

A photograph of a protest scene. In the foreground, two people are standing with their backs to the camera, looking towards a crowd. The air is filled with thick white smoke or tear gas. In the background, there are people walking, some holding flags, and a line of police officers in riot gear. The scene is outdoors with trees visible in the distance.

**INSI**

INTERNATIONAL NEWS SAFETY INSTITUTE

# KILLING THE MESSENGER 2016

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An analysis of news media casualties carried out for the International News Safety Institute by Cardiff School of Journalism

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**Last year, 115 of our media colleagues were killed doing their work. Most were not international journalists, few had the support of major news outlets, and most died after fighting insurmountable odds, daily threats and constant pressures.**

The year began, and came to a close, with mass casualties among our profession. In Afghanistan, less than three weeks into January, a suicide bomber targeted a bus, killing eight journalists who were on board.

In late December, nine journalists were killed when a Russian military plane crashed into the Black Sea. It had been carrying members of the Alexandrov Ensemble, the official choir of the Russian armed forces to Syria when the accident happened, killing all 92 on board. The accident came less than a month after 20 journalists were among those killed when a plane carrying the Brazilian football team Chapecoense crashed near the Colombian city of Medellin.

Spanning the globe and the year, these incidents in Afghanistan, Colombia and over the Black Sea speak to the hazardous nature of journalists' work and the fact that the risks are varied, sometimes unpredictable and not limited to war reporting or countries in conflict.

Mexico maintains its position as one of the most dangerous countries to be a journalist, with 12 killed and

many others living under constant threat from organised crime and corrupt officials. Its Central American neighbour, Guatemala, is gaining a foothold in this grim league table with six killed in a country where journalists are increasingly at risk of being targeted by drug cartels.

Elsewhere, Afghanistan, Iraq, Yemen and Syria all proved to be deadly, each accounting for at least six deaths. However, six of the 2016 casualties came from a country supposedly at peace, India, where investigative journalists are increasingly being targeted by those who wish to silence the messenger.

Like Dharmendra Singh the most recent Indian journalist to be killed, almost half of those killed were shot. The second most common cause of death was an air accident - with the two aforementioned tragedies creating a disproportionate spike in numbers in this field. A further 27 were blown up, making this the third most common cause of death.

This year, there have been four arrests and two people charged with the deaths of journalists. Historically, the figure has been as high as 9 out of 10 killers of journalists going unpunished.

For all the darkness that seems to have pervaded this year, it is perhaps a small sign of hope.

– Hannah Storm, INSI Director



Image above: Afghan reporter Zabihullah Tamanna prepares to broadcast on the outskirts of Kabul. He was killed by the Taliban in southern Afghanistan along with American journalist David Gilkey. Cover image: Journalists stand in smoke from tear gas fired by Turkish riot police to disperse demonstrators.

## Country of journalists' death



## Country of journalists' origin

**1 killed** from Democratic Republic of Congo, El Salvador, Georgia, Guinea, Iran, Jordan, Kenya, Myanmar, Netherlands, South Sudan, Turkey, Ukraine and USA

**2 killed** Bangladesh, Libya, Pakistan and Somalia

**3 killed** from Philippines

**6 killed** from Guatemala, India and Syria

**8 killed** from Yemen

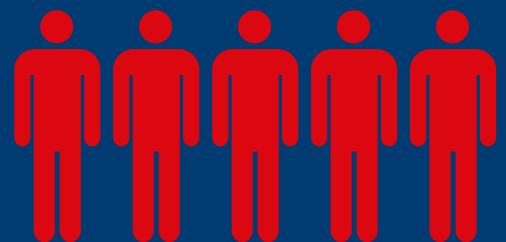
**9 killed** from Russia

**11 killed** from Afghanistan and Iraq

**12 killed** from Mexico

**23 killed** from Brazil

## Citizen journalists killed



All 5 citizen journalists killed were from Syria

TOTAL KILLED

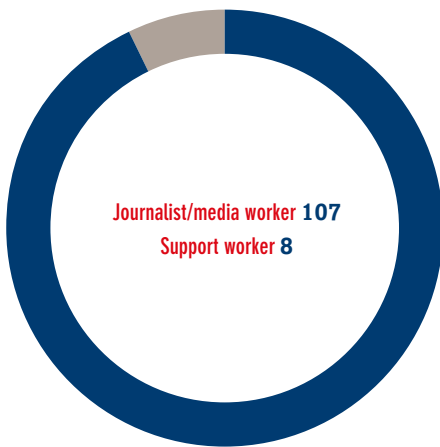
**115**



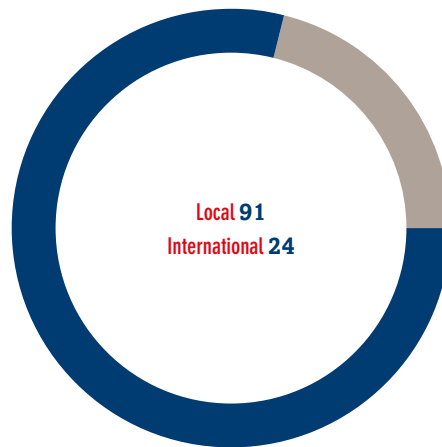
Top image: Photos of killed journalists stuck on the fence of the Veracruz state representative's office during a journalists protest in Mexico City.  
Bottom image: A Pakistani journalist holds a poster bearing the image of a news cameraman killed in a suicide bombing.



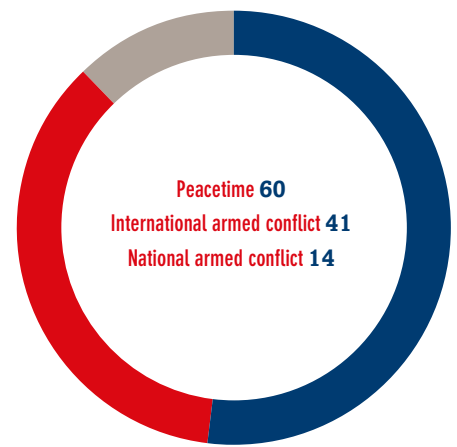
Professional position



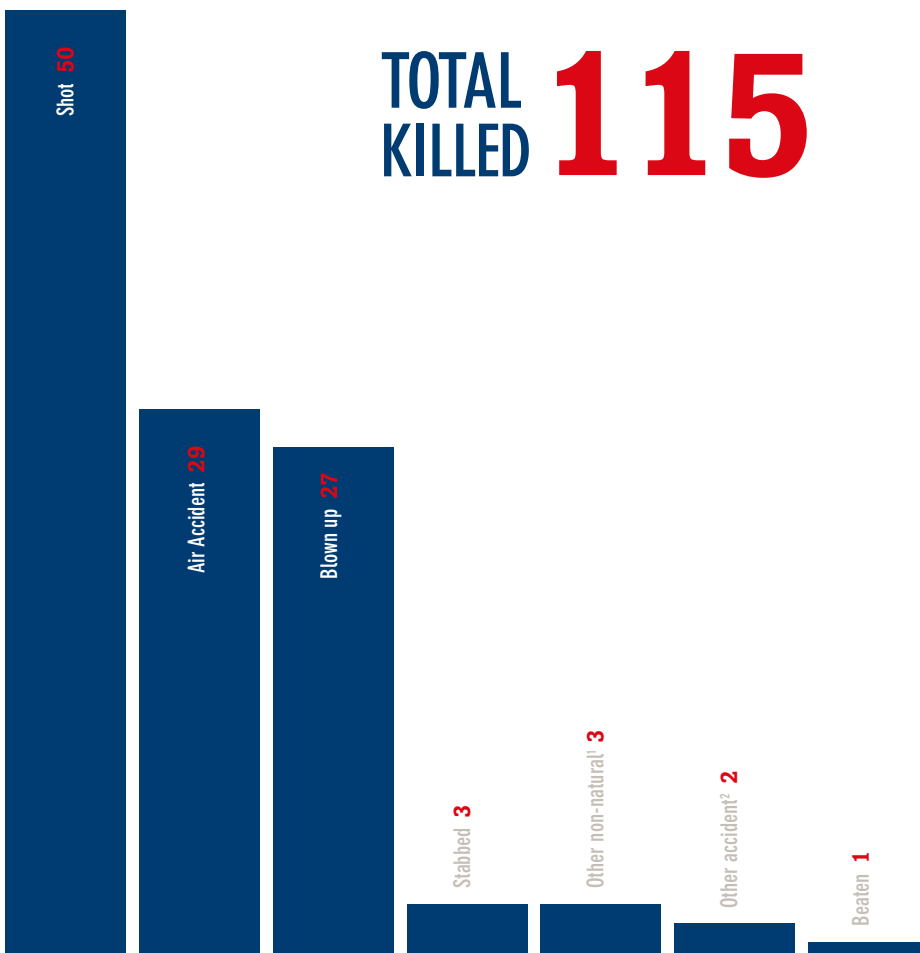
Status of journalist in country



Context of death



Cause of death



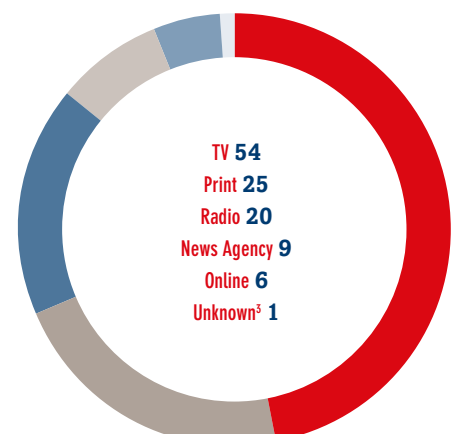
<sup>1</sup> Bodies found with evidence of violent deaths.

<sup>2</sup> One electrocuted, one drowned.

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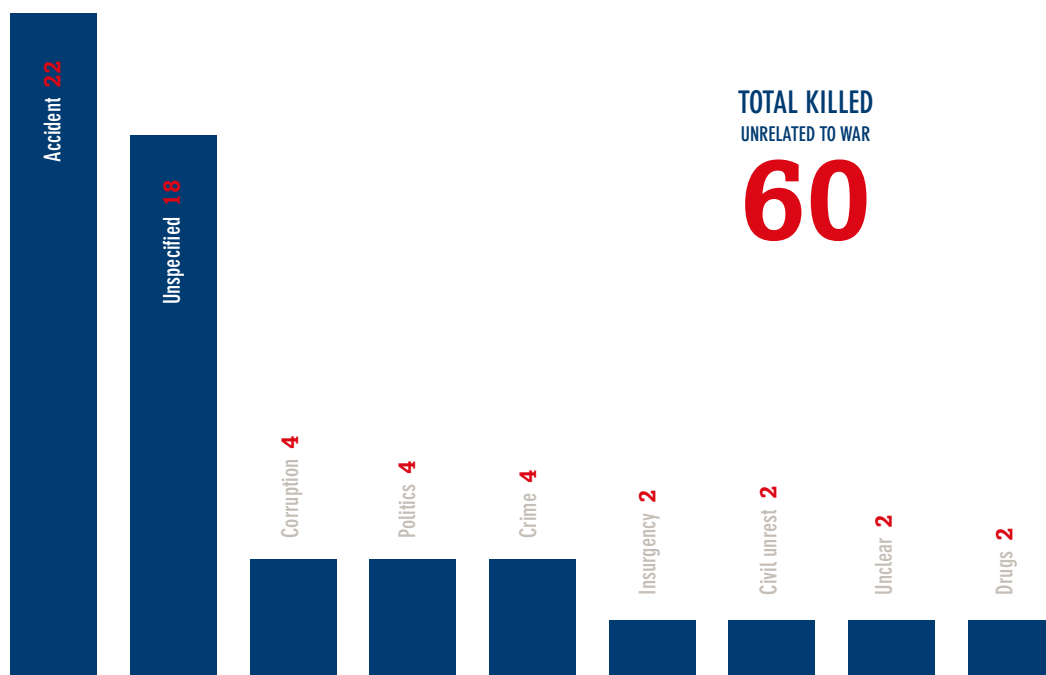
Employer/commissioner



<sup>3</sup> Freelance photographer killed in Yemen.

## JOURNALISTS KILLED: THE NUMBERS

### Deaths unrelated to war reporting



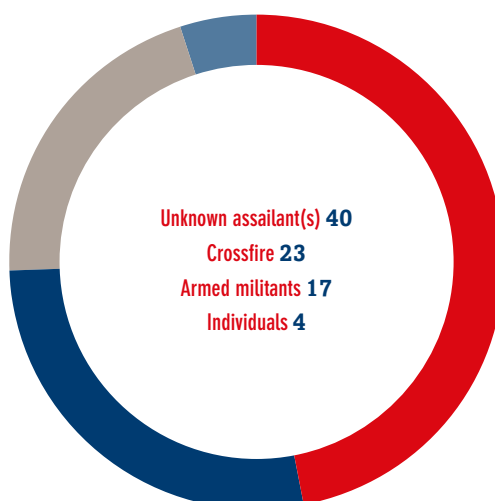
### Legal outcome<sup>4</sup>



### TOTAL KILLED WITH LEGAL OUTCOMES

04

### Perpetrator<sup>7</sup>



<sup>4</sup> This does not include accidents, crossfire, aerial bombardments, suicide bombings, or an attack on a convoy that journalists were part of.


<sup>5</sup> Suspects have been identified or arrests made.

<sup>6</sup> Suspects have been arrested and charged.

<sup>7</sup> Accidents are not included here.



Journalists run from tear gas as riot police clash with demonstrators during a protest in Nairobi against government corruption.

A photograph of a protest scene. In the foreground, a person in a checkered shirt and striped pants is running. In the background, a cameraman is filming, and there is smoke on the ground. A blue text box is overlaid on the image.

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