Journalist tells struggle for freedom of speech in Libya

June 1, 2015

By Gabrielle Nina Mitch

Orange Magazine

http://www.orangemagazine.eu/journalist-tells-struggle-freedom-speech-libya/

Journalists working in war-torn Libya face dangers of getting attacked while on the job, the point that reporting can endanger one’s life.

Salah Zater is one of those journalists, who struggled to report the truth in war-torn Libya. While there, he was attacked several times because of his investigative stories about the brutality of Muammar al-Gaddafi’s regime, he narrates during one of the sessions at the Deutsche Welle Global Media Forum 2015 held from 22 to 24 June in Bonn, Germany.

Due to increasing life threats he received, he was advised by various international NGOs to leave the country for his security.

This is a difficult course of action as well since exiting the borders prove to be challenging to say the least, he adds.

He eventually made the hard choice of leaving the country to save his life.

In Libya, freedom of expression doesn’t virtually exist but there is “freedom of murdering” those journalists who produce stories against the regime, he notes.

Preserving press freedom in countries where there is conflict is difficult but necessary and one way to do this is to stop the violence against journalists so they can work freely and unrestrictedly, he notes from his experiences.

Guy Berger, Director of Freedom of Expression and Media Development at UNESCO said that the United Nations recognize the value of journalists’ work in reporting in countries in conflict.

This is why stakeholders and authorities must work together to help promote an environment that enables journalists to do their job to produce stories adhering to fair reporting guidelines with the goal of informing the public, Berger notes.

