

Dear President Trump,

We are writing to you as journalists, press freedom organizations, and industry groups to express our deep dismay at the recent violence perpetrated against journalists in the United States as they have sought to report on mass protests across the country. We urge you to speak out forcefully against these attacks and in support of the rights of journalists to report freely, as guaranteed by the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.

The United States' history of protecting free expression and defending and protecting the rights of journalists is much admired beyond U.S. borders. This is borne out of a recognition that journalists serve as independent monitors of social and political developments, and are essential to democracy, transparency, and accountability.

Attacks on journalists in the U.S. threaten to undermine this commitment. The [U.S. Press Freedom Tracker](#) has received reports of at least 320 [violations](#) of press freedom across the country since protests demanding an end to police brutality and calling for social justice broke out on May 26. It is vital that state and local government officials take steps to ensure such violations never happen again, and that the perpetrators are held to account.

We call on you to send a clear and unambiguous message across the country and around the world about the importance of the press freedom and work of the press. Local leaders need to hear unambiguously from you that they have a responsibility to fully investigate these attacks, protect journalists, and ensure that they can work unobstructed and without fear of injury or reprisal.

Press freedom in the United States is critical to people around the world. Thousands of foreign correspondents are based in Washington D.C. and throughout the U.S., where they are tasked with telling the story of America to their publics back home. The ability of journalists to work freely in the U.S. creates a more enlightened global citizenry.

What happens in the United States also has repercussions for journalists around the world, including American correspondents. When the U.S. backslides it sends a green light to authoritarian-leaning leaders around the world to restrict the press and the free flow of information.

Authoritarian regimes in China, Iran, and Turkey have already opportunistically spoken out about the heavy-handed police tactics used here, using the crackdown on the press in this country to legitimize their own repression of independent journalism.

Instead of condemning journalists and the media, we urge you to commend and celebrate them as the embodiment of the First Amendment, which is the envy of so many countries around the world.

Sincerely,

Afghanistan Journalists Center (AFJC)

Aliansi Jurnalis Independen/Alliance of Independent Journalists (AJI)

Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain (ADHRB)

ARTICLE 19

Brazilian Association for Investigative Journalism

Bytes for All (B4A)

Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (CIHRS)

Cambodian Center for Human Rights (CCHR)

Cartoonists Rights Network International (CRNI)

Center for Independent Journalism - Romania

Center for Media Studies & Peace Building (CEMESP)

Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ)

Foundation for Press Freedom - FLIP

Free Media Movement

Free Press Unlimited (FPU)

Freedom of Expression Institute (FXI)

Global Voices Advox

Hong Kong Journalists Association

Independent Journalism Center (IJC)

Index on Censorship

Initiative for Freedom of Expression - Turkey

Instituto Prensa y Sociedad de Venezuela

International Federation of Journalists (IFJ)

International Press Institute (IPI)

Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA)

Media Matters for Democracy

Media Watch

Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance

Metamorphosis, Foundation for Internet and Society

Norwegian PEN

Pacific Islands News Association (PINA)

Pakistan Press Foundation

World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC)

World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers

South East European Network for Professionalization of Media (SEENPM)

South East Europe Media Organisation

Ad IDEM/Canadian Media Lawyers Association
Palestinian Center for Development and Media Freedoms (MADA)

Reporters Without Borders (RSF)
Social Media Exchange (SMEX)
PEN America
PEN International
Media Foundation for West Africa (MFWA)
Samir Kassir Foundation - SKeyes Center for Media and Cultural Freedom
Press Union of Liberia
Rory Peck Trust
INSI - international News Safety Institute
Somali Media Women Association (SOMWA).
Association for International Broadcasting
SembraMedia
Rural Media Network Pakistan
International Women's Media Foundation
Internews
Fundación Gabo (Gabriel García Márquez Foundation)
Centre for Law and Democracy
Institute for Regional Media and Information
Global Forum for Media Development (GFMD)
DW Akademie
International Center for Journalists (ICFJ)
Arab Reporters for Investigative Journalism (ARIJ)
International Media Development Advisers (IMDA)
Bangladesh NGOs Network for Radio and Communication
Newsgain
Community Media Forum Europe (CMFE)
Media Focus International (MFI)
International Media Support (IMS)
Acclaim Nigeria Magazine (ANM)
Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting
Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project (OCCRP)
Global Investigative Journalism Network (GIJN)
Project Syndicate