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## **Press freedom: Borrell (EU), “crucial for all other human rights”**

“We join UNESCO in emphasizing that, today more than ever, freedom of expression is crucial for all other human rights”, the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs, Josep Borrell, said in a statement to mark World Press Freedom Day. “Reporters in an attacked Ukraine, journalists in Belarus and Afghanistan, independent media in the Middle East and North Africa, local journalists in Central America, the Nobel Prize laureates in the Philippines and Russia and many other media workers worldwide, including in Europe, continue to pay a high price for exercising their profession”, he added. Women journalists “are particularly vulnerable to threats and increasing attacks, both offline and online. They are exposed to stigmatization, sexist hate speech, trolling, sexual and gender-based violence and even murder”. 73% of women journalists have experienced online threats, abuse and harassment in the course of their work. “We have never seen as many women journalists in detention as today”, he stressed. The EU condemns all forms of threats and violence against journalists and supports the media via several programmes: Safejournalists in the Western Balkans; Support to independent media and fundamental freedoms in Cambodia; and Media Resilience in Afghanistan. Moreover, the EU is countering disinformation and “Strategic lawsuits against public participation (SLAPP), regulating digital services and markets, and proposing an EU Media Freedom Act”.

Valentina Bombelli