



COMMUNITY  
OF DEMOCRACIES

## Statement by the Secretary General Thomas E. Garrett on the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists

The right for the press to collect, report and disseminate information, news and opinion is one of the principles enshrined in the Warsaw Declaration – the founding document of the Community of Democracies. Today, journalists and media workers around the world are increasingly silenced for bringing news and information to the public; the recent murder of investigative journalist Daphne Caruana Galizia is a stark reminder of this alarming and unacceptable trend.

Crimes against journalists, with increasing special risks towards female journalists, constitute one of the major threats to press freedom. Free and uncensored media are vital to ensure freedom of opinion and expression – one of the core human rights and an anchor of democracy.

To address the lack of sufficient protection for journalists, the Community of Democracies' Working Group on Promoting Freedom of Opinion and Expression has recently developed a *Toolkit on the Safety of Journalists for the Personnel of the Diplomatic Missions*. The Toolkit has been created to help ensure that adequate support and effective protection from harm is provided to journalists around the world. It provides various options and solutions from which diplomatic representatives of the world's democracies can choose when developing an approach tailored to local context and needs.

Today we are joining the global community in commemorating the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists. While the safety of journalists and the issue of impunity have been acknowledged by the international community, much remains to be done to prevent these crimes and to hold perpetrators accountable. Journalism should not and cannot be a life-threatening occupation – free and independent media are needed to ensure the right to freedom of opinion and expression for all.