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UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of expression condemns attack on journalists in Paris

GENEVA (7 January 2015) – The United Nations Special Rapporteur on freedom of opinion and expression, David Kaye, condemned in the strongest possible terms the attack on journalists at the magazine Charlie Hebdo in Paris.

“Today’s attack is one of the gravest attacks on journalists and a free press in recent history,” the human rights expert said. According to reports, gunmen killed at least twelve individuals at the satirical magazine based in the heart of Paris. “It is critical at a time like this to reiterate the vital importance of a free press in democratic societies.”

“There will be voices urging satirists in particular to exercise caution in their expression,” Mr. Kaye noted. “I urge the opposite: that all those with any capacity to restrain such violence to do so now and in clear and absolute terms.”

“Shocked by today’s display of violence, I express my solidarity with journalists, satirists, and artists under threat,” the expert said. “I look forward not only to accountability for this horrific violence but also to hear all voices across the political spectrum condemning it unequivocally.”

The Special Rapporteur extended his deepest sympathies to the families of the victims and the people of France.

David Kaye (USA) was appointed as Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression in August 2014 by the United Nations Human Rights Council. Learn more, log on to:

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/FreedomOpinion/Pages/OpinionIndex.aspx>

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UN Human Rights, country page – France: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Countries/ENACARRegion/Pages/FRIndex.aspx>

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