

UN Human Rights Council 41: joint statement on freedom of expression

I have the honour to make this statement on behalf of Canada, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

Madam Vice-President,

Together, we take this opportunity to reiterate our commitment to the right to freedom of opinion and expression.

This right remains essential to the protection of all human rights and contributes to the prosperity, stability and resilience of a society. States that limit it do so at their own peril. Regrettably, violations and abuses of this right continue to occur and have shown no sign of abating since we took the floor on this issue during the last session of the Human Rights Council.

Around the world, journalists and media workers face undue restrictions, as well as threats, intimidation or outright murder; female journalists are particularly at risk.

The Global Conference for Media Freedom – which will take place in London on July 10-11 – will contribute to the international community's efforts to identify practical measures that states can adopt to protect and promote media freedom. It will include the participation of civil society organizations, the private sector and media professionals.

In April 2020, the Netherlands and UNESCO will host the annual conference marking World Press Freedom Day.

The conference celebrates the fundamental principles of press freedom and serves as an occasion to evaluate press freedom around the world,

We are confident that these events will serve to strengthen the work already underway in the multilateral system to support freedom of the press, including in this very chamber.

We remain committed to working with all members of the Council to shed light on this issue and ensure that states have the tools they need [to promote and protect freedom of expression and media freedom.

Thank you, Madam Vice-President.