



World Press Freedom Day 2023 Event on the 2023 Joint Declaration

3rd May, 09.30-11.00

Vance Centre, New York Bar Association

The role of media freedom for attaining and sustaining democracies

On World Press Freedom Day, the four international freedom of expression mandate holders from the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the African Commission of Human Rights, and the Inter-American Commission for Human Rights will come together to present their Joint Declaration on media freedom and democracy.

This Joint Declaration unfolds the important role of media freedom in enabling and upholding democratic societies. The year 2023 marks the 75th anniversary of the UN Declaration of Human Rights, the 30th anniversary of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action and the 30th anniversary of the celebration of World Press Freedom Day. Commemorating these milestones, the Joint Declaration outlines how media freedom fits into the broader human rights and democratic framework, including by enabling other human rights (*inter alia* political, economic, social and cultural rights) and sustainable development. With this Joint Declaration, the mandate holders acknowledge that the state of democracy and fundamental rights globally is currently challenged in unprecedented ways and provide guidance to states and other actors on creating an enabling environment for independent and pluralistic media, which would allow media to perform their important function in the democratic societies.

The event will provide an opportunity to explore and deliberate the role of the media in democracy as provider of quality information, as public watchdog, and supporter of democratic processes and human rights. In particular, the session aims at outlining ways to enable the media to play their role in democratic societies and the steps states and other actors, including online platforms, need to take to ensure genuine and functional freedom of the media.

Joint Declarations by the free speech rapporteurs have been adopted annually since 1999, covering current universal challenges to freedom of expression.

Speakers

- **Irene Khan**, UN Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of the Right to Freedom of Opinion and Expression
- **Teresa Ribeiro**, OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media
- **Ourveena Geereesha Topsy-Sonoo**, African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information
- **Pedro Vaca**, Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR)

Moderator

- **Quinn McKew**, Executive Director, Article 19

Target Audience

As this discussion follows the official launch of this year's JD during the main plenary on 2nd May, which is planned to target states and public officials, this off-site event aims at enabling more in-depth discussions with a broader audience, bringing together experts in academia, civil society, media, private sector, and intergovernmental organizations who work on media freedom and democratic values. The event will provide a platform to discuss the main themes and recommendations of the 2023 Joint Declaration and ways forward with regard to their implementation via comprehensive, multi-stakeholder approach.