PRESS INFORMATION
THE EUROPEAN UNION DELEGATION TO AFGHANISTAN
THE EUROPEAN UNION SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE IN AFGHANISTAN

2016 the bloodiest year ever for Afghan journalists and media

Kabul, 19 January 2016

Yesterday, the 6-months report from the Afghan Journalists Safety Committee (AJSC) was publicised highlighting that 2016 was the bloodiest year ever for journalists and media in Afghanistan. 13 journalists were killed, a figure that is unprecedented. Threats are posed by a variety of groups, including government officials, but the changed Taliban policy towards journalists and media is the main driver behind the increase in the violence against journalists. The deliberate targeting of media reflected in the figures show that Taliban are responsible for 10 of the 13 killed journalists.

"Freedom of the Media is key to any democracy – critical media holds government and administration accountable, ensures transparency in society and gives ordinary Afghan citizens a voice. We urge all parties to the conflict in Afghanistan to do their utmost to protect journalists and provide them with a safe and secure working environment", said European Union Special Representative to Afghanistan, Ambassador Franz-Michael Mellbin.

Of 101 cases recorded, 51 cases of threats and violence against journalists were caused by government officials making the government responsible for 50,5% of the cases. Taliban account for 22,8%, unidentified persons and local powerful individuals have been involved in the rest of the cases.

"It is alarming that the Government continues to be responsible for so many cases. The Government should do its utmost to bring perpetrators of threats, attacks and killing of journalists to justice. Attacks on the Media must be stopped", said Ambassador Mellbin."

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