

# UNESCO condemns murder of Egyptian journalist

PARIS: UNESCO director-general Irina Bokova on Friday, 11 February 2011, condemned the murder of Egyptian journalist Ahmed Mohammed Mahmoud, who died of his wounds on 4 February. He was shot in the head on 29 January while covering the protests that began on 25 January in Cairo.



"I condemn the murder of journalist Ahmed Mohammed Mahmoud," said the director-general. "Violence against journalists represents an attack on the basic right of freedom of expression and therefore a direct threat to democracy. Media professionals must be able to work in safety in order to nurture free and independent debate. I count on the Egyptian authorities to do all they can to shed light on this murder and bring the culprits to justice."

## Shot while taking photos

Ahmed Mohammed Mahmoud, 36, was covering the uprising that began in Cairo on 25 January for the newspaper *Al-Taawun*, put out by the Al-Ahram publishing house. He was shot in the head while taking photographs of the protesters from the balcony of his apartment, located not far from Tahrir Square, centre of the demonstrations. He died of his wounds six days later at a Cairo hospital.

Since the protests began in Egypt, the situation of the media covering events has continued to give cause for concern. Journalists have reportedly been assaulted and their equipment confiscated; others have been arrested. Numerous media have furthermore had their permits suspended and their satellite transmission blocked.

The director-general reiterated her call for Egypt to respect the rights of freedom of expression and freedom of information as laid down in Article 19 in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

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