

# **Fact sheet: International Human Rights Day – Media Round Table**

**Date: 10/12/2012**

## **1. Why did the European Union (EU) and its Member States organize a media round table on the *International Human Rights Day*?**

This mission has been organized as part of the *International Human Rights Day* which has been celebrated each year on the 10th of December since 1950.

The EU and its partners wanted to mark the *International Human Rights Day* by focusing on "freedom of expression" with a view to contribute to the ending of the targeted killings and attacks on journalists in Somalia. This year alone 18 media workers have been killed in Somalia.

## **2. What is the goal of this mission?**

The goal of the mission was to meet with a select number of media organizations, media stakeholders and Somali authorities in order to better understand the human rights and media situation and to identify gaps where support from the international community could be provided.

## **3. What topics were discussed?**

The participants of this round table have discussed a wide range of related topics linked to the safety of journalists, the fight against impunity, the professional and ethical standards of media workers and media regulation.

## **4. Are donors already supporting the media sector?**

As different donors have supported the media sector in different ways, the international community's *Somalia Media Support Group* (including the EU, donor countries, international organisations and NGO's) has developed a *Somalia Media Sector's Operational Strategy for 2012-2015* that will provide a basis for more coordinated international community support to the media sector in Somalia.

The freedom of speech and media sector challenges are also discussed within the "*EU + Human Right Working Group*". This Working Group was established by the European Union in December 2011 and comprises the EU + Member States and Norway, Switzerland and the United States. It is currently chaired by Denmark and it meets quarterly or as required. It is mandated to monitor the Human Rights situation in Somalia through interaction with local and international partners; to engage in dialogue on human rights issues with all relevant parties; and to coordinate efforts to promote human rights in Somalia.

## **5. How is the EU currently engaging in the media sector?**

In order to support the Somali media in this very difficult situation, the EU is working with the sector in three different fields:

1. PROTECTION OF JOURNALISTS: Together with the Members States, the EU has developed a Local Implementation Strategy for Human Right Defenders in Somalia which provides a more systematic protection of cases of intimidation and threats against for instance journalists.

2. ENHANCING THE MEDIA LEGAL FRAMEWORK: The EU is a member of the Somalia Media Support Group (SMSG) that will implement the "Somalia Media Sector's Operational Strategy 2012-2015". This strategy will be useful for Somalis stakeholders and the donors to further strengthen the legal framework and the professional standards of the media sector.

3. SUPPORTING MEDIA CAPACITY: Together with the media and international partners, the EU is supporting media development, including more sustainable professional training and resources. This will create a more conducive environment for free, fair and independent reporting. Up to now, the EU has invested 2.140.000 EUR in such programmes implemented by various partners.