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Seminar on Building Safety Mechanisms

Today, the Centre for Law and Democracy and International Media Support are hosting a seminar on Promoting Journalists' Safety: Building an Effective Safety Mechanism, as a side event at the main UNESCO World Press Freedom Day event in Helsinki. The purpose of the event is to host a debate on the Discussion Paper, *Supporting Freedom of Expression: A Practical Guide to Developing Specialised Safety Mechanisms*, prepared by the Centre for Law and Democracy in collaboration with UNESCO and launched on 21 April 2016.

"It is very important that the Discussion Paper is debated and used", said Toby Mendel, Executive Director of CLD. *"We hope that participants at the event will take the Paper back to their constituents and use it for purposes of planning and supporting national safety mechanisms in different countries."*

The Discussion Paper focuses on specialised formal safety mechanisms which aim to provide protection to journalists and others who are attacked for exercising their right to freedom of expression and to combat the impunity which all too often prevails in relation to the perpetrators. Such mechanisms are in place in a few countries and are being seriously considered in a few more, but they deserve a lot more attention as a key safety tool.

"In order to improve our response to the serious safety concerns that face local journalists around the world, it is imperative that we share the best practices available on setting up national safety mechanisms for journalists – mechanisms that are locally anchored and led. This Discussion Paper aims to do just that," says Jesper Højberg, Executive Director of International Media Support.

The Seminar is being moderated by Jesper Højberg, Director, International Media Support, and the speakers are:

- Toby Mendel, Executive Director, Centre for Law and Democracy (CLD)
- Frank La Rue, Assistant Director-General for Communication and Information, UNESCO
- Ms. Sophie Busson, Advocacy Advisor, Reporters without Borders (RSF)
- Tahmina Rahman, Director, Bangladesh and South Asia, Article 19

Those interested in joining in the discussion are encouraged to tweet on #MediaSafetyMech.

The Discussion Paper is available at: <http://www.law-democracy.org/live/protecting-against-attacks-on-freedom-of-expression/>. More about the debate at <https://www.mediasupport.org/debate-promoting-journalists-safety-building-effective-safety-mechanism/>.

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