

EBU Applauds UN Resolution on Journalist Safety

Geneva, 24 December 2006 – The European Broadcasting Union (EBU)* warmly welcomes the unanimous adoption of a resolution, on journalist safety by the United Nations Security Council yesterday.

"We are delighted that the UN has recognised the importance of journalists' safety," said Jean Réveillon, Secretary General of the EBU, the professional association of Europe's public service broadcasters.

"The protection of journalists in conflict zones is crucial to ensuring freedom of expression and opinion. The media can give a voice and visibility to peoples suffering in conflict zones. The resolution will help ensure full and balanced reporting".

The EBU – operator of Eurovision, the world's largest provider of international transmission and production services for live news events – has campaigned for more than two years with INSI and the International Federation of Journalists for a Security Council resolution on journalist safety.

The EBU is committed to journalist safety, and runs a course, *Hostile Environment and Safety Training*, for its Members. The course aims to help journalists operate securely in a conflict area.

The resolution, which was first tabled at UN Headquarters on 5 December 2006 by France and Greece and backed by Britain, Slovakia and Denmark, urges states to do their utmost to prevent crimes against journalists and to investigate all crimes committed against media professionals. Increasing numbers of journalists and media staff are being killed in pursuit of their profession – the International News Safety Institute (INSI) says the total so far this year is running at a record 144 – and very few cases of murder are ever pursued.

At the World Electronic Media Forum in November 2005, organized by EBU and its sister organizations alongside the World Summit on the Information Society in Tunis, the EBU President presented the text of a draft resolution to UN Secretary General Kofi Annan.

Mr Annan, who leaves office at the end of this month, pledged to press governments to uphold their responsibility to create conditions in which journalists can do their job safely, and to bring to justice those who commit crimes against them.

Deeply concerned at the frequency of acts of violence, including deliberate attacks, in many parts of the world against journalists, media professionals and associated personnel, in armed conflicts, the Security Council yesterday condemned such attacks and called on all parties to put an end to such practices.

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** The EBU helps Europe's public service broadcasters (74 Members) to deliver unique high quality European programming to their audiences. It offers Members technical, operational and legal services, and coordinates a growing supply of quality European content for radio, television and new platforms. It provides members with information and analysis on media trends, and training designed to meet their needs. The EBU works to secure recognition of the crucial role of public service broadcasters in Europe's digital audiovisual landscape.*