



**IN MESSAGE FOR WORLD PRESS FREEDOM DAY, SECRETARY-GENERAL
CALLS ON ALL SOCIETIES**

**TO 'SPARE NO EFFORT' TO BRING TO JUSTICE PERPETRATORS OF ATTACKS
ON JOURNALISTS**

Following is UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's message for World Press Freedom Day, on 3 May:

From the education of the youngest members of society to the full public engagement of citizens with their political leadership, access to information empowers each one of us to transform our lives and our communities. Just as water is essential for life to grow, knowledge sustains our capacity to imagine and to change. When information flows freely, people are equipped with tools to take control of their lives. When the flow of information is hindered -- whether for political or technological reasons -- our capacity to function is stunted.

Sixty years ago, the drafters of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights declared in article 19 that the right of everyone to freedom of opinion and expression "includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers". As the rapid pace of globalization has strengthened the development of a free, pluralistic, independent and professional media, the significance of this right has never been more evident. Technological advances have promoted media and information literacy as right for all to access equally.

A free, secure and independent media is one of the foundations of peace and democracy. Attacks on freedom of the press are attacks against international law, against humanity, against freedom itself -- against everything the United Nations stands for. I am therefore all the more alarmed at the way journalists are increasingly being targeted around the world, and dismayed when such crimes are not thoroughly investigated and prosecuted.

On this World Press Freedom Day, and in this year when we mark the sixtieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, I call on all societies to spare no effort in bringing to justice the perpetrators of attacks on journalists. I pay tribute to all who work in difficult and dangerous conditions to provide us with free, unbiased information. And I call on every one of us to work for the freedom -- and the safety -- of the press everywhere.

* * * * *