South African media community mourns journalists killed in Gaza

By GroundUp Staff ²⁹ Jan 2024

Posters of journalists killed while covering the Israeli war on Gaza were placed outside St George's Cathedral o
Sunday evening.

Many Cape Town journalists attended the vigil. Source: *GroundUp*

About 200 people, many of them journalists, took part in a vigil outside St George's Cathedral in Cape Town on Sunday
evening. They were there to express solidarity with Palestinian journalists and commemorate the extremely high number of
media workers killed in Gaza since 7 October.

The Committee to Protect Journalists states that as at 28 January, 83 journalists and media workers are confirmed dead i
the war in Israel, the Occupied Palestinian Territories and Lebanon since 7 October. These include 76 Palestinians, four
Israelis, and three Lebanese. The organisation says that it is "also investigating numerous unconfirmed reports of other
journalists being killed, missing, detained, hurt, or threatened, and of damage to media offices and journalists' homes".

The government media office in Gaza estimates over 100 journalists have been killed.

Raeesa Pather, a journalist, chaired the vigil. She told the story of Ayat Khadoura, a Palestinian journalist and podcaster.

HUMAN RIGHTS LAW

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On 6 November Khadoura published a video on Instagram that she called "my last message to the world". The CPJ website
says she was killed on 20 November along with an unknown number of family members in an Israeli airstrike on her home
northern Gaza.

Veteran journalist Jimi Matthews addressed the crowd and called out the names of the five journalists who died "with their
boots on" in the ten years that he covered the struggle against apartheid. He compared that to the over 100 journalists
believed to be killed in Gaza in just over 100 days.

Matthews paid tribute to the Palestinian journalists risking their lives to tell the world what is going on in Gaza. But he also

criticised "our colleagues in the mainstream western media" who have "embedded with the" Israeli military and had their reports "vetted by the Israelis before publication".

Sound clips were also played of Palestinian journalists Samer Zaneen (via a translator), Youmna ElSayed, Maram Humaid and Nizar Sadawi. They told their personal stories and all expressed gratitude for South African journalists standing in solidarity with them.Michael Weeder, Dean of St George's Cathedral, Farieda Rabiyah Nsoki-Nzuzi of Radio 786, arts journalist Attiyah Khan, veteran journalist Zubeida Jaffer and Reverend Allan Boesak also addressed the vigil.

People were invited to light candles in honour of the reporters who have been killed. Posters with the faces of dead reporters were put up on the outside of the cathedral.Similar vigils were organised in Johannesburg, Makhanda and Durban. Published originally on GroundUp.

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