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**Open debate of the Security Council  
on  
Protection of Journalists in Conflict Situations**

**27 May 2015  
Intervention by  
H.E. Ambassador Zsolt Hetesy  
Chargé d'Affaires a.i.**

Mme. President,

Hungary is deeply committed to the protection of civilians, and welcomes the Lithuanian presidency's initiative on the protection of journalists in conflict situations. We also thank our distinguished speakers for their informative briefings. While fully supporting the statement of EU, that has been delivered recently, Hungary makes the following remarks in its national capacity.

In the past decades the conditions for members of the media have deteriorated sharply, journalists are increasingly being singled out and attacked for what they write and say. Safety of journalists has direct impact on the freedom of opinion and expression therefore they must be protected.

For people in conflict situations, access to quality and timely information can be a matter of life and death. Furthermore, unhindered work of journalist has a mitigating effect on the conflict and on the worst violations. Conversely, restrictions or attacks on the independent media, together with biased propaganda, may easily contribute to escalation.

Yet, in the past decade, attacks against journalists reporting from conflict zones have steadily increased both in number and severity. According to a 2014 survey, nearly half of women journalists said that they had experienced sexual harassment. Many of these crimes remain unreported for fear of reprisals and stigmatization. When incidents do get public attention, "blaming the victim" is a frequent phenomenon.

Mushrooming conflicts, asymmetrical warfare, but also hunger for negative sensations in reporting, will continuously send media workers in harm's way. Therefore, we must protect those, on whom our access to information partially depends.

We applaud the Security Council for adapting Resolution 2222 (2015) today. Hungary is a proud co-sponsor of this resolution.

As many others have also emphasized it, outside of these walls, GA Resolution 68/163, on "The safety of journalists and the issue of impunity" recommends practical measures to promote safe and enabling environment for media workers. Furthermore, the resolution clearly identifies the threat posed by non-State actors, including terrorist groups and criminal organizations.

Mme. President,

As your concept paper points it out, vast majority of these crimes still go unpunished. Since 2014, the "International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists" ensures constant attention to this issue. While accountability for crimes can prevent future attacks, ending impunity is, first and foremost, a State responsibility.

However, the increased number of attacks on journalists is a *symptom* of a much broader problem, related to the diminishing respect for international human rights and humanitarian law obligations in conflict situations. Therefore, besides treating the symptom, we will also have to focus on the root causes.

Based on this understanding, violence against journalists can only be addressed by the cooperation of States, the UN agencies and relevant stakeholders.

The UN Plan of Action "on the safety of journalists and the issue of impunity" is the first holistic effort to address these issues. We commend UNESCO, as the overall coordinator of the implementation of the Plan of Action.

In order to strengthen cooperation with the academia, UNESCO is organizing dedicated workshops in order to establish an academic research agenda on journalists' safety. The first Special Session will be organized in collaboration with the Global Communication Association (GCA) Conference during the 10th GCA Conference in Berlin, Germany from 16 -19 July 2015.

We also urge the Security Council to build on its resolution adopted today in order to further assist these endeavours in conflict situations.

Thank you, Mme. President.