

Caretaker Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of Foreign Trade and Development Aid
Drs. C. C. J. Veldkamp
Rijnstraat 8, 2515 XP The Hague

11 June 2025

Dear Minister Veldkamp,

We are writing to you on behalf of the broad journalism professional community in the Netherlands. Our colleagues in the Occupied Palestinian Territories pay an indescribably high price for practising their profession.

Time and again, we see Palestinian journalists no longer being protected. While working, they make sure they are recognisable as journalists by wearing helmets and vests with the imprint 'press'. Instead of offering protection, it makes them a target. According to the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), at least 184 journalists and media workers have been killed in the region since October 2023. This makes it the deadliest period for journalists ever recorded. At least 17 journalists have now been proven to have been targeted by Israeli forces. CPJ is investigating at least 20 more cases that seem to involve targeted attacks.

As early as February 2024, the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression [signalled](#) that Israel appears to have a deliberate strategy to obstruct media and prevent critical reporting.

Moreover, Israel does not allow foreign journalists into Gaza and makes it impossible for foreign media to operate, among others by closing Al Jazeera's office in Ramallah.

International law provides a clear and binding framework for the protection of journalists: they are considered civilians during armed conflict and must be protected as such. Key instruments, such as the [UN Security Council Resolution 2222 \(2015\)](#), affirms states' obligations to protect journalists from all forms of violence, to investigate attacks against them and to criminally prosecute those responsible. Not only that: states are obliged to ensure the safety of journalists by creating conditions in which they can work freely and safely.

And this is not without reason: access to reliable information is a human right. Journalists contribute to the documentation of war crimes and human rights violations with which we can hold those in power accountable. That is why the safety of Palestinian journalists is vital. They are the eyes and ears of the world. They are the ones who show us what is happening in Gaza and the West Bank.

Our role as journalists is first and foremost to report on this conflict, as completely as possible and from every relevant perspective, and we have been trying to do that since the beginning of this war. But the Israeli government has not allowed international journalists into Gaza to report since October 2023, and this also makes it difficult for us to properly do our job. Meanwhile, our Palestinian colleagues in Gaza continue to risk their lives every day to report on events.

Therefore, we have no choice but to take action now and demand action from you.

We demand action:

We, journalists of the Netherlands, urgently appeal to you:

1. Make every effort to ensure that journalists in Gaza and the West Bank are no longer targeted and stand up to the Israeli government for press freedom and the safety of journalists.
2. To initiate, as former co-chair of the Media Freedom Coalition, a coordinated, joint and public statement condemning Israeli violations of press freedom and calling for the protection of journalists and free access to Gaza and the West Bank. This statement should also condemn violence and other obstacles to media, including the many arrests of journalists in the West Bank, Gaza and Israel. In doing so, specifically call for the immediate release of imprisoned journalists.
3. To initiate an independent investigation into the murdered journalists, in line with the UN Manual on the Effective Prevention and Investigation of Extra-Legal, Arbitrary and Summary Executions (the Minnesota Protocol).
4. To ensure that Israel's attack on press freedom and violations of international law are included in the investigation under the EU-Israel Association Agreement.
5. To urge Israel to allow us, international journalists, access to Gaza in order to report on what is happening there. International journalists reach different audiences through different platforms than their local colleagues, thereby increasing the visibility of what is occurring.

In conclusion

The Dutch Society of Editors-in-Chief, the Dutch Association of Journalists (NVJ), and the European Federation of Journalists, together with sixty journalistic and human rights organizations, have previously called attention to these violations of press freedom and the safety of journalists by Israel.

As long as these violations continue, we stand in solidarity with our colleagues in Gaza, continue to inform our audiences about these abuses, and will do everything within our power to protect journalism. We expect the same from you, on behalf of the Dutch government, which claims to hold human rights in high regard.

On behalf of

Journalists and editors-in-chief of

AD

AD de Dordtenaar

AD Groene Hart

AD Haagsche Courant

AD Rotterdams Dagblad

AD Utrechts Nieuwsblad

ANP

BN De Stem

Brabants Dagblad

De Correspondent

De Gelderlander

De Groene Amsterdammer

The editors-in-chief of the 13 regional public broadcasters (RPO)

De Stentor

EenVandaag

Eindhovens Dagblad

FTM

Het Parool

Human

Journalists from NRC

Journalisten van Bureau Wibaut

KRO-NCRV

Medisch contact

NOS

Nieuwsuur

[Nu.nl](https://www.nu.nl)

NTR

PZC

RFG Media

RTL Nieuws

Trouw

Tubantia

Vers Beton

Villamedia

Volkskrant

VPRO

Vrij Nederland

and

Free Press Unlimited (FPU)

Nederlandse Vereniging van Journalisten (NVJ)

Vereniging van Onderzoeksjournalisten (VVOJ)