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Host Organization:  
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Division for Freedom of Expression and Media Development  
Communication and Information Sector  
UNESCO, Paris

22 August 2016

## **Final report 1.9.2015-31.08.2016 on Working as Visiting Expert at UNESCO's Division for Freedom of Expression and Media Development**

I continued working as the seconded Helsingin Sanomat Foundation Expert/Research fellow at United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in Paris during the period of 1.9.2015-31.08.2016, as a follow-up to a full year in the same position in 2014-2015. This expert position is connected to UNESCO's work on freedom of expression and media freedom, and especially to their work on safety of journalists and the issue of impunity.

### **Work related to Journalists' Safety Indicators assessments**

UNESCO is the UN agency with a mandate to promote freedom of expression and press freedom. An important component of freedom of expression is safety of journalists, media workers, and social media producers of public interest journalism. To this end, the [UN Plan of Action on Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity](#) was created and endorsed by all main UN-bodies in 2012, with UNESCO leading the implementation of the Plan. In this regard, UNESCO developed the Journalists' Safety Indicators (JSIs) in 2013. Their purpose is to enable a comprehensive assessment of the level of journalists' safety in a given country and assess the actions undertaken by various stakeholders in addressing safety and the impunity of crimes committed against journalists. The JSI assessments also measure the level of implementation of the UN Plan of Action on local level.

During these two years, I have as a part of my expert activities been supporting the research implementation of the JSI assessments that were conducted or are at the moment still being conducted, namely the assessments in Pakistan, Guatemala, Honduras, Kenya, Nepal, Iraq and Afghanistan. The pilot JSI projects concerning safety of journalists in Pakistan and Guatemala have now been fully finalized and were published as working documents on UNESCO's website (see the JSI website [link](#), also in the end of the report). During the term 2015-2016, I commented at many different phases and edited the reports concerning Kenya, Nepal and Iraq – the projects which were started under my supervision earlier in 2015. [The Kenya JSI report](#) was published as an official UNESCO publication in June 2016, being the first one in the new JSI series. The Nepal report will be published in August 2016 (see the [JSI website](#)). The assessments for Iraq and Afghanistan (the latter started in spring 2016) are now in review and data collection phase.

As expert I have also supported the local researchers by giving them advice in the research process, including methodological and other questions such as data verification. A part of the work has been to

support the publication process of the reports, including editing and final editing, liaising for translation, graphical design, layout work and printing, administration and releasing related news items.

Each of the JSI reports is the first of its kind in the given country. All the assessments reveal the variety of threats that journalists are facing in the countries in question. They are also summarizing the existing activities in place to protect journalists. All the assessments show that despite some international and local efforts in this regard, more coordinated action and solid national frameworks for protection need to be established in order to guarantee safe working environment for journalists. The assessments are further hoped to guide local stakeholders in this process. An article on the Journalists Safety Indicators was recently published in a [book of Nordicom](#). In the article I summarise and further analyse the experiences and lessons learnt based on the first JSI research projects.

I have also contributed to UNESCO's other work on safety of journalists, e.g. by discussing future activities and priorities with colleagues at the UNESCO Head Quarters and in Field Offices, by giving inputs to current activities, as well as by co-operating to create a brochure on the UN Plan of Action. Internally at UNESCO, I have also presented the JSI projects to the Bureau of the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC, composed by 39 member states) in their yearly meeting.

The above mentioned activities, enabled by the support of HS foundation to the research fellow position, altogether have supported the establishment of a good basis for the JSI initiative and the JSI assessments as a prominent element in the work of the Division for Freedom of Expression and Media Development.

### **Creating research cooperation on safety of journalists**

Another part of my expert activities related to UNESCO's field of work involved the creation of an '[Research agenda on safety of journalists](#)'. It is a research document that discusses ten broad fields of communication and media research that all are, or could be linked with the theme of journalists' safety. The purpose of the document is to develop and encourage academic research on journalists' safety issues, as well as to discuss possibilities for future research and cooperation. The agenda was created in early 2015 by me and the director of the Division, Guy Berger.

During the past 1,5 years I have co-organised several academic events in order to share and discuss the document with other researchers working in this area, and with researchers that could potentially engage with the topics. After organizing the first conference sessions in [Montreal and Berlin in July 2015](#), I participated in October 2015 in another conference in Oslo to discuss the safety agenda. I also participated and contributed to the International Journalism Week on Safety issues at the Centre for Freedom of Media (CFOM), University of Sheffield, UK, in November 2015 by giving a lecture, following and participating in the academic discussions, and advising the students. In April 2016 I presented UNESCO's work at Nordic Data Journalism Conference in Helsinki. In July 2016 [another successful session organised by UNESCO](#) took place during the IAMCR 2016 conference. Next to organizing this session, I also co-organised another session discussing UNESCO's [World Trends Report on Freedom of Expression](#).

Next to participating in conferences organised by others, I was the main organiser together with Professor Ulla Carlsson at the University of Göteborg, Sweden, for an academic side event/two-day conference on journalists' safety that took place during UNESCO's World Press Freedom Day conference

in Helsinki in May 2016. This included negotiations with Finnish universities, the above mentioned British CFOM, the IAMCR, as well as other academic contacts, in order to have them involved in the conference. The call for papers to the conference attracted more than 50 paper proposals, out of which 18 full papers and 14 posters were selected to be presented at the conference. I coordinated the procedure for peer reviews of the abstracts, gave guidelines for paper and poster writing and took care of the practicalities and communications to organise the conference. The conference in the end brought together some 80 academics to discuss the topics, which they themselves considered a great success. The conference papers will be published in a conference book, edited by Ulla Carlsson and me, planned to be out at the next 2017 World Press Freedom Day. For further details, consult the conference [call for papers](#), [conference website](#) and the [news release](#) on the outcomes of the conference.

The cooperation with academia has also taken other forms. CFOM in cooperation with UNESCO carries out a PhD research project on journalists' safety. The PhD researcher involved followed an internship at UNESCO in February-May 2016, during which period I acted as her actual supervisor. I advised her in her daily tasks at UNESCO, but also supervised her research related activities during that period, including data collection and research process, and provided input to her PhD report. The cooperation with CFOM continued also during the Research Conference on Safety of Journalists in May 2015, as explained above. I have furthermore assisted them to create a database of safety researchers, which has now lead into establishment of Journalism Safety Research Network JSRN that will be managed by CFOM. I visited CFOM again in August 2016 in order to discuss all these joint activities, as well as some new research projects as a member of an advisory board.

In addition, there have been ongoing discussions with other academics on cooperation with UNESCO. For example, the universities of Tampere and Helsinki are both involved in the research publication on safety of journalists, mentioned above. I have also upon request provided feedback on other new research proposals and existing research in the area of journalists' safety.

The expert activities related to the research agenda have established a new line of programmatic work at UNESCO's Division for Freedom of Expression and Media Development. Academic contacts have been strengthened, which will function as a good basis for future cooperation. The academic community has also been made aware of UNESCO's interests in academic safety research and researchers working in the same field have been given opportunities to share their experiences and research. The funding that HS foundation has provided through the fellowship position for these expert activities has been of crucial importance for that matter.

## **Research activities**

During the Research Fellow period, I have kept on working on my personal research interests that broadly involve journalism, media and human rights; including topics such as freedom of speech, hate speech, migration and racism in the media, and professionalism and ethics of journalists. As hate speech related to the refugee crisis and other current events has been a raising issue in Finland, Nordic countries and the whole Europe in the past year, I have upon request participated as an independent expert in e.g. Nordic conferences and other forms of cooperation related to hate speech issues, as well as acted as an invited panellist in various discussions on the topic. These activities have been listed more in detail below. I have worked on an article related to the refugee crisis and hate speech in the Finnish media. At UNESCO, I wrote a background information paper on the topic of migration and media, based on my earlier research and PhD dissertation.

For the purpose of developing new research related to the topics mentioned above, such as freedom of speech and human rights in the media, the period as a Research Fellow at UNESCO has been very fruitful, as it offers a good insight into the work that is done globally in this field. At the moment I am developing a post doc research proposal that is closely connected to these issues. The period has also enabled the establishment of new global networks, which will for sure be useful for all future research activities.

I also believe that the benefits of this research fellowship have been mutual, as I have been able to offer UNESCO my expertise on several topics it works with. Altogether, my research expertise nicely fitted into the freedom of expression work of UNESCO.

### Articles published in 2016

Pöyhtäri, Reeta (2016) The (Un)safe practice of journalism. An analysis based on UNESCO's Journalists' Safety Indicators assessments. In: Ulla Carlsson (ed.) *Freedom of Expression and Media in Transition: Studies and Reflections in the Digital Age*. Göteborg: Nordicom. Available at: [http://www.nordicom.gu.se/sites/default/files/publikationer-hela-pdf/freedom\\_of\\_expression\\_and\\_media.pdf](http://www.nordicom.gu.se/sites/default/files/publikationer-hela-pdf/freedom_of_expression_and_media.pdf).

Pöyhtäri, Reeta, Väliaverronen, Jari & Ahva, Laura (2016) Suomalaisen journalistin itseymmärrys muutosten keskellä. *Media & Viestintä* 39: 1, 32–54. (The self-image of the Finnish journalist in times of change. In: Media and Communication.) Available at: <http://mediaviestinta.fi/blogi/suomalaisen-journalistin-itseymmarrys-muutosten-keskella/>.

### Articles in writing process

Pöyhtäri, Reeta (2017) Verkosta uutisiin – uutismedian harkintaa ja harkitsemattomuutta. (From internet to the news – Consideration and indiscretion of the news media.) In: Maasilta, Mari & Nikunen, Kaarina (eds.) *Media, pakolaisuus ja tunteet*. (Media, refugees and emotions.) Tampere: Vastapaino.

Pöyhtäri, Reeta (2017) UNESCO's Research agenda on safety of journalists. In: Carlsson, Ulla & Pöyhtäri, Reeta (eds.) *Safety of journalists – knowledge is the key*. Göteborg: Nordicom & UNESCO.

Pöyhtäri, Reeta (2017) Research highlights: focus on empirical research. In: Carlsson, Ulla & Pöyhtäri, Reeta (eds.) *Safety of journalists – knowledge is the key*. Göteborg: Nordicom & UNESCO.

Carlsson, Ulla & Pöyhtäri, Reeta (2017) (eds.) *Safety of journalists – knowledge is the key*. Göteborg: Nordicom & UNESCO.

### Other published material (online)

UNESCO's Research Agenda on Safety of Journalists:

<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/freedom-of-expression/safety-of-journalists/unescos-research-agenda-on-safety-of-journalists/>

[http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/images/Themes/Freedom\\_of\\_expression/safety\\_of\\_journalists/Draft\\_Research\\_Agenda\\_Safety\\_of\\_Journalists\\_06\\_2015.pdf](http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/images/Themes/Freedom_of_expression/safety_of_journalists/Draft_Research_Agenda_Safety_of_Journalists_06_2015.pdf)

Call for Papers, UNESCO research conference on Safety of Journalists:

[http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/pdf/themes/freedom\\_of\\_expression/CFP\\_UNESCO\\_Academic\\_Safety\\_conference\\_Helsinki\\_WPFD2016.pdf](http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/pdf/themes/freedom_of_expression/CFP_UNESCO_Academic_Safety_conference_Helsinki_WPFD2016.pdf)

UNESCO's Research Conference on the Safety of Journalists:

<https://en.unesco.org/world-press-freedom-day-2016/research-conference-safety-journalists>

### Related news items on UNESCO website

Safety research agenda:

<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/resources/news-and-in-focus-articles/all-news/news/call-for-papers-unesco-research-conference-on-safety-of-journalists/>

<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/resources/news-and-in-focus-articles/all-news/news/unesco-presents-its-academic-research-agenda-on-safety-during-iamcr-2015-and-gca-conferences/>

<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/resources/news-and-in-focus-articles/all-news/news/unescos-research-conference-on-the-safety-of-journalists-paved-the-way-for-academic-research-cooperation-knowledge-is-the-key/#.V6xTyqJFyFW>

<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/media-services/single-view/news/academics-urged-to-study-safety-of-journalists/#.V6xRdGfymih>

<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/media-services/single-view/news/unesco-promotes-research-report-to-communications-scholars/#.V6xSy2fymig>

JSI assessments:

<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/resources/news-and-in-focus-articles/in-focus-articles/2015/supporting-safety-of-journalists-in-pakistan/>

<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/resources/news-and-in-focus-articles/all-news/news/unesco-meeting-analyses-state-of-journalists-safety-and-issue-of-impunity-in-kenya/#.Vl8fFRsQWig>

<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/resources/news-and-in-focus-articles/all-news/news/unesco-publishes-report-on-safety-of-journalists-in-kenya-b/#.V6xUx6JFyFV>

### Conference presentations etc.

Pöyhtäri, Reeta. *UNESCO's Academic research agenda on safety of journalists*. Conference on Gender, War and Conflict reporting, 7.10.2015. Oslo, Norway.

Pöyhtäri, Reeta. *Supporting Safety of Journalists. Preliminary outcomes of UNESCO's Journalists Safety Indicator assessments*. Conference on Gender, War and Conflict reporting, 7.10.2015. Oslo, Norway.

Pöyhtäri, Reeta. *Supporting Safety of Journalists – UNESCO's work for safe journalism*. (Lecture) International Journalism Week Journalism in Danger, 10.11.2015. University of Sheffield, Great Britain.

Pöyhtäri, Reeta. *Limits of hate speech and free speech on moderated news websites and some best practices*. Nordplus seminar Law and Media, 17.11.2015. University of Tampere, Finland.

Pöyhtäri, Reeta. *Hate speech as a challenge to newsmedia*. Nordplus seminar Law and Media, 17.11.2015. University of Tampere, Finland.

Pöyhtäri, Reeta. *Politiikan käytöstavat – Vihapuhe- ja teot hallintaan*. (Manners in politics – End to hate speech and acts.) (Invited panelist) Yearly policy and program planning event of Keskustapuolue (Centre Party) in Finland, 6.2.2016. Tampere, Finland.

Pöyhtäri, Reeta. *The Journalists Safety Indicators (JSI) assessments*. 60<sup>th</sup> IPDC Bureau meeting, 17.-18.3.2016. UNESCO, Paris, France.

Pöyhtäri, Reeta. *Media and hate speech – what is it all about*. (Invited guest lecture) Suomen Freelance-journalistit (Freelance journalists in Finland), 20.4.2016. Helsinki, Finland.

Pöyhtäri, Reeta. *Supporting Safety of Journalists – UNESCO working for safe journalism*. Intensive Course on Development for Journalists, Reporting World News, organised by Media 4 Development project / Vikes Finland, 22.4.2016. University of Helsinki, Finland.

Pöyhtäri, Reeta. *Supporting Safety of Journalists – UNESCO working for safe journalism*. Nordic Data journalism conference NODA 2016, 23.4.2016. University of Helsinki, Finland.

Pöyhtäri, Reeta. *Freedom of speech and hate speech*. (Invited panelist) Finnish Internet Forum, 27.4.2016. Helsinki, Finland.

Pöyhtäri, Reeta. *UNESCO's Research Agenda on Safety of Journalists*. UNESCO's Research Conference on Safety of Journalists, 3.-4.5.2016. Helsinki, Finland.

Pöyhtäri, Reeta. *UNESCO's Research Agenda on Safety of Journalists*. IAMCR 2017 conference, Journalism Research and Education Section, 28.7.2016. Leicester, UK.

Pöyhtäri, Reeta. *World Trends in Freedom of Expression and Media Development. Special Digital focus 2015*. IAMCR 2017 conference, 30.7.2016. Leicester, UK.

### **Other expert tasks**

Conference participation (invited expert):

Seminar of Nordic Ministerial Council *Nordisk seminar om hadytringer og sexism*, 2.-3.11.2015. Copenhagen, Denmark. (Nordic seminar on hate expressions and sexism.)

Peer reviewer for publications of Tampere University Press in Finland.

Expert external evaluator (Finland) for Media research commissioned by European Commission.

Member of research Advisory Board, University of Sheffield, Department of Journalism Studies, Centre for Freedom of the Media CFOM.