

Notice: Undefined index: et_header_layout in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1214

Notice: Trying to access array offset on value of type null in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1214

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Notice: Undefined index: et_template in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1216

UKRAINE - RUSSIA: War in Ukraine – journalists constantly risking their lives

War in Ukraine: journalists constantly risking their lives

Reporter Without Frontier (02.03.2022) – <https://bit.ly/3KxM0bp> – Several media crews have already come under fire and four reporters have sustained gunshot injuries in Ukraine since the start of the Russian invasion less than two weeks ago. Reporters Without Borders (RSF)

reiterates its call to the Russian and Ukrainian authorities to comply with their international obligations to guarantee the safety of reporters in field, and urges the latter to take the utmost care.

The shots came within centimetres of Swiss photographer **Guillaume Briquet**'s head when presumed members of a Russian special commando fired on him shortly after he passed a Ukrainian checkpoint on a road towards the southern city of Mykolaiv on 6 March, while covering the Russian advance in the region. Despite the many "Press" markings on his car and his bulletproof vest marked "Press," this experienced war reporter was then harassed by the soldiers, who stole 3,000 euros and reporting equipment from him.

"As this incident clearly illustrates, reporters in the field are targets for belligerents despite all the rules protecting journalists," said Jeanne Cavelier, the head of RSF's Eastern Europe and Central Asia desk. "They are civilians, who are keeping the world informed about the progress of the fighting. They must be able to work safely. We therefore call on all parties to the conflict to immediately commit to protecting journalists in the field in accordance with international law. We also recommend that journalists exercise the utmost caution in the light of the many attacks by Russian commandos sent ahead as scouts."

"They were less than 50 metres away," RSF was told by Briquet, who was injured in the face and arm by glass splinters from his windshield. "They clearly shot to kill. If I hadn't ducked, I would have been hit. I've been fired on before in other war zones, but I've never seen this. Journalists traveling around the country with no war experience are in mortal danger."

Under Russian fire

A crew working for the London-based pan-Arab TV channel *Al-ArabyTV* – reporter **Adnan Can** and cameraman **Habip Demirci** – came under Russian fire in Irpin, a suburb of Kyiv, on 6 March. Shots were aimed at their car even though they had attached a white flag and “Press” signs to it. Trapped in a town where fighting was taking place, the two journalists had to hide with residents.

A crew with the UK’s *Sky News* TV channel – consisting of four Brits and a Ukrainian journalist – came under fire from a Russian reconnaissance unit while heading toward Bucha, on the outskirts of Kyiv, on the fourth day of the invasion, 28 February. The crew’s leader, reporter **Stuart Ramsay**, sustained a gunshot injury to the lower back while cameraman **Richie Mockler**’s body armour stopped two other rounds. After shouting that they were journalists and after seeing that the shooting continued despite their press vests, the crew had to abandon their vehicle and run for cover.

Vojtech Bohac and **Majda Slamova**, two Czech journalists reporting for *Voxpot*, and two Ukrainian journalists with *Central TV* had more luck during a similar incident while travelling together in a car in Makariv, another town on the outskirts of Kyiv, on 3 March. They managed to escape uninjured in their car after coming under fire from Russian soldiers using AK-47 assault rifles, their media outlets reported.

Brush with death

“This shoulder wound missed costing me my life by just a few centimetres,” Danish journalist **Stefan Weichert** told RSF. He is now [hospitalised](#) in Denmark after being evacuated along his colleague, **Emil Filtenborg Mikkelsen**, who sustained four gunshot wounds in the same attack. The two reporters for the Danish newspaper *Ekstra-Bladet* sustained these injuries in the northeastern town of Okhtyrka on 26 February. “The gunman, who we weren’t able to identify, was located about 15 metres behind our car.” Weichert said. “He couldn’t have failed to see the ‘press’ sign that was clearly visible on our car.”

As well as firing live rounds at reporters, the Russian armed forces have also carried out strikes on telecommunications antennae to prevent Ukrainian TV and radio broadcasts. At least four radio and TV towers – in Kyiv, Korosten, Lyssytchansk and Kharkiv – have been the [targets](#) of Russian attacks. **Evgeny Sakun**, a cameraman for the local *Kyiv Live* TV channel, was at the Kyiv tower at the time of the attack and was killed in circumstances that RSF is investigating.

Ukraine is ranked 97th out of 180 countries in RSF’s 2021 [World Press Freedom Index](#), while Russia is ranked 150th.

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content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line **1268**