



(A Shattered Voice and a Clearer Picture)
Media freedoms report 2024

91 Palestinian Journalists
Killed in 2024 Paying the Price for Truth's Flight

(Prepared by: Freedoms Committee/Palestinian Journalists Syndicate)



By Mohammed Al-Laham, Chair of the Freedoms Committee at PJS

The year 2024 bore witness to the continuation of a bloody saga produced by the Israeli occupation. By the year's end, this tragic series claimed the lives of approximately 46,000 Palestinians, including 193 journalists, since the assault on October 7, 2023.

This year of bloodshed requires terminology far beyond “genocide” to describe the atrocities inflicted on the Palestinian people at large and on journalists in particular. The deliberate targeting of the press was underscored by missiles, artillery shells, and sniper bullets, all employed to silence the truth.

In 2023, Israeli forces killed 102 journalists over three months. Yet the assault on the truth did not stop there. Photographers, correspondents, editors, and media technicians were killed, their work revealing the brutal reality behind the veil of propaganda that Israel had maintained for decades.

In 2024, Palestinian journalism wrote a new chapter in global media history, blending professionalism, patriotism, and humanity. This sacrifice came at an immeasurable cost: 91 journalists lost their lives, some of their bodies still buried under rubble. Dozens of others languish in Israeli detention, enduring torture and suffering.



Targeting Truth: A Deadly Pattern

A startling disparity emerged in the casualty figures among journalists in war zones: the death toll far outstripped the number of injured or detained. This alarming trend reflects a deliberate policy by Israeli forces to eliminate journalists rather than merely intimidate them. Whether targeted by drone strikes, artillery shells, or sniper fire, journalists were often treated as direct threats and marked for death.

The inclusion of armed drones as tools of suppression in 2024 marked a grim milestone. These drones, loaded with explosives and controlled remotely, claimed the lives of 29 journalists in a single year. Such technology represents an escalation in the methods employed to suppress freedom of expression.

New Tools of Repression



The Israeli military also introduced unprecedented punitive measures, including the deliberate targeting of journalists' families as a form of collective punishment. Meanwhile, bullets intended to intimidate journalists were deployed more frequently than tear gas or sound grenades, signifying a shift in the tactics of suppression.

Enforced disappearances, arbitrary arrests, and torture—particularly of female journalists—escalated to unprecedented levels in 2024. Similarly, settler violence against journalists, once rare, became a frequent occurrence, reflecting a broader breakdown in the Israeli military's monopoly on repression.

Documenting the Atrocities

Efforts to document these violations have faced immense challenges, particularly in Gaza, where the occupation's unrelenting violence spares no one. Despite the difficulties, recording these crimes remains essential to exposing the reality and securing international action to protect journalists. 2024: A Year of Human Wounds and New Documentation Tools^[1] The year 2024 saw an expansion in the categories of violations against journalists, increasing from the usual ten to 21. This growth reflects the introduction of new methods of repression and violence, including drone strikes, family-targeted assassinations, and amplified settler aggression. The brutality of 2024 has left an indelible mark on Palestinian journalism, underscoring the urgent need for global solidarity and action to safeguard those who risk their lives to expose the truth.

91 Journalists Killed, Including 23 Women



The year 2024 marked an unprecedented tragedy for Palestinian journalists, with 91 media workers losing their lives, all from Gaza. Among them were 23 female journalists, many killed in mass-casualty events, such as incidents where five journalists died in a single attack, four in another, and three in yet another. Most of these journalists were killed by airstrikes, drone attacks, artillery shells, or sniper fire.

Families of Journalists Targeted



In 2024, approximately 164 relatives of journalists were killed in airstrikes targeting their homes. Many journalists lost entire families, paying the ultimate price for their profession. Additionally, 53 homes belonging to journalists were destroyed.

Bloody Injuries and Neglected Wounds



The year also saw at least 86 journalists injured, some fatally, due to a lack of medical treatment for their wounds. The overarching theme of violence defined the Palestinian experience in 2024, with journalists suffering alongside their communities.

Arrests, Enforced Disappearances, and Torture



At least 64 journalists were arrested across the West Bank and Gaza. Some remain in administrative detention without charges or fair trials, while others were temporarily detained and subjected to torture. Of those detained, 15 underwent interrogations, and 27 were tried in military courts.

Female journalists also faced targeted arrests, with at least 20 detained, accused of “incitement” under dubious charges. Enforced disappearances increased significantly, as seen in the cases of Nidal Al-Wahidi of Al-Najah TV and New Press, and Haitham Abdul Wahid of Eye Media. While some were located after weeks of uncertainty, others remain unaccounted for.



Relentless Attacks on Media Institutions



Media organizations endured severe targeting, with 54 cases of destruction, confiscation, or vandalism reported. Furthermore, 28 institutions faced closures or extended shutdowns by Israeli authorities.

Widespread Restrictions and Violence



Journalists experienced 367 incidents of detention or obstruction while working, most occurring in the West Bank. These incidents often involved physical assault, verbal abuse, and the confiscation of equipment, including the deletion of captured footage.

Increased use of live ammunition was notable, with 148 incidents of journalists being shot, compared to 85 cases involving tear gas inhalation. Physical assaults, including beatings with rifle butts, batons, and kicks, were reported in 58 cases.

Settler Violence and Vehicular Attacks



Settler attacks on journalists increased significantly, with 27 incidents recorded, particularly in Jerusalem. These attacks often led to injuries requiring hospital treatment and were accompanied by direct threats with weapons. Additionally, 23 cases of journalists being hit or nearly hit by military vehicles were reported.



Other Forms of Targeting

Journalists also faced destruction of communication infrastructure, travel bans, home raids, and equipment confiscation, including cameras, mobile devices, and personal belongings.



Conclusive Observations

The data from 2024 underscores a systematic policy by the Israeli government to suppress Palestinian journalists. This is not merely the result of field-level decisions but an institutional effort involving political, military, and judicial branches, as well as settlers. Even Israel's Supreme Court rejected a request from the Foreign Press Association to allow coverage from Gaza, further highlighting institutional complicity.

The targeting of journalists' families, the destruction of homes, and the use of live ammunition reflect a deliberate strategy to instil fear and silence those reporting the truth. These actions defy international conventions and norms, with no precedent for such systematic violence against journalists anywhere else in the world.

Recommendations

1. **International Advocacy:** Urge international bodies, including the United Nations, the International Criminal Court, and the Human Rights Council, to enact measures to protect journalists and hold perpetrators accountable.
2. **Coalition Building:** Form a coalition led by the Palestinian Journalists' Syndicate, Arab Journalists' Union, and International Federation of Journalists to address the legal and professional needs of Palestinian journalists.
3. **Documentation and Expertise:** Enhance documentation efforts by recruiting experts and training teams to record violations accurately for use in advocacy and legal proceedings.
4. **Identifying Perpetrators:** Document the identities and actions of those responsible for crimes against journalists to pursue justice globally.
5. **Support for Journalists:** Mobilize resources to improve working conditions and provide essential support to journalists in Gaza, where the blockade exacerbates challenges.
6. **Unified Efforts:** Encourage collaboration among Palestinian institutions, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and civil society organizations, to amplify advocacy efforts.
7. **Humanizing Victims:** Promote storytelling that humanizes journalists and highlights the personal toll of these attacks, moving beyond mere statistics.
8. **Safety Measures:** Urge journalists to prioritize safety and avoid high-risk situations while adhering to professional ethics.

The ongoing targeting of Palestinian journalists is a grave violation of press freedom and human rights. Without concerted efforts to address these abuses, the truth remains at risk of being buried alongside those who dare to report it.