



The High Level Panel of
Legal Experts on Media Freedom



Permanent Mission of the Czech Republic
to the United Nations

Providing Safe Refuge to Journalists at Risk in an Increasingly Dangerous World

UNGA 2022 Side Event, hosted by the Czech Republic and the High Level Panel of Legal Experts on Media Freedom.

Date & Time: 22 September 2022, 14:30-15:30, EST.

Location: Permanent Mission of the Czech Republic to the UN in NY (One Dag Hammarskjöld Plaza, 885 Second Avenue, 48th Floor, NY)

Due to limited capacity, please kindly RSVP by **Tuesday 20 September** using [this form](#). Virtual attendance is also possible via online registration [here](#). The event will also be livestreamed via [Youtube](#).

Chairs:

- **Prof. Can Yeginsu & Ms. Catherine Amirfar**, Deputy Chairs of the High Level Panel of Legal Experts on Media Freedom.

Speakers:

- **H. E. Mr. Jan Lipavský**, The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic.
- **Ms. Jodie Ginsberg**, President, The Committee to Protect Journalists.
- **Mr. Roman Anin**, co-founder of iStories, previously journalist at *Novaya Gazeta*.
- *Further speakers to be confirmed.*

Description:

The free press and independent journalists are under attack around the world like never before as undemocratic regimes seek to suppress the free flow of information and try to control what constitutes the truth.

Since Russia's violent invasion of Ukraine in February, for example, dozens of journalists have been killed, with many more facing shelling, shooting, and arbitrary detention as they have sought to report about the war. At the same time, journalists in Russia and Belarus have been targeted in an unprecedented crackdown on the independent media, with many being forced to seek safety abroad.

Such threats to journalists' safety are not limited to times of war. For years now, more journalists have been killed outside of war zones than in them.

But for every journalist who is able to find a safe haven, there are scores who do not, often with tragic consequences. This is because the pathways to safety that exist for journalists at risk are too slow, too burdensome, and too difficult to navigate.

In 2020, the independent advisory body to the Media Freedom Coalition, the High Level Panel of Legal Experts on Media Freedom, published an advisory report recommending a number of concrete measures that States should take to strengthen and increase the legal pathways for safe refuge for journalists at risk. The High Level Panel's first recommendation was the creation of an emergency visa for journalists at risk.

The High Level Panel's advisory report and all of its recommendations have been widely endorsed by civil society, media organizations, and mandate holders at the United Nations. Importantly, these recommendations are now being adopted by an increasing number of States in the Media Freedom Coalition.

The Czech Republic has been one of the Coalition States that has been leading the way, creating and issuing over 600 emergency visas to journalists and activists at risk in 2022. But much more needs to be done and more States need to take urgent action in this area to protect journalists at risk.

Join the High Level Panel of Legal Experts on Media Freedom and the Czech Republic, together with special guests, to discuss the growing need to secure emergency safe refuge for journalists at risk.

For the High Level Panel's Advisory Report on Safe Refuge and related work:

<https://www.ibanet.org/Safe-Refuge-report-launch-2020>