

## WAN-IFRA Board Press Freedom Resolution – Mexico

The Board of the World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers (WAN-IFRA), meeting in Estoril, Cascais, Portugal on 6<sup>th</sup> June 2017, on the occasion of the 70<sup>th</sup> World News Media Congress, reiterates its call on the Mexican authorities to take urgent, resolute action to end the cycle of violence that continues to target journalism in the country, and urges the incoming administration to prioritise the safety and security of journalists nationwide.

The Board of WAN-IFRA notes with dismay that Mexico remains one of the most dangerous countries for the practice of journalism in the world, and that the Mexican State has consistently failed to take the necessary steps to reduce impunity in instances of attacks against journalists.

The Board acknowledges that while important steps towards solving the March, 2017 murder of reporter Miroslava Breach have been made, the vast majority of crimes against journalists remain unsolved.

One year after Sinaloa-based reporter Javier Valdez was gunned down in broad daylight outside of his office at the newsmagazine Riodoce, the Board of WAN-IFRA notes that the authorities have so far only arrested one of the perpetrators and have yet to file charges or detain those who planned the killing.

The Board recognises the tragic sacrifice of the 11 journalists who were killed in Mexico in 2017, as well as the four professionals who have been killed so far in 2018.

Furthermore, the Board of WAN-IFRA stresses that the killing of journalists represents only the deadly tip of an ever-growing iceberg in Mexico, with more than 400 individual types of attack (physical, digital, psychological and legal) having been documented over the last year. The Board is also concerned that the 2018 electoral process has increased forms of intimidation against the media.

The Board of WAN-IFRA refers to its communication of May, 2017 in which it alerted outgoing President Enrique Peña Nieto, to the growing reality that institutions dedicated to the protection of press freedom were insufficient and systematically failing to address the relentless nature of attacks against journalists – attacks originating not only from organised crime, but also federal and local authorities. Regretfully, the Board of WAN-IFRA acknowledges that this situation has not improved.

The Board once again urges the Mexican government to do more in its efforts to end the impunity for those who silence journalists and to rid the country of the pervasive mentality that believes intimidating an editor or a reporter carries no consequence. It calls on the new administration, due to be elected in just a few weeks, to make better use of the channels of communication that have been opened between Mexican government officials, publishers and editors of news organisations affiliated with WAN-IFRA, and sincerely hopes this process can contribute to meaningful change.