

SAVING INDEPENDENT JOURNALISM

**30 YEARS
DEFENDING MEDIA**

**REPORTERS
WITHOUT BORDERS**
FOR FREEDOM OF INFORMATION



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EDITORIAL



BIG LITTLE NGO

In Les Misérables, Victor Hugo refers to the street urchin Gavroche as a “big little soul.” We could describe Reporters Without Borders as a “big little NGO.” For 30 years, this organization founded in Montpellier has been cheekily climbing the barricades, boldly waving freedom's banner, proclaiming the virtues of journalism, supporting heroes, dispensing safety equipment, funding resistance and applying pressure in the palaces where laws are written.

Now aged 30, Reporters Without Borders has become a “very big little NGO.” It has consultative status with the United Nations, UNESCO, the Council of Europe and the International Organization of La Francophonie. It speaks English, French, Spanish, Arabic and Farsi every day, and often uses Russian and Chinese as well. Based in Paris, it has correspondents in 130 countries, eight autonomous national sections, and bureaux in 12 cities around the world. And it will soon have two more bureaux, in Hong Kong and Sao Paulo.

In the “new propaganda era” we are entering, the world needs Reporters Without Borders. Whether totalitarian, violent or soft, information control is taking unprecedented forms that free citizens must oppose with all their strength. We can and will wage this battle thanks to the help of all those who have made and continue to make us what we are, in war and in peace and in all corners of the world. Former and current board members, correspondents, staff members, volunteers and supporters – we can never thank you enough.

RWB APPEALS TO THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL

*Injured in the leg by
sniper fire, an Al-Jazeera
reporter runs across
a street during fierce
fighting in Aleppo in
August 2012.*

©AFP PHOTO /
JAMES LAWLER
DUGGAN

“Refer war crimes against journalists in Syria and Iraq to the ICC!”

In a request timed to coincide with this year’s World Press Freedom Day, Reporters Without Borders is asking the UN Security Council to refer the situation of journalists in Syria and Iraq to the International Criminal Court.

Reporters Without Borders secretary-general Christophe Deloire wrote on 15 April to Lithuania’s permanent representative, who is the Security Council’s president in May, calling on the Security Council to act on the basis of Chapter VII of the UN Charter and using its prerogatives under the ICC’s statutes.

« To shed light on the terrible acts being committed against journalists in these war zones and to deter the belligerents from continuing to commit them, we believe the Security Council should urgently refer the situation in Syria and Iraq, in which war crimes have been committed against journalists, to the Prosecutor of the ICC statutes » the letter said.

Citing a report to the UN Human Rights Council by the independent international commission of inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic on 5 February that said journalists “have been disappeared, detained, tortured and killed,” the letter singles out deliberate attacks by Islamic State and the Al-Nusra Front and abuses against journalists by Syrian government forces.

Resolution 1738, which the UN Security Council adopted in 2006 “condemns intentional attacks against journalists, media professionals and associated personnel, as such, in situations of armed conflict, and calls upon all parties to put an end to such practices.” The letter notes that the General Assembly adopted two resolutions, in 2013 and 2014, on the safety of journalists and the need to combat impunity for crimes of violence against journalists. It also notes that under UNESCO’s aegis, a UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity was adopted in 2012.

“The representatives of most of the Security Council’s member countries have repeatedly said they want to defend the safety of journalists, so now these countries must show they mean what they say by initiating a concrete process designed to bring the perpetrators of crimes against journalists to justice”, Deloire said. “If they do not, they will prove their hypocrisy.”

■ SYRIE



■ IRAQ



HOW WE STARTED WORLD PRESS FREEDOM DAY

A young NGO that had been created in Montpellier, in southern France, Reporters Without Borders (RSF) was just six years old when it organized the first World Press Freedom day on 20 April 1991. Many news organizations immediately supported the initiative. It was a time when, according to our latest annual roundup, 40 journalists had been killed the previous year in connection with their work or the views they expressed, and 1.5 billion of the world's 5.3 billion inhabitants lived in countries that censored the news.

Two weeks later, on 3 May, a UNESCO seminar on developing an independent African press ended in Windhoek, a city 8,000 km to the south, with the "[Windhoek Declaration on Promoting Independent and Pluralist Media](#)." It included a call for the creation of an international day. By common accord, the staff at UNESCO in Paris and Reporters Without Borders subsequently agreed that 3 May should become World Press Freedom Day. The UN endorsed the proposal in December 1993.

Ever since then, every 3 May provides the entire world with an opportunity to celebrate the fundamental principles of media freedom, to remind governments they should be respecting freedom of expression, to defend the independence of all media, and to pay tribute to journalists who were killed while doing their job to report the news.



During Chinese President Hu Jintao's visit to Paris in November 2010, Reporters Without Borders releases doves in Stravinski Square in a show of support for Chinese writer and Nobel peace laureate Liu Xiaobo. ©AFP PHOTO FRED DUFOUR

In a [joint statement](#) on 3 May 2014, UN secretary-general Ban Ki-moon and UNESCO director-general Irina Bokova said: "World Press Freedom Day highlights the importance of independent, free and pluralistic media to protecting and promoting these rights. (...) Only when journalists are at liberty to monitor, investigate and criticize policies and actions can good governance exist."

RSF DEFENDED THOSE INFORMATION HEROES

■ BURMA



Hla Hla Win

In 2007, the year the military government cracked down on the “Saffron Revolution,” Reporters Without Borders awarded its 16th press freedom prize to radio and TV broadcaster Democratic Voice of Burma (DVB) for its fight against censorship. In May 2011, as 17 DVB videojournalists (known as VJs) were serving long jail terms, we supported DVB’s “Free Burma VJ” campaign (acting both as a relay and source of funding). In particular, we drew international attention to the plight of Hla Hla Win, a young woman journalist sentenced to 27 years in prison for interviewing Buddhist monks. Our Swiss section organized events in several Swiss cities, raising funds and gathering signatures to a petition that was sent to the Burmese authorities. All of DVB’s jailed employees were freed under an amnesty for political prisoners in January 2012.

■ MEXICO



Jesús Lemus
Barajas

Jesús Lemus Barajas, the founder and publisher of El Tiempo, a local newspaper, went missing while investigating drug cartel activity in Guanajuato state in May 2008. After his worried staff contacted Reporters Without Borders, our Mexico correspondent located him in a prison where he was being held on a trumped-up drug trafficking charge. Threatened, beaten and tortured, he remained in prison for the next three years, during which time his family was also threatened and three of his lawyers were murdered. We repeatedly denounced his detention, raised the case with federal officials, and supported his family’s legal initiatives and campaigning at the regional and national level. A judge finally freed

■ BURUNDI



Hassan Ruvakuki

A reporter for Radio France Internationale’s Swahili service, **Hassan Ruvakuki** was arrested on a terrorism charge in late 2011 accused of complicity with a new rebel group. Reporters Without Borders and RFI sent a team to Bujumbura to press for his release and attend his trial. We also provided his lawyers with legal assistance. After he was sentenced to life imprisonment in June 2012, RSF stepped up its efforts, issuing 16 press releases and a petition in the space of a year, returning to Bujumbura to support the pro-Ruvakuki marches held by the Burundian media, and organizing meetings with key politicians in Bujumbura, Brussels and Paris. Ruvakuki was freed in 2013, just as the organization was

RSF CAMPAIGNS TODAY FOR THE RELEASE OF THESE JOURNALISTS

■ RAÏF BADAWI



Raïf Badawi

Sentenced by a Riyadh court in September 2014 to ten years in prison and 1,000 lashes, 31-year-old blogger Raïf Badawi is facing the possibility of another trial, this time before Saudi Arabia’s supreme court on a charge of apostasy, which carries the death sentence. The winner of the 2014 Reporters Without Borders Press Freedom Prize, Badawi was convicted of insulting Islam and promoting liberal ideas on the discussion website he created, called the Liberal Saudi Network. As well as staging protests outside the Saudi embassies in Paris and Berlin and collecting 45,500 signatures to a petition, Reporters Without Borders asked the late king to give Badawi a pardon and urged François Hollande, Barack Obama, Angela Merkel, Mariano Rajoy and other international leaders to intercede. After Badawi endured an initial public flogging on 9 January, subsequent sessions were postponed for health reasons.

■ GAO YU



Gao Yu
©AFP PHOTO/
ESDRAS
NDIKUMANA

A well-known journalist who has received many international awards, including the UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize in 1997, Gao Yu has been held since 24 April 2014 for sending a copy of an internal Communist Party memo to a foreign news organization. The authorities said it was a “secret” document although it had already been posted online. Shortly after her arrest, state-owned China Central Television broadcast a video of her making a “confession.” She retracted it during her trial on 21 November, saying it was extracted under the pressure of threats against her family. A Beijing court finally sentenced her on 17 April 2015 to seven years in prison on a charge of divulging state secrets. This is the second time she has been jailed on the same charge, having been sentenced to six years in prison in 1993.

LAWS THAT PROTECT FREEDOM

■ REYOT ALEMU



Reyot Alemu

It was in an Addis Ababa prison that Reyot Alemu learned that she had won the 2013 UNESCO world press freedom prize. A political and business columnist with the national weekly Fitih, she has been there since June 2011 serving a 14-year sentence (later reduced to five) on a charge of “participating in, promoting and communicating a terrorist act.” A colleague remembers seeing her leave the Addis Ababa law-courts, proudly clutching copies of her articles as evidence that she was a real journalist.

■ MAZEN DARWISH



Mazen Darwish

A Reporters Without Borders press freedom laureate and “information hero,” Mazen Darwish has been detained for the past three years awaiting a trial that has been postponed eight times. A journalist and activist who founded and ran the Syrian Centre for Media and Freedom of Expression (SCM), he and two assistants, Hussein Ghareer and Hani AlZitani, are being held on a charge of “publishing information about terrorist actions.” They were arrested when members of the security forces raided the SCM’s headquarters in Damascus on 16 February 2012.

A few weeks after the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 2139 on 22 February 2014, demanding the release of all those held arbitrarily in Syria, Reporters Without Borders joined more than 60 other human rights groups in denouncing the repeated postponement of Darwish’s trial by the head of the Damascus anti-terrorism court. We continue to follow the case closely, active SCM member. The Spanish section of Reporters Without Borders included Darwish in its sponsorship program in 2012, with three well-known Spanish journalists undertaking to provide developments in his case with frequent coverage, so that he continues to benefit from active support and is not forgotten.

■ FRANCE’S PRESS FREEDOM LAW MODEL AND THREAT

Several French-speaking African countries amended their media legislation in the late 1990s, using France’s 1881 press freedom law as their model. This law provided for the possibility of imprisonment as the penalty for many offences although French judges rarely took advantage of these provisions, regarding them as obsolete or excessive. But their African counterparts were much more inclined to adhere to the letter of the law and pass harsh sentences on journalists.

In an attempt to end these abuses, Reporters Without Borders began campaigning for the elimination of prison sentences from France’s press law in 2000. We presented our arguments to legislators and to then justice minister Elisabeth Guigou, who was in the process of overhauling the criminal procedure code. As result, the 1881 law was amended and many of the provisions for prison sentences were removed.

Our strategy bore fruit. We helped draft a new press law that the Republic of Congo adopted in 2001. It eliminated prison sentences for such offences as insult or defamation although they continued to be possible for other media offences. We thereby achieved our goal of using the French law to generate improvements in legislation in other countries that is based on it. However, this strategy has been compromised by the fact that the French government is now in the process of rolling back the 1881 law.

■ TUNISIA

The Ben Ali regime’s fall in Tunisia paved the way for what is one of the Arab world’s most progressive legislative frameworks for freedom of information. When Reporters Without Borders secretary-general Christophe Deloire met President Moncef Marzouki in January 2013, he urged Marzouki to implement the print and broadcast media laws that had taken effect in late 2012. In December 2013, Reporters Without Borders and other NGOs called on legislators to ensure that Tunisia’s constitution would be a regional model for protecting freedom of expression. Article 6 banning sacrilege and article 20 saying the constitution takes precedence over Tunisia’s international obligations are a source of concern, but articles 31 and 32 enshrining freedom of expression and information and the right of access to information still represent historic advances.

DEMOCRACY'S BLIND SPOTS

UNITED STATES - JUDICIAL PRESSURE ON JAMES RISEN TO REVEAL SOURCES



James Risen
© AFP PHOTO/
BRENDAN
SMIALOWSKI

In 2008 the US Justice Department started pressuring New York Times investigative reporter **James Risen** to reveal his sources in the hope of getting evidence for its prosecution of former CIA employee Jeffrey Sterling under the Espionage Act. In press releases and protests, Reporters Without Borders condemned the judicial harassment of Risen and, along with other NGOs, launched a petition in 2014 that got more than 130,000 signatures. We talked often with Risen and his lawyer and played a crucial in getting this issue into the public eye. Risen was even guest of honour at the news conference we held at the National Press Club in February 2014 to publicize our press freedom index. The Justice Department finally let it be known in December 2014 that Risen would not after all be forced to name his sources. This legal battle spotlighted a major gap in the protection of journalists' sources in the United States. We have been calling for a federal "shield law" for years.

JAPAN - MINORU TANAKA VERSUS THE "NUCLEAR VILLAGE"



Minoru Tanaka
© NATHALIE-
KYOKO STUCKY

In December 2011, the weekly Shukan Kinyobi published a story by freelance reporter **Minoru Tanaka** about the questionable activities of Shiro Shirakawa, a leading entrepreneurial member of Japan's nuclear industry, dubbed the "nuclear village" because of the cosy relationships between government officials and private sector. In retaliation, and to deter other reporters from doing similar stories, Shirakawa brought a libel suit against Tanaka in May 2012, demanding an exorbitant sum in damages. Reporters Without Borders condemned the suit, urging the courts to rule in Tanaka's favour. We also contributed to the "Streisand effect" (whereby trying to censor information is often the surest way to give it more publicity) by posting Tanaka's translated article online. Shirakawa withdrew his suit in August 2013.



Two weeks after posting 400,000 classified US military documents online, WikiLeaks editor-in-chief Julian Assange asks to speak at a November 2010 meeting between NGOs and the US State Department.

© AFP PHOTO / FABRICE COFFRINI

PROTECTING WHISTLEBLOWERS

In a campaign called "Whistle for Whistleblowers," Reporter ohne Grenzen (the German section of Reporters Without Borders) sells whistles with the faces of three whistleblowers – Edward Snowden, Chelsea Manning and Katharine Gun.



By making classified or sensitive information available to the public, **Edward Snowden** and **Julian Assange** have held governments accountable and, as a result, have been the targets of relentless reprisals. Snowden is in forced exile in Russia while Assange has been holed up in the Ecuadorean embassy in London since July 2012.

Despite occasional differences, Reporters Without Borders decided to support Assange's organization, WikiLeaks. When its website was blocked, we set up mirror sites to make its content accessible again. When Visa, MasterCard and PayPal blocked payments to WikiLeaks, we publicized information about alternative methods of making donations.

Our secretary-general has often visited Assange in London and they wrote an opinion piece together in the summer of 2014 urging European countries to grant Snowden asylum. Our German section, Reporter ohne Grenzen, launched an international campaign called "Whistle for Whistleblowers" and our Swiss section organized a debate about defending whistleblowers during the International Film Festival and Forum on Human Rights. In September 2013, shortly after US Army Private Chelsea Manning was sentenced to 35 years in prison for leaking classified military documents to WikiLeaks, we asked the UN Human Rights Council to adopt a resolution on protecting whistleblowers.

(GOOD) RESOLUTIONS



United Nations head-
quarters in New York

© AFP PHOTO / JAMES
LAWLER DUGGAN

■ SPEARHEADING THE FIGHT FOR LEGAL PROTECTION FOR JOURNALISTS

It was hard to justify NATO's bombing of state-owned Radio Television of Serbia's Belgrade headquarters on 23 April 1999, during the Kosovo War, in which 16 of its employees were killed and a similar number were wounded. Fearing that this would set a dangerous precedent, Reporters Without Borders took up the issue of the role and status of media and journalists in wartime. In 2003, at the height of the Iraq war, RSF organized a workshop on propaganda media and international humanitarian law and drafted a "Declaration on the safety of journalists and media in wartime."

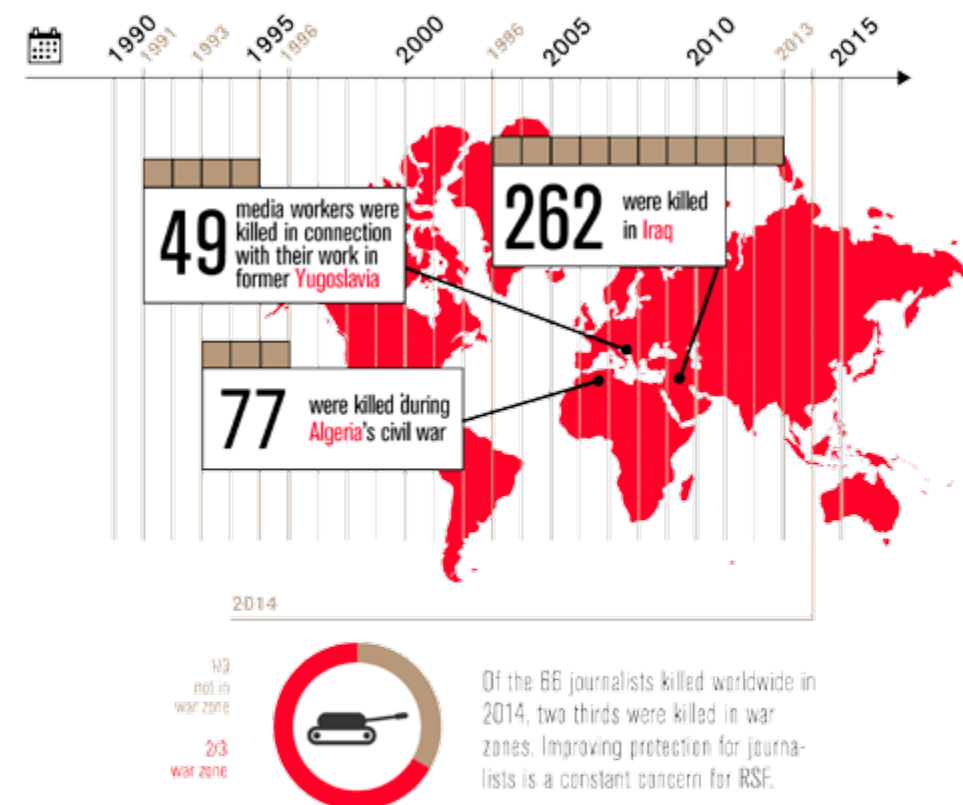
With the aim of ultimately achieving a legally-binding document, RSF approached the French government and obtained the creation of a parliamentary commission that wrote a proposed resolution based on its draft. Submitted to the UN Security Council in March 2006 and adopted unanimously on 26 December 2006 as Resolution 1738, it reaffirms the basic rules of interna-

tional humanitarian law guaranteeing the protection of journalists and news media during armed conflicts.

Meanwhile, RSF actively works with various UN officials and bodies (the secretary-general, Security Council, special rapporteurs, Human Rights Council and UNESCO), providing them with information about crimes against journalists, about the degree to which states are complying or failing to comply with their obligations, and about advances and setbacks as regards the safety of journalists.

RSF has campaigned successfully for the creation of an international day to end impunity for crimes against journalists (General Assembly Resolution 68/163), for recognition of the vital role and vulnerability of journalists as regards coverage of peaceful protests (Human Rights Council Resolution 25/38) and for recognition of the dangers arising from the illegal or arbitrary surveillance of journalists (Human Rights Council Resolution 27/5 of September 2014).

To help guarantee the effectiveness of the existing international provisions and resolutions, and to reinforce them, RSF is now calling for the creation of the position of special representative of the UN secretary-general for the protection of journalists. RSF also believes that the obligation of states to protect journalists in wartime should be extended to non-professional journalists and to situations of internal unrest and tension.



MAJOR CAMPAIGNS

October 7th. The anniversary of the assassination of Anna Politkovskaya.



INDEPENDANT JOURNALISM
THE ONLY DISCIPLINE BANNED IN SOCHI
**REPORTERS
WITHOUT BORDERS**
FOR FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

This man is not a rugby player.
He's an Eritrean journalist.



Eritrea is the world's second biggest prison for journalists, after China. Dozens of them are tortured and left to rot in the country's detention centres. On the 10th anniversary of the mass arrests of journalists and closure of the privately-owned media, it is time for the international community to react.

**REPORTERS
WITHOUT BORDERS**
FOR PRESS FREEDOM

Our cause is media freedom. Support Reporters Without Borders.

© Cameron Whiteman / Vetta / Getty Images



Beijing 2008

Reporters Without Borders - www.rsf.org



BAN JOURNALIST HUNTING

Since 2001, 615 journalists have been killed around the world.
www.rsf.org

**REPORTERS
WITHOUT BORDERS**
FOR PRESS FREEDOM



PURSuing THE TRUTH



Georgiy Gongadze - © AFP PHOTO /FILES/DIMA GAVRISH

■ GONGADZE, THE BATTLE GOES ON

The decapitated body of wellknown independent journalist Georgiy Gongadze was found in a wood on 3 November 2000, two months after he went missing. In the course of an investigative visit to Ukraine, Reporters Without Borders established that his murder was linked to his journalistic activities and exposed the flaws in the police and judicial investigation, which was designed above all to protect the government rather than find out what really happened.

Reporters Without Borders began a tireless battle for a proper investigation and to enlist the international community's support for this demand. In the capacity of legal representative of Gongadze's mother, the organisation had all the evidence reexamined by independent forensic laboratories. Together with the Damocles Network and our partner organization, IMI, it helped Gongadze's widow, Myroslava Gongadze, to refer the case to the European Court of Human Rights in 2002/2003. In November 2005, the court ordered Ukraine to pay 100,000 euros in compensation for failing to protect Gongadze and for failing to carry out a proper murder investigation. Fifteen years later, Reporters Without Borders continues to fight for justice. The perpetrators have been convicted but the instigators are still unpunished.

■ ZONGO AND KIEFFER – SAYING NO TO IMPUNITY



Guy-André Kieffer,
a journalist with
French and Canadian
dual nationality
who disappeared in
Abidjan 11 years ago

Norbert Zongo's bulle-triddled and burned body was found in a car on the side of a road in Burkina Faso in December 1998. French reporter Guy André Kieffer was never seen again after going to meet a source in a parking lot in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire's economic capital, in April 2004. What these two journalists had in common was an interest in stories that threatened the interests of government officials at the highest level. In Zongo's case, it was a murder in which President Compaoré's brother was implicated. With Kieffer, it was questionable practices in Côte d'Ivoire's cocoa trade.

In both cases, Reporters Without Borders has taken determined action so that justice be done. In Burkina Faso, it participated from the outset in an independent commission of enquiry, it issued nearly 30 press releases drawing attention to the flaws in the official investigation and has pressed the country's leaders to rectify these problems. The reopening of the case after the Compaoré regime's fall in November 2014 has revived hopes.

In the Kieffer case, RSF registered as interested party in the judicial investigation and, together with the Kieffer family, has organized protests, visits, campaigns and open letters to the French and Ivorian leaders. At a meeting in Abidjan in May 2014, RSF got President Ouattara to promise that the case would be reexamined. At the request of the civil parties (the Kieffer family and Reporters Without Borders), the judge who took over the French investigation from Patrick Ramaël submitted formal requests to the Ivorian authorities in November 2014 for certain action to be taken.



Demonstration on 13 December 2008 in Ouagadougou, the capital of Burkina Faso, in protest against the failure to punish journalist Norbert Zongo's murder

© AFP PHOTO / STRINGER

JOURNALISTS HOUNDED, FIRST BY MILITARY THEN BY ERDOGAN

■ WHEN RSF PROVOKED MILITARY ANGER

It was on 3 May 2002 that Reporters Without Borders took on the “Predators of Press Freedom” for the first time, displaying a map of the world with the photos of 38 predators at Saint-Lazare station in Paris. They included Turkish armed forces chief of staff Gen. Hüseyin Kivrikoglu. At the time, Turkish journalists were being tried by military courts and a state of emergency (called the OHAL) banned the distribution of critical publications in the Kurdish part of Turkey. The military had suppressed investigations into murders of journalists and had directly appointed some of the members of the High Council for Broadcasting.

Turkish nationalists vandalized the map at Saint-Lazare station while the authorities reacted angrily in Ankara. The French ambassador was summoned and threatened with the cancellation of military contracts. The Reporters Without Borders representative in Turkey, Erol Önderoglu, was subjected to unprecedented harassment that including interrogation by the police and threatening phone calls. Gen. Kivrikoglu sued Reporters Without Borders in Paris but the court ended up ruling against him. And RSF secretary-general was denied a Turkish visa for years. All in all, the Saint-Lazare map ended up having an impact around the world and, against all expectation, managed to shine a spotlight on the situation of the media in Turkey.

■ TRIALS OF JOURNALISTS, HUNDREDS OF HEARINGS ATTENDED

Reporters Without Borders' representative in Turkey has attended hundreds of hearings in trials of journalists in the past 20 years. Secularists have replaced the Islamist targets of old but Kurdish and socialist media continue to be persecuted. It is impossible to forget Isik Yurtcu and Bülent Balta, both of whom were jailed for agreeing to edit Özgür Gündem, a newspaper focusing on the Kurdish cause. A series of trials of Hrant Dink, a journalist of Armenian origin who advocated reconciliation, were used for a psychological lynching that paved the way for his murder.

One could also mention the cartoonists Ertan Aydın and Dogan Güzel and the journalists Ertugrul Kürkçü, Nadire Mater and Ali Bayramoglu, who were persecuted for criticizing the military and police state. The



A photo of Turkish armed forces chief of staff Gen. Hüseyin Kivrikoglu, one of 38 “Predators of Press Freedom,” is displayed on the gigantic world map that Reporters Without Borders installed on the ground in Saint-Lazare Station in Paris in May 2002 © AFP PHOTO JOEL SAGET

leading targets of judicial repression in recent years have included Kurdish journalists (KCK Press), secularist journalists (Odatv) and investigative journalists such as Ahmet Sik and Nedim Sener. Sadly, selective amnesia is a condition affecting both Islamist journalists, who used to be targeted by the military and now show little concern for media freedom, and secularist journalists, who condemn the current “unprecedented crackdown” while forgetting the abuses of the 1980s and 90s.

■ ERDOGAN'S GROWING AUTHORITARIANISM

The former driving force behind negotiations with the European Union, Recep Tayyip Erdogan has ended up becoming the main obstacle to democratization in Turkey. As his power has consolidated, the crackdowns have steadily intensified. Woe to anyone daring to question this transition to authoritarianism and reinforced state security at the expense of fundamental freedoms. President Erdogan spends his days insulting journalists, critical media owners, foreign reporters and intellectuals. Around 100 opposition activists, ordinary citizens, journalists such as Can Dündar and cartoonists such as Musa Kart have been the targets of judicial proceedings in the past six months for “insulting” Erdogan.

It was Reporters Without Borders' turn to be verbally assailed by the new president on 20 December 2014. In its annual round-up, the organisation had said that Turkey ranked third in the world in terms of the number of journalists physically attacked in 2014. Dismissing the figures, Erdogan said he was the victim of a malevolent “campaign” and launched into a string of mendacious claims about Reporters Without Borders, which he previously accused of having “really no [moral] borders.”

HELPING ENDANGERED MEDIA

■ SARAJEVO RESISTANCE



© AFP PHOTO / ELVIS BARUKCIC

Founded in 1943 to oppose Nazi occupation, the Bosnian daily *Oslobodenje* ("Liberation") became a symbol of resistance when Sarajevo was under siege during the Bosnian war. After artillery fire destroyed its headquarters in July 1992, killing five employees and wounding 25, Reporters Without Borders provided it with newsprint, a radio transmitter, bullet-proof vests and even an armour-plated truck, and invited foreign reporters from all over the world to visit its ruined headquarters and lend it international visibility. Twenty million facsimiles of its latest issue were twice published in the issues of foreign newspapers that supported its struggle. Operating out of the ruined building's basement, its journalists were able with our help to keep producing 300 copies a day of a news sheet opposing Belgrade's ethnic cleansing and to post them on walls throughout the besieged city.

■ HAITI



Training at the Media Operations Centre in Port-au-Prince - © CENTRE OPERATIONNEL DES MEDIAS

With the Canadian press group Québecor's help, Reporters Without Borders had a fully-equipped media operations centre running in Port-au-Prince within days of the devastating earthquake of 12 January 2010. It continued to function until the end of 2011. With 20 work-stations, it provided quake-hit journalists with the equipment they needed to keep working. A month after the earthquake, half of the capital's radio stations – the most popular source of news in Haiti – had resumed operating. Five years later, Haiti's media are back to normal.



Biniam Simon, Radio Erena's director and co-founder.

■ RADIO ERENA

State-owned Eri TV star anchor Biniam Simon took advantage of a trip to Japan in 2006 to escape the horrendous dictatorship ruling Eritrea, the country that is ranked last in the Reporters Without Borders press freedom index. After obtaining asylum in France with the help of RSF the following year, he still wanted to provide news and information to the Eritrean people, who are completely cut off from the rest of the world. That's how the idea of creating Radio Erena, a Tigrinyalanguage radio station that would use satellite and Internet broadcasting came about. RSF helped him to raise the necessary funding and find premises.

Radio Erena began broadcasting in 2009. Another journalist, Amanuel Ghirmay, joined the team a year later. Ghirmay still gets emotional when he recalls the day he was sitting under a tarpaulin in a refugee camp in Ethiopia and got a call from a young woman who said a team in Paris was working to bring him to France to resume working as a journalist. Radio Erena covers the everyday life of Eritreans, whether in Asmara's suburbs, the immigrant hell of Calais, or the Sinai Desert, providing analysis and comment that is free of any government pressure.

THE CHINESE EMPIRE OF CENSORSHIP

■ Since we began campaigning for freedom of information in China, we have seen a tenfold increase in the number of traditional media and the emergence of the world's biggest community of Internet users (more than 600 million in 2014). But one thing has not changed, the Communist Party's unyielding determination to censor information, control media and news providers closely, and severely punish those who do not toe the party line.

To combat an offensive by China's censors, we waged a gigantic international advocacy campaign throughout the three-year run-up to the 2008 Beijing Olympics that simultaneously targeted the Chinese authorities, the Olympic Committee, the United Nations and countries on the Olympic torch route. Thanks to this campaign, the entire world was told about the plight of the dozens of journalists and cyberdissidents detained in the planet's biggest prison.



The Reporters Without Borders campaign visual with handcuffs replacing the Olympic Rings is paraded through New York's Time Square a few months before the start of the Beijing Olympics..



*Posters of "Predator of Press Freedom" Xi Jinping making a rude gesture are paraded around Paris during the Chinese president's visit to Paris in April 2014.
© AFP PHOTO / JACQUES DEMARTHON*

When Chinese leaders have visited France – Hu Jintao in 2010 and Xi Jinping in 2014 – we have staged street protests in Paris to challenge their repressive policies. Now, with journalist Gao Yu, Nobel peace laureate Liu Xiaobo and blogger Ilham Tohti all languishing in prison, Tibet and Xinjiang cut off from the rest of the world and the Internet under close surveillance, the fight seems to be moving from the Chinese mainland to Hong Kong and to western democracies that rarely seem inclined to confront such an economically powerful country.

■ SHI TAO



Shi Tao

Journalist Shi Tao was sentenced to ten years in prison in 2005 on a charge of illegally divulging state secrets to foreign countries because he had provided international media with copies of an internal directive ordering censorship of information about the anniversary of the Tiananmen Square massacre.

Reporters Without Borders published details of the verdict – which showed that Yahoo! Hong Kong had provided the Chinese authorities with information about Shi's email account, thereby helping them to identify him – and accused the Internet giant of complicity with Beijing. Summoned to explain its actions at a US congressional hearing on corporate social responsibility, Yahoo! apologized and created a support fund for Chinese cyberdissidents. Shi was released in 2013 after serving eight and a half years of his sentence.

SUPPORTING JOURNALISM IN SYRIA

■ “INK NOT BLOOD” PROTEST

On World Press Freedom Day in 2011, Reporters Without Borders staged a demonstration outside the Syrian embassy in Paris in protest against the Syrian government's violence against the media and detention of around ten journalists. After arriving surreptitiously in a van, our activists splashed the embassy's entrance with blue paint, symbolizing words “It is ink that should flow, not blood” alongside it in red.



A Reporters Without Borders protest outside the Syrian embassy in Paris on World Press Freedom Day 2011.
© AFP PHOTO JOEL SAGET

■ KEEPING SYRIAN MEDIA INK FLOWING

The targets of systematic reprisals by government henchmen, armed opposition groups and members of the Al-Nusra Front, Islamic State and other extremist militias, around 300 journalists and citizenjournalists have had to flee Syria in the past four years.

Refusing to be silenced although forced into exile, they are reorganizing aboard, especially in Turkey, publishing news reports based on information provided by journalists still in the country.

Despite limited resources, they try to reflect to the scale of the atrocities that have been taking place for the past four years and the attempts of their compatriots to keep living and make a future in Syria while surrounded by horrendous violence.

In 2013 and 2014, we organized four seminars in the Turkish city of Gaziantep for the reporters and editors of eight news outlets that are representative of the new Syrian media. The reporters participated in workshops designed to reinforce their writing and editing skills. The workshops for the editors focused on the political and financial aspects of media management and how to run a news team. As well as technical aspects, the seminars also covered such key issues as journalistic objectivity and ethics. The final session was about protecting the security of online data and communications.

We also provided each of these exile news outlets with €4,000 in financial support for the purchase of equipment needed to continue operating. The money was spent on cameras, printers, computers and mobiles phones.

CAMPAIGNING FOR HOSTAGES

■ The first hostage to benefit from Reporters Without Borders' ability to mount an all-out campaign was **Brice Fleutiaux**, a French freelance photographer who was kidnapped in Chechnya in October 1999. He was not the first journalist to be abducted in this troubled region. More than 20 journalists of many nationalities had preceded him, and had received our support.

But, with his family's consent and in the absence of any reaction from Vladimir Putin, who was elected president in March 2000, we decided to launch a major campaign on behalf of Fleutiaux, although the French foreign ministry was recommending discretion. The campaign included public displays of his photos, radio spots on France Inter, and a poster campaign that included a 22-metre billboard and poster designed by comic book artist Enki Bilal. All this was backed by **Jean-Paul Kauffmann** and **Philippe Rochot**, two journalists who were kidnapped in Beirut in 1985 and 1986 and who were held for many months. "You can never talk about us [hostages] too much," they said.

The now well-known Fleutiaux was finally released after nine months of anxiety and negotiations. Sadly, he took his own life less than a year later, the victim of depression. And also sadly, the next decade saw the abduction of many more journalists, of whom around 100 in Iraq alone from 2003 to 2010. They included French reporters **Christian Chesnot** and **Georges Malbrunot**, kidnapped by the Islamic Army in Iraq in August 2004. We launched another major campaign for them that included a permanent vigil in front of the Paris city hall.

We were still celebrating their release on 21 December 2004, after four months of captivity, when Libération reporter **Florence Aubenas** was abducted along with her fixer in Baghdad. We went all out for them during the next six months, forming a support committee with Libération, organizing solidarity events and public meetings all over France and getting gigantic portraits of them displayed on the facades of town halls. After three Romanian journalists were kidnapped, a campaign for all five hostages enlisted the support of 200 European news media and included radio and TV spots and the distribution of badges. All possible means were used to make the hostages – and their kidnappers – know that we had not forgotten them.

After Aubenas and her fixer were released on 12 June 2005, she made her skills and optimism available to Reporters Without Borders, assisting our campaigns for the release of French TV journalists **Hervé Ghesquière** and **Stéphane Taponier**, who were kidnapped in Afghanistan in 2009, and four French journalists who were kidnapped in Syria in June 2013 – reporters **Didier François** and **Nicolas Hénin** and photographers **Edouard Hélias** and **Pierre Torrès**. All were eventually freed and able to return to their arduous jobs as journalists.



1 - Brice Fleutiaux - 2 - Hervé Ghesquière et Stéphane Taponier © AFP PHOTO / BERTRAND GUAY - 3 - Georges Malbrunot © AFP PHOTO JACK GUEZ - 4 - Nicolas Hénin © AFP PHOTO / TORRES FAMILY/BENOIT SCHAEFFER - 5 - Edouard Hélias © AFP PHOTO / SYLVAIN THOMAS - 6 - Jean-Paul Kauffmann © AFP PHOTO JACK GUEZ - 7 - Florence Aubenas © AFP PHOTO GABRIEL BOUYS - 8 - Pierre Torres © AFP PHOTO / TORRES FAMILY / BENOIT SCHAEFFER - 9 - Didier François © AFP PHOTO / THOMAS SAMSON - 10 - Hussein Hanun - 11 - Christian Chesnot © AFP PHOTO STEPHANE DE SAKUTIN

WORKING IN THE FIELD

■ SAFETY TRAINING FOR JOURNALISTS IN THE TRIBAL AREAS

PAKISTAN

With ten journalists killed in bombings or targeted murders, Pakistan was the world's deadliest country for media personnel for the second year running in 2011. In the Tribal Areas, a region adjoining Afghanistan, 11 journalists have been killed since 2005, most of them by Taliban trying to impose favourable coverage of their activities.

Together with our local partner organization, the Peshawar-based Tribal Union of Journalists (TUJ), we decided to organize safety training for journalists working in this region. Six seminars were held from 1 November to 4 December 2011. In all, nearly 90 journalists were given instruction in safety rules and the procedures to follow in the event of danger. They were also taught first-aid techniques, and methods for evaluating and preventing such risks as abduction, and they were given copies of a handbook that had been translated into Urdu.

■ PROVIDING PHYSICAL PROTECTION

2014 – UKRAINE

Ukrainian journalists were repeatedly the targets of violence by the security forces in the first few months of 2014, as the authorities cracked down on the Maidan Square protests. Responding to the emergency, Reporters Without Borders and its Ukrainian partner, the Institute of Mass Information, raised



Vladislav Musiyenko, a photographer with the UNIAN news agency, wearing a protective helmet and goggles. He received an award for his coverage of the Euromaidan movement.

© VLAD MUSIYENKO

funds and bought 100 sets of helmets, goggles and masks, for journalists in need. In July 2014, after the protests were over in Kiev, we helped fund IMI's acquisition of a stock of bulletproof vests and helmets that can be lent to reporters covering the conflict in Eastern Ukraine, free of charge.

■ ASSISTING JOURNALISTS FACING REPRISALS

2001 – AFGHANISTAN – INJURED ON EVE OF 9/11

Afghan journalist Faheem Dashty was badly wounded in the suicide bombing that killed Commander Ahmad Shah Massoud on 9 September 2001, two days before AlQaeda's terrorist attacks on the United States. He was initially hospitalized in neighbouring Tajikistan but Reporters Without Borders arranged for him to be flown to Paris for further treatment. With our support, he was then able to hone his editorial and managerial skills thanks to in-house training at Le Monde, Le Nouvel Observateur and other news organisations. On his return to Afghanistan in December 2001, he founded Kabul Weekly. He now heads the Afghanistan National Journalists Union.

2009 – IRAN – VISAS FOR FREEDOM

Dozens of journalists had to flee Iran as a result of a crackdown on the media in the wake of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's disputed reelection in 2009. After crossing into neighbouring Turkey or Iraqi Kurdistan, many of them found they were still exposed to reprisals by the Iranian government. In response to the scale of this exodus, the biggest since 1979, Reporters Without Borders increased the number of assistance grants and waged a campaign to get European governments to give them humanitarian visas. France's commitment enabled more than 30 Iranian journalists to reach Paris in the space of six months.

HEROES BEHIND THE FIGURES

Every year, Reporters Without Borders tries to offset the figures for assistance to journalists against the figures for media freedom violations. By providing funds and the expertise of our network of correspondents and partners, we help victims of the fight for media freedom to obtain treatment if they have been injured, legal assistance if they are being prosecuted, and a safe refuge if they are in danger. Flight into exile is not the least of the challenges that result from the predators' determination.

We do our best to help the dozens of men and women who flee abroad every year in search of safety and solutions and usually find only uncertainty and a long wait. We follow their odyssey through the institutions to which they turn in the hope of asylum or refuge, and we try to rebuild an identity for these heroes who have been reduced to anonymity by their forced departure.

COMBATTING INTERNET CENSORS

- “For Press Freedom” was the slogan that Reporters Without Borders used for 25 years to define the purpose of its existence. Known throughout the world, it was changed in 2010 to “For Freedom of Information” to reflect the fact that, for nearly two decades, we had also been fighting for the right to information online.

The public started going online in the mid-1990s. For the first time in the history of the media, any citizen could become a creator and distributor of news and information. For an NGO like ours, used to defending the media and journalists, the advent of the Internet was a game-changer.

We began adapting to this new situation in 1997, releasing a study with the prophetic title of “Censoring the Internet.” We created a New Media Desk, dedicated exclusively to digital issues, in 2001 and we issued our first list of 15 countries regarded as “Enemies of the Internet” in 2005.

■ TOOLBOX FOR JOURNALISTS AND DISSIDENTS

It was also in 2005 that we published our Handbook for CyberDissidents, which explains how to encrypt emails and use free software such as Tor to circumvent website blocking. The handbook is regularly updated and is now available online.

In 2011, we began providing training in digital safety and distributing tools for combating online censorship and surveillance such as digital safes, VPN software and the Tor browser. The first seminar was held in Thailand and brought together journalists and bloggers from all over Southeast Asia.



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■ NEW GENERATION CENSORS

The threats have evolved since our first Internet report in 1997.

Governments are no longer the only actors capable of controlling the Internet. In 2013 we published a report about Internet surveillance that drew attention to the role of private corporations such as Amesys, Blue Coat, Hacking Team, TRICOR and Gamma International. These companies sell surveillance technology to authoritarian regimes that enables them to spy on journalists and human rights activists.

The privatization of censorship and, more broadly, the need to get corporations to face up to their responsibilities are among the new challenges we have to address.



Reporters Without Borders decided in 2008 that 12 March should be celebrated as World Day Against CyberCensorship. We publish a report on cyber-censorship and stage some kind of related action on this date every year. In 2015, we launched Operation Collateral Freedom, unblocking the censorship imposed on nine websites in 11 countries.

REPORTERS WITHOUT BORDERS promotes and defends the freedom to be informed and to inform others throughout the world. Based in Paris, it has international offices (Berlin, Brussels, Geneva, Helsinki, Madrid, Stockholm, Tripoli, Tunis, Vienna and Washington DC) and more than 150 correspondents in all five continents.

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