



INTERNATIONAL NEWS
SAFETY INSTITUTE

**Director's Report
Annual Meeting
Amsterdam**

9 November 2005

As we enter our third year, I can say with absolute confidence that the **International News Safety Institute** already has made an indelible mark in the global struggle to save journalist lives.

Were we to retire from the field today, we would leave:

- 300 news media staff in 9 violent countries trained to help themselves survive
- A strong body of evidence from around the world on why people kill journalists and what might be done to stop it
- Real momentum for international action to stem the bloodshed
- Journalist safety inscribed for the first time in the British Military's media operations bible
- Safety message planted in fertile fields around the globe

Thanks to the unstinting support of our members, news organisations and journalist support groups alike, we have come a considerable way since we first gathered in 2003 and set off on our unique mission to provide practical, preventive help to journalists in danger.

Of course, we are not retiring today, or planning to do so any time soon.

Although we have achieved much, it is still far too little while thousands of our friends and colleagues around the world continue to face daily danger.

We have to make sure our safety drive doesn't flag in a news industry whose attention span is notoriously short.

With your continued backing and indefatigable dedication INSI can – and will – achieve greater things in 2006 and beyond.

I thank you -- and ask for more.

Global Inquiry

The INSI Global Inquiry into journalist deaths has been at the forefront of our activities this past year.

We have held fact-finding sessions in Kuala Lumpur with Asian journalists, Doha for those in the Middle East and Gulf, London for international reporters and New York for colleagues in Latin America.

We started this critical project after our last Annual Meeting with much ambition but – as usual – no money.

However, we won key sponsorship for the Doha and New York sessions from Al Jazeera and the Museum of Radio & Television, the Knight Foundation, Open Society Foundation and the McCormick Tribune Foundation respectively. The Open Society Foundation has agreed to fund a gathering of media legal experts early in 2006.

Our next session, for journalists from Eastern Europe and Russia, is here in Amsterdam tomorrow, 10 November. We are indebted to Sky News, Channel 4, CNN, Reuters, BBC, AKE and NOS for sponsoring the travel and accommodation of journalists who need to be heard.

We will hold a fact-finding session for Africa early next year.

We have now amassed a considerable amount of anecdotal evidence from journalists who have experienced physical attack or who are experts in that field.

The next step is to analyse and sort this material as well as a mountain of historical data.

We are working with Cardiff University J-school on how best to do this.

The aim of the inquiry is to produce a report and recommendations to be presented to international bodies, governments and news organisations.

Supported by this solid body of evidence – never before brought together in such a comprehensive way -- we will seek international action to halt the spiral of journalist deaths.

So far this year, INSI has recorded 68 news media dead, compared with 117 for 2004, a 10-year record.

Iraq remains the bloodiest killing field with 88 dead, according to our count, since 1993, compared with about 70 over the 20 years of Vietnam.

If the pace of killings is slowing in some countries, there are grave indications that the method of silencing free reporting with bomb and bullet, beating and threat, is working.

Journalists in Latin America, for example, say many colleagues have been intimidated into self-censorship by killings and threats. A culture of impunity, under which few murderers of journalists ever face justice, helps encourage more of the same.

The need for better safety training for journalists exposed to danger remains has not lessened. It is as critical as ever.

We must strive to give brave colleagues working in horror conditions the knowledge and tools with which to defend themselves.

UN resolution

Alongside the Inquiry, we are working with the EBU and Aidan White, our Honorary Treasurer and head of the IFJ, on a draft Security Council resolution on the safety of journalists.

We will be seeking support at the WSIS conference in Tunis later this month and at a key meeting of European NGOs in London next month.

We need the backing of a permanent member of the Security Council members to get the resolution before that body.

The resolution echoes a Security Council declaration on the safety of humanitarian workers in conflict. Whilst obviously that is a good thing, we have been pointing out to anyone who will listen that three times more journalists die in warfare.

The resolution addresses head-on the scandalous issue of impunity for the killers of journalists.

Military-Media

INSI has made telling progress on journalist safety on the 21st century battlefield.

We launched an initiative, supported by the London-based News Security Group, to have journalist safety written into the British Defence Ministry's "Green Book" of media operations in time of war.

Now the British battlefield bible will for the first time contain elements dealing with journalist safety. Our prime request, that the British recognise the right of independent journalists to be in the battle space, has been accepted – a real breakthrough.

Other concessions to journalist safety are also made in the latest draft of the Green Book. We are working on more.

On the downside, we have made little progress in similar discussions with the Americans and Israelis. But we will press on.

We always believed that if the British, a key military power, recognised the issue of journalist safety, and enshrined it in print in their basic operational manual, we could use it to help pressure others.

Safety Training

INSI's global training programme is making solid though insufficient progress.

We have now provided basic safety training to almost 300 journalists in nine countries.

This is good. These are all underprivileged journalists in danger areas who, until INSI came along, would have received no protective training and advice whatsoever.

But we must do more.

Progress has been held back, as always, by insufficient funds. INSI has to seek funding on a project-by-project basis from individual donors who often have the say on where and when we provide the training.

The Swedish International Development Agency (Sida) continues as our principal benefactor for our regional safety network and we have attracted substantial money for training from UNESCO, the British Foreign Office and the Open Society Foundation.

But we need to focus more on securing fresh sources of funding.

We need a more consistent stream of cash that we can apply according to our priorities if we are to reach the thousands of journalists in need.

I try to underline this issue whenever we seek out new members, and appeal for help from our existing supporters.

We need members not only to pay to run our organisation, but because we need their names to back up our appeals to international donors and provide added legitimacy. Every cent we raise is ploughed back into our operations.

All benefit from the training, local and international media alike. Many of the journalists we reach work as stringers for newspapers and broadcasters in other countries.

And of course the safe flow of news is crucial for all of us.

That point was made strongly in New York in September at an INSI panel discussion on journalist safety which ran alongside our Latin America fact-finding session.

Regional Coordinators

With Sida's help, we have now established regional offices for Latin America, South East Asia, South Asia, Africa and the Middle East.

I would like to welcome formally Luisa Rangel from Venezuela, Sunanda Deshapriya and Frederica Janz, who work in concert in Sri Lanka, Nadim Al-Jamal from Ramallah in the West Bank, Birima Fall from Senegal and Enrico Aditjondro from Jakarta. Their contact details are on our website.

These offices are charged with coordinating training, boosting our flow of safety information – and also with acting as much-needed support for our overstretched central staff in Brussels.

(I must pay tribute here to the sterling work of Sarah de Jong and Adrien Collin, in our Brussels Head Office. When I look back on what we have done this past year, I have to remind myself we have only two fulltime staff.)

To spread the load and make INSI more effective, we plan to harness Brussels and the regional coordinators into one global virtual office via the Internet and free-phone Skype connections.

Membership

INSI's membership continues to grow, albeit more slowly than we would like.

We now have 70 members, 12 more than at our last Annual Meeting.

Obviously, the target we adopted last year, for each Board member to bring in three new members, was not reached. More effort is required.

I'd like to have 100 members by this time next year. But we need the help of all to hit the spot.

Our main support still comes from broadcasters and agencies. With a couple of exceptions, newspapers remain difficult to persuade.

But we make progress, and that is encouraging for us and for those many journalists in the developing world who are in extreme danger and who undoubtedly benefit from our work.

The feedback we have received from our training projects underlines their great importance to our colleagues who have the greatest need.

Al Jazeera this year joined our Advisory Board, in recognition of its strong support of INSI from launch through our Board and Inquiry Fact Finding meetings in Doha in May.

Website

Another source of encouragement is the attraction of our website, which is pulling in about 25,000 visitors a month, with up to 500,000 page views. Our webmaster says this is a remarkable audience for one so young.

According to a recent analysis, the top pages are the Index, the AFP news feed, Safety Advice, Links, Hotspots, Noticeboard, Training and Casualties, roughly in that order. The "Tell a Colleague" button was used more than 270 times in a four-day period.

We're planning a complete review of the website next year and would welcome comments and suggestions.

We need more informative contributions and advice from journalists in Hotspots to enliven the website and maintain its topicality.

Missionary Work

In the course of the past year I have represented INSI and spoken about journalist safety at the following events:

NATO Public Affairs Officers, Norfolk, Va., on media-military relations; Military-Media training course in UK; World Press Freedom Day, Oslo, on journalists in danger; Asia Media Summit in Kuala Lumpur; European Union Sub-Committee on Human Rights in Brussels; European Broadcasting Union editors conference; Thomson Foundation international journalists in London; Cardiff University international journalism students in Cardiff; City University international journalism students in London; International Consortium of Investigative Journalists in London; CNN World Report convention in Atlanta; panel on journalist safety at the World Economic Forum, Davos.

I have also placed articles on journalist safety in The Times Online and UK Press Gazette and done interviews on current safety issues with CNN, BBC (Radio Four Today programme and Northern Ireland), RTE, Guardian and American Journalism Review.

I am working with AKE and TOR International on an INSI "road show" to present safety work and resources at news media events.

Our INSI video, dramatically illustrating for journalist and non-professional audiences the dangers journalists face, is being premiered at this NewsXchange at the INSI safety segment on Friday.

We continue to work with Cardiff University on an INSI safety segment for journalism schools, to be accessed via the Internet. I hope this project, constantly interrupted by other demands on us and on Cardiff, will bear tangible fruit early in 2006.

We will also be working on improved promotional handout material about INSI, once we have located funds for design and printing.

I appeal to all INSI members to let me know of any upcoming news media event anywhere at which I might preach about INSI and the journalist safety code.

Thank you for your support – and stay safe.



**Projects Report
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As of September we can call ourselves a truly global organization with 6 regional INSI Offices in Europe, Middle East, Africa, Latin America, South Asia, and South East Asia.

These offices are primarily responsible for information-gathering on media safety in their regions and for contributing to the core activities of the Institute.

INSI now has trained 315 journalists and media support staff in 9 countries -- Russia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Iraq, Palestine, Venezuela and Colombia.

The biggest single group of journalists to benefit is Iraqi.

We have trained 80 so far and are about to hold two more safety courses before the end of this month.

Thanks to the Mo Amin Award that we received at NewsXchange last year, and the additional money pledged by conference participants, we have been able to train a dozen Iraqi cameramen.

Approximately 65 women journalists have been trained.

Significantly, 20 per cent of journalists trained are local staff working for our own members.

These include the BBC, AFP, Associated Press, Reuters, ZDF, NBC, ABC, the Boston Globe, Internews, Institute for War and Peace reporting, Al Jazeera, ITN, and CNN.

Each of these safety training courses is in fact a project on its own. Fund-raising must be done for each.

We would like to thank the following organisations that have supported this work:

The Swedish International Development Agency

The British Foreign & Commonwealth Office

UNESCO

Open Society Institute

International Media Support

International Federation of Journalists

Over the coming months, we will be organizing training in Iraq, Palestine, Philippines, Haiti, Colombia and possibly also Kenya.

This coming year we will be starting a training of trainers programme ensuring capacity building in local journalists' communities.

We will be doing this in close cooperation with AKE and TOR International, the recognized companies currently providing training for the INSI projects.

Sarah de Jong
Deputy Director & Project Manager
November 2005