularly, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) along with its permanent and temporary members has produced resolutions and reports that include decisions regarding the protection of journalists in conflict areas. The Resolution 2222 of the United Nations Security Council portrays a conspicuous picture of the obstacles that are encountered by journalists and includes operative clauses that dictate actions. Preambulatory clauses (facts by the committee) in the resolution include the acknowledgement and the borderlines of the issue. It can be discussed, however, whether or not the member states and the United Nations have achieved the aim of the Resolution 2222 fully as prosecutions, murders, assassinations and oppression against journalists persist.

Additionally, the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) was founded in an attempt to conceptualize and tangibly comprehend the issues faced by the journalists. The organization provides a space for the community to advocate for the rights of these journalists while serving as a prominent player in the solution of the issue.

Moreover, UNESCO has played a significant part in advancing the security of writers and combatting exemption for violations against them. UNESCO underpins a wide extent of activities pointed at moving forward the security of writers, counting awareness-raising campaigns, preparing programs, and backing endeavors. These collective endeavors emphasize the continuous commitment to tending to the security and assurance of writers, emphasizing the need for supported and facilitated activity to successfully defend the lives and rights of writers around the world.

### **I. Relevant UN Treaties, Resolutions and Events**

*IV Geneva Convention Relative to The ...*,

[www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/documents/atrocities-crimes/Doc.33\\_GC-IV-EN.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/documents/atrocities-crimes/Doc.33_GC-IV-EN.pdf). Accessed 7 June 2024.

*S/RES/2242 (2015)*,

[www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s\\_res\\_2242.pdf](http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_res_2242.pdf). Accessed 7 June 2024.

*UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity* | Ohchr, [www.ohchr.org/en/safety-of-journalists/un-plan-action-safety-journalists-and-issue-impunity](http://www.ohchr.org/en/safety-of-journalists/un-plan-action-safety-journalists-and-issue-impunity). Accessed 7 June 2024.

UN, [documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n06/681/61/doc/n0668161.doc?token=6HZhtGmwvQLw2YvflC&fe=true](http://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n06/681/61/doc/n0668161.doc?token=6HZhtGmwvQLw2YvflC&fe=true). Accessed 7 June 2024.

“UN, United Nations, UN Treaties, Treaties.” *United Nations*, United Nations, [treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg\\_no=IV-4&chapter=4&clang=\\_en](http://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=IV-4&chapter=4&clang=_en). Accessed 7 June 2024.

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*Unesdoc.Unesco.Org*, [unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000260893](http://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000260893). Accessed 7 June 2024.

## **J. Possible Solutions**

The responsibility of the General Assembly Sixth Committee (GA6) is to constitute legal grounds for the possible solutions for the issue at hand. The committee intends to contribute to the international law, international jurisdiction practices and, evidently, the preservation of the international human rights norms. Consequently, the delegates should aim to find solutions and write resolutions related to the legal protection of journalists in conflict areas. It is also important to acknowledge the need of humanitarian aid in those regions, however the delegates have a duty to avoid writing clauses that center primarily upon the aid provided. Instead, the committee should focus on direct solutions related to international law and national jurisprudence of certain countries that deal with terrorism whilst pursuing a counter-terrorism agenda. The core reason of the suffering of the journalists as well as the international community is the conflicts themselves, hence the consequential aim of eradicating the effects and presence of the war zones and conflicts should be accounted for. A possible solution to the issue would be amending the international law practices to increase the level of protection that journalists face during the duration that they pursue this profession.

Solutions regarding the acknowledgement of the Geneva Conventions can also be implemented through various discussion between delegates and countries. The support for more activities conducted by the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) can also be encouraged by due deliberation. The fact is



that the journalists are victims of the conflicts and profit wars between states as well as intragovernmental oppressions. The delegates should aim to address the oppression whilst also endeavoring to diminish the lack of attention to the issue.

Extending on the methodologies to upgrade the security of writers, the Common Get together 6th Committee (GA6) ought to prioritize the improvement and usage of comprehensive legitimate systems that particularly address the one of a kind dangers confronted by writers in struggle zones and perilous areas. This could be accomplished by drafting unused universal arrangements or revising existing ones to guarantee more grounded and more enforceable assurances for writers. Delegates ought to perform in exhaustive dialogues and transactions to distinguish holes in current legitimate systems and propose particular corrections or increases to improve the security and rights of writers.

Moreover, the Common Gathering 6th Committee (GA6) ought to energize Part States to completely follow and execute the arrangements of the Geneva Traditions and other pertinent worldwide helpful law disobedient concerning the assurance of civilians, counting writers, amid outfitted clashes. Delegates should consider components for the indictment of people or substances mindful of assaults, dangers, or other shapes of viciousness against writers. This may incorporate supporting the foundation of specialized worldwide tribunals or the referral of cases to the Worldwide Criminal Court (ICC) for examination and indictment.

## **K. Further Reading**

*Coe*, [rm.coe.int/safety-implementation-guide-en-16-june-2020/16809ebc7c](https://rm.coe.int/safety-implementation-guide-en-16-june-2020/16809ebc7c). Accessed 7 June 2024.

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[www.osce.org/files/f/documents/8/b/254526.pdf](https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/8/b/254526.pdf). Accessed 7 June 2024.

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[www.icrc.org/en/doc/assets/files/other/irrc\\_853\\_gallois.pdf](https://www.icrc.org/en/doc/assets/files/other/irrc_853_gallois.pdf). Accessed 7 June 2024.

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*News Blackout Definition and Meaning* | *Collins English Dictionary*, [www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/news-blackout](http://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/news-blackout). Accessed 7 June 2024.

“Non-State Actors.” *Oxford Public International Law*, [opil.ouplaw.com/display/10.1093/law:epil/9780199231690/law-9780199231690-e1445](http://opil.ouplaw.com/display/10.1093/law:epil/9780199231690/law-9780199231690-e1445). Accessed 7 June 2024.

Prasad, A N, and P L Prasad. “Children in Conflict Zones.” *Medical Journal, Armed Forces India*, U.S. National Library of Medicine, Apr. 2009, [www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4921424/#:~:text=Conflict%20zone%20refers%20to%20war,being%20waged%20around%20the%20world](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4921424/#:~:text=Conflict%20zone%20refers%20to%20war,being%20waged%20around%20the%20world).

“Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM): Central African Republic, Monthly Factsheet #6 (01 - 30 June 2023) - Central African Republic.” *ReliefWeb*, 19 July 2023, [reliefweb.int/report/central-african-republic/rapid-response-mechanism-rrm-central-african-republic-monthly-factsheet-6-01-30-june-2023#:~:text=The%20Rapid%20Response%20Mechanism%20\(RRM,emergency%20water%2C%20sanitation%20and%20hygiene%20\(](http://reliefweb.int/report/central-african-republic/rapid-response-mechanism-rrm-central-african-republic-monthly-factsheet-6-01-30-june-2023#:~:text=The%20Rapid%20Response%20Mechanism%20(RRM,emergency%20water%2C%20sanitation%20and%20hygiene%20()

*Resolution 2222*, [unscr.com/en/resolutions/doc/2222](http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/doc/2222). Accessed 7 June 2024.

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[www.unesco.org/en/safety-journalists](http://www.unesco.org/en/safety-journalists).

"Universal Jurisdiction." *International Justice Resource Center*, 27 Feb. 2021,  
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