

To the leaders of the European Union,

To EU member state officials,

I am writing to implore you to continue calling for Israel to be held accountable for crimes against journalists in Lebanon and Gaza.

As European leaders and ministers come together next week, these meetings coincide at a hard time.

Three years ago, on October 13, 2023, Israeli forces deliberately conducted a double-tap strike on myself and six other colleagues in southern Lebanon as we were reporting next to the border.

My colleague Issam Abdallah, a Reuters videographer, was killed. Five other journalists were also wounded: Thaer Al-Sudani, Elie Brakhya, Dylan Collins, Carmen Joukhadar, and Maher Nazeh. I was also gravely wounded.

Israel has claimed this was a “mistake” and that the Israeli military believed we were “terrorists.”

But we were visibly marked as “Press”, openly working on a hill, and a drone was monitoring us. Four investigations — by AFP, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and Reuters — all independently concluded we were deliberately attacked.

Our case was the first instance CPJ documented of Israeli forces deliberately targeting journalists following October 7, 2023. Today, our case is one of scores of journalists who have been deliberately attacked by Israel over the past three years.

One day, the full truth of this horror will be confronted, understood, and heard. But until then, justice cannot be achieved without action.

I call on you, the leaders of Europe, to use every political, legal, and diplomatic tool at your disposal to end Israel’s impunity. Demand accountability for attacks on journalists and for violations of international law.

Journalists are not part of the conflict, they are there to document it, and to tell the world what is happening. Every attack on a journalist is an attack on our freedom and the public’s right to know.

The war on journalists must end.

Christina Assi

