

Journalist killings up by 50% in 2022

By  Karabo Ledwaba

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One journalist is killed every four days tallying up to 86 deaths in 2022. This is according to a recent report by [The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation \(Unesco\)](#) which looked at the killings of journalists in 2022 which have gone up by 50% from previous years.



Source: www.unsplash.com

“After several years of consecutive declines, the steep rise in the number of journalists killed in 2022 is alarming. Authorities must step up their efforts to stop these crimes and ensure their perpetrators are punished, because indifference is a major factor in this climate of violence,” said Unesco director-general Audrey Azoulay.

Latin America and Caribbean crisis

Latin America and the Caribbean have been the most affected areas with 44 killings in 2022.

“Asia and the Pacific registered 16 killings, while 11 were killed in Eastern Europe. The deadliest individual countries were Mexico (19 killings), Ukraine (10) and Haiti with nine,” states the report.

One prominent killing was of *Al Jazeera*’s veteran journalist Shireen Abu Akleh who was shot by Israeli forces in the

occupied West Bank. Her colleague Ali al-Samoudi survived after being shot in the shoulder.

In October Pakistani journalist Arshad Sharif was shot and killed by Kenyan police. A fact-finding team from Pakistan travelled to Kenya and wrote a 600 page [report](#) claiming it was a pre-planned murder.

Thousands killed over two decades

According to [Reporters Without Borders](#) 1,668 journalists have been killed in the past 20 years.

“The annual death tolls peaked in 2012 and 2013 with 144 and 142 journalists killed, respectively. These peaks, due in large measure to the war in Syria, were followed by a gradual fall and then historically low figures from 2019 onwards,” it states.



Journalist imprisonments highest recorded in years

15 Dec 2022



In the past 20 years the most killings were seen in Iraq and Syria with 578 journalists dead. They are closely followed by Afghanistan, Yemen, Palestine and Somalia.

“Russia continues to be Europe’s deadliest country for the media, with the biggest number of journalists killed during the past 20 years. Since Vladimir Putin took over, Russia has seen systematic attacks on press freedom – including deadly ones – as RSF has repeatedly reported. They include Anna Politkovskaya’s high-profile murder on 7 October 2006,” states the report.

Eight journalists have been killed in Ukraine since the Russian invasion in February, while 12 had died in the previous 12 years.

“France ranks as the fourth deadliest European country as a result of the massacre at the satirical weekly *Charlie Hebdo* in Paris in 2015,” it states.

“Countries where no war is officially taking place are not necessarily safe for reporters and some of them are near the top of the list of those where killings have occurred. In fact, more journalists have been killed in “zones at peace” than in “zones at war” during the past two decades, in most cases because they were investigating organised crime and corruption.”

Journalists also continue to be prosecuted by governments across the world. According to the [Committee to Protect Journalists](#) 363 journalists are currently imprisoned.

ABOUT KARABO LEDWABA

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