



World Press Freedom Day

A functioning democracy relies on voters who are informed about the issues – whether these are things we want to hear about, or the inconvenient truths we need to know about.

For that, we rely on the news media, and its ability to get at that truth and hold our public officials to account, without impediment from those in position of power and authority. That is why World Press Freedom Day this Saturday, May 3, is so important.

But the ability of journalist to do their important work is impeded on many fronts. In its annual *Review of Free Expression in Canada*, the Canadian Journalists for Free Expression reports a 51 per cent increase in missing records complaints submitted to the federal Information Commissioner from 2012 to 2013. That means our government is increasingly denying journalists and other Canadians access to information about what their government is up to – part of the reason Canada is ranked in the bottom half of the Global Right to Information Index.

Around the world, journalists are killed and imprisoned, just for doing their jobs. The International Federation of Journalist reports that 126 reporters and other media workers were killed on the job last year, and already 26 have died this year. In Egypt, three journalists, including one Canadian, are on trial. And in Ukraine, several journalists have been detained, kidnapped or have simply disappeared while covering the conflict there.

It is for them, and journalists around the world finding their ability to do their jobs restricted, that we mark World Press Freedom Day this Saturday May 3.