

Staff Reporter

The United States on Monday said that ending impunity for crimes against journalists is both a moral imperative and a practical necessity in creating free, open, and stable societies around the world.

“Impunity for those who threaten, beat, and murder journalists isn’t only unjust. It sets a dangerous precedent and creates a culture of impunity,” said John Kerry, Secretary of State of the United States, in a statement marking International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists.

“Journalists shouldn’t be muzzled from asking tough questions. They should be empowered to seek the truth without fear of reprisal,” he said.

Kerry observed that abuses are happening in far too many places and they have seen them in horribly brutal and painful ways this year in Syria. “We see them in the ISIL-controlled areas of Iraq and throughout Syria, where the regime and ISIL continue to censor the media through vicious and heinous attacks, including disappearing and kidnapping journalists to stop the vital flow of information to the outside world.”

He said the United States is committed to working with the Iraqi Government to bring the perpetrators to justice. “We call on all parties to the Syrian conflict to protect journalists in Syria.” The US Secretary of State demanded an end to impunity for those who use violence to silence their critics. “We demand answers on behalf of all the journalists and their families who still have not seen justice served. And above all, we stand in awe of the courage of those who risk their lives to tell the stories the world needs to hear.”

He also mentioned that the danger that journalists face in pursuing and publishing the truth was really driven home for him earlier this year when he visited Kyiv.

“As we all know, knowledge is power - and truth the great antidote to impunity. That’s why the United States co-sponsored the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists,” Kerry added.