

GUIDELINES FOR JOURNALISTS COVERING CHILDREN IN WAR AND CONFLICT

**Adopted by Participants in the Workshop for Journalists
on War-Affected Children**

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A. RIGHT TO FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

The right to freedom of expression is a fundamental human right. All rights and duties of a journalist originate from this right. From this also derives the right of the public to be informed. Journalists in war and conflict situations shall, accordingly, uphold as a supreme professional obligation the public's right to accurate information.

Journalists shall consider it their obligation to publicize early warning signs to potential conflict situations.

Journalists shall pay attention to covering efforts at resolving conflicts, rehabilitation and social reintegration, not ignoring efforts made through local initiatives.

B. PROFESSIONAL COMMITMENT OF JOURNALISTS

Journalists shall maintain a high degree of commitment and professionalism in the discharge of their duties. In furtherance of this principle:

1. Journalists shall maintain independence of conscience from all factions in war and conflict;
2. Journalists should constantly guard against being used as propaganda tools;
3. Journalists should endeavour to establish links with civil society and any other credible sources in order to develop a high degree of mutual trust and confidence;
4. Journalists covering situations of armed conflict shall properly familiarize themselves with issues affecting the conflict;
5. Journalists shall endeavour to expose by any means available acts of atrocities and their perpetrators at all times;
6. Journalists should make every effort to avoid being compromised with such things as incentives which might influence them to deviate from the established professional ethics.

C. SENSATIONALISM

In view of the volatile nature of armed conflicts, journalists shall take the greatest care in the choice of language, images and information so as not to aggravate the conflict situation.

Where information is true but potentially explosive and the journalist thinks it is of public interest, he/she must take great care in publishing the story.