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Minister Joly participates in Third Global Conference for Media Freedom

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News release

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Canada believes in free and independent media because freedom of the press is the bedrock of a healthy democracy.

Today, the Honourable Mélanie Joly, Minister of Foreign Affairs, concluded her virtual participation in the Third Global Conference for Media Freedom, which took place on February 9 and 10 and was hosted by Estonia

Throughout her participation, Minister Joly emphasized that a strong democracy relies on access to diverse and reliable sources of news and information and, ultimately, a shared set of facts. These facts enable members of society to develop informed opinions, hold governments and individuals accountable and constructively participate in public debate. The Minister also highlighted Canada's commitment to supporting and strengthening free and independent media around the world.

With this in mind, the Minister announced the following funding in support of media freedom:

- \$636,048 in funding to support the International Press Institute in its work of strengthening the safety of journalists in Sub-Saharan Africa
- \$1 million in funding to support UNESCO's Global Media Defence Fund in 2022; the Global Media Defence Fund helps organizations around the world promote

media freedom.

Minister Joly also participated in a panel discussion on disinformation and freedom of expression. She illustrated the dangers of disinformation through the example of the ongoing crisis in Ukraine, where Russia continues to push false narratives to undermine the Ukrainian government through overt and covert disinformation. Minister Joly was clear that Russia must de-escalate and cease its disinformation activities.

At the conference, Minister Joly and Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon, U.K. Minister for South Asia, the United Nations and the Commonwealth, presented the Canada-United Kingdom Freedom Award for Media Freedom to Vietnamese journalist Pham Doan Trang for her work in advancing democracy and human rights in Vietnam.

In addition, Minister Joly congratulated Eva-Maria Liimets, her Estonian counterpart, for organizing a successful conference. As the United Kingdom concluded its co-chairship of the Media Freedom Coalition, Minister Joly thanked the U.K. for its leadership in the coalition since its inception. Canada looks forward to working with the Netherlands as the Netherlands assumes co-chairship of the coalition.

Quotes

“A free and independent media plays a vital role in building democratic societies. Canada is committed to working with the international community to protect media freedom and support those that defend it.”

- *Mélanie Joly, Minister of Foreign Affairs*

Quick facts

- Canada co-chairs the 50-member Media Freedom Coalition, which advocates for media freedom and the protection of journalists.

- The coalition was officially launched in September 2019 on the margins of the UN General Assembly.
- Canada and Botswana co-hosted the Second Global Conference for Media Freedom in November 2020. The inaugural Global Conference for Media Freedom was hosted by Canada and the United Kingdom in July 2019.

Related products

- [Backgrounder: Minister Joly concludes participation in Third Global Conference for Media Freedom](#)

Associated links

- [Canada and United Kingdom announce recipient of the 2022 Media Freedom Award](#)
- [Global Conference for Media Freedom: Joint communiqué](#)
- [Freedom of expression and media freedom](#)
- [Media Freedom Coalition](#)

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