

Media Freedom Coalition statement on anniversary of inaugural Global Conference for Media Freedom

Two years ago, the United Kingdom and Canada hosted the first Global Conference for Media Freedom in London, United Kingdom, to respond with a united front to ongoing challenges faced by journalists and media workers throughout the world.

The event marked the beginning of the Media Freedom Coalition, a significant international effort by governments to protect and promote media freedom. The first members of the coalition signed the Global Pledge on Media Freedom, a written commitment to promote media freedom domestically and work together internationally.

On the second anniversary of the Global Conference for Media Freedom, the undersigned members of the Media Freedom Coalition today reiterate their commitment to expand efforts to defend media freedom worldwide.

We acknowledge the impact of the pandemic on media freedom, in particular that this crisis has been used to put in place undue restrictions on free and independent media.

Co-hosted by Canada and Botswana, we reaffirmed our commitment to protecting media freedom, including in the context of COVID-19, during the second Global Conference for Media Freedom on November 16, 2020.

We condemn intimidation, harassment and violence against journalists. We commend the crucial role played by journalists and media workers and pay tribute to those who have lost their lives in the exercise of their profession.

We welcome the contribution of the independent High-Level Panel of Legal Experts on Media Freedom and appreciate its ongoing work to advise governments on preventing and reversing repression of media freedom. We recognize the work of the Global Media Defence Fund, administered by UNESCO, in enhancing journalists' legal protection and improving media freedom through supporting investigative journalism and strategic litigation.

Today, we recall and reaffirm the commitments we made in the Global Pledge on Media Freedom: to increase coordination locally through our diplomatic missions around the world, to defend media freedom and to increase support to and engagement with journalists and independent media under threat.

Our countries are committed to working together to protect media freedom.

Signed: Afghanistan, Australia, Austria, Belize, Botswana, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Honduras, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Kosovo,

Latvia, Lebanon, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Maldives, Montenegro, the Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Serbia, Seychelles, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sudan, Switzerland, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, Uruguay, the United States