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Journalists photograph a protester at a demonstration against plans to overhaul the state-owned railway company in France.

AFP/Gerard Julien



The mother and brother of Ángel Eduardo Gahona, a journalist who died while covering the protests in Nicaragua in April.
AFP/Diana Ulloa

Dear Friend,

CPJ exists to defend the basic principle that journalists, wherever they are in the world, should be free to report the news without fear of reprisal. We defend this fundamental right everywhere that journalists are threatened, from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe. Recently we've also had to defend it in the United States.

CPJ believes that the U.S. should use its influence to stand up for the rights of journalists globally. But in order to play this crucial role, the U.S. must uphold First Amendment values at home.

Instead, the president's cries of "fake news" and other efforts to demean and marginalize journalists are emboldening repressive leaders around the world to take action against their press. In February, the Philippine news website *Rappler* was banned from covering presidential events after President Rodrigo Duterte said it was "fake news." In March, a Sudanese court convicted two journalists of "false news." In 2017, at least 21 journalists worldwide were jailed on "false news" charges, more than double that of the year before.

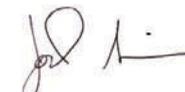
Meanwhile, journalists in the United States are being threatened and attacked. In late June, four journalists and one media worker were killed at the *Capital Gazette* in Maryland, making the U.S. the third deadliest country for journalists at the time. Since CPJ and its partners launched the U.S. Press Freedom Tracker in 2017, the website has documented 56 attacks on journalists. In May and June, 11 *HuffPost* journalists and their families received threats—in one case, thousands of them by phone and online. In 2018, CPJ led an international mission to the United States, where we spoke to journalists and leaders about press freedom.

We also continued with the global work we do every year, such as meeting with high-level government officials to urge them to improve the media environment. In Ecuador, we raised our concerns to officials about a repressive communications law, which President Lenín Moreno later announced he would reform. We published a report examining the threats to press freedom in Iran and launched it at the European Parliament, where we urged the EU to call for improved human rights in the country. In Brussels, we met with high-level EU officials to urge them to protect journalists working in member states—and pursue justice in the murders of investigative reporters Daphne Caruana Galizia in Malta and Ján Kuciak in Slovakia.

Advocacy by CPJ and other groups helped win convictions in 2017 in the murders of eight journalists. We also helped win the early release from jail of 75 journalists, the most we have helped free in one year since we began keeping records. In 2017, CPJ provided direct support to more than 120 journalists under threat, including for relocation or medical costs.

CPJ works to ensure that freedom of expression is defended and preserved around the world. We will continue to stand up for your right to information in this global society.

Thank you for standing with us.



Joel Simon
Executive Director



Committee to Protect Journalists

CPJ has its headquarters in New York with staff in Washington. We also have contributors in Bangkok, Beirut, Berlin, Bogotá, Brussels, Goma, Istanbul, Kiev, London, Mexico City, Nairobi, New Delhi, São Paulo, and Taipei.

Canada

CPJ met with journalists and civil society members to discuss surveillance and other restrictions on the press.

United States

CPJ took dramatic steps to safeguard First Amendment values, including organizing the first global press freedom mission to the U.S. and engaging with elected leaders.
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Mexico

CPJ continues to pressure the government to address impunity in journalist murders in Mexico, one of the deadliest places in the world for journalists.

Ecuador

In a meeting with a CPJ delegation in March, the government pledged to reform the nation's oppressive communications law.
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Poland

CPJ traveled to Poland to meet with journalists who described the restrictive media environment under the ruling Law and Justice party.

Malta

CPJ pressed EU officials to advocate for full justice in the murder of Maltese journalist Daphne Caruana Galizia.
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Democratic Republic of Congo

CPJ's Emergencies Response Team disseminated safety and security advice to journalists reporting on protests all over the world.
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Iran

CPJ published a special report documenting how the Iranian press has seen little change in the nation's media environment despite President Rouhani's promises.
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Afghanistan

CPJ collaborated with the *Columbia Journalism Review* to publish a report highlighting the lives and work of nine Afghan journalists killed in a double suicide blast.

Pakistan

CPJ is publishing a report on the shifting threats to press freedom in Pakistan following a mission we conducted there in February.
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Egypt

CPJ called on Egyptian authorities to release imprisoned journalists, including photojournalist Shawkan and blogger Alaa Abdelfattah.

Myanmar

CPJ advocated for the release of two imprisoned Reuters journalists, arrested in December under the Official Secrets Act.

Ethiopia

CPJ advocacy contributed to the early release of journalists in Ethiopia. At least one of them, Eskinder Nega, had been convicted on terrorism charges.
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A journalist is arrested as police investigate a home linked to a bomber in Texas in March.
Reuters/Loren Elliott



An international mission of press freedom groups including CPJ met with Representative Ted Poe (R-TX), fourth from left, in January.
CPJ

Fighting for the First Amendment

In January, CPJ led the first international mission of press freedom organizations to the United States. The mission representatives traveled to Missouri and Texas to speak to journalists and then met with leaders in Washington, DC, to discuss what they had learned: Journalists are being arrested and attacked during protests, public officials are embracing chilling rhetoric, and access to information is politically obstructed. The situation has worsened under President Donald Trump. And the data from the U.S. Press Freedom Tracker supported these findings.

“I’m shocked,” Sen. Robert Menendez (D-NJ) said during a Foreign Relations Committee hearing the week before the mission. “I never thought I’d be at a moment in time in which the Committee to Protect Journalists would cite the United States as a place they have concerns about.”

CPJ is acting upon these concerns. Key among our efforts to uphold press freedom in the United States is our engagement with leaders on Capitol Hill.

In late 2017, we met with staff for Sens. Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) and Ron Wyden (D-OR), who wrote letters to Attorney General Jeff Sessions about protecting journalists in leak investigations. In January, we reached out to Sen. Jeff Flake (R-AZ), who cited CPJ on the Senate floor. That month, we also engaged with the office of Sen. John McCain (R-AZ), who penned an op-ed in *The Washington Post* citing CPJ data. Trump’s efforts, he wrote, “are being closely watched by foreign leaders who are already using his words as cover as they silence and shutter one of the key pillars of democracy.”

In late 2017, at least 21 journalists were behind bars globally on false news charges, more than double the year before. In April, Malaysia enacted the Anti-Fake News Act, which hands out six-year prison terms. (The new government later said the law would be abolished.)

CPJ regularly engages with U.S. leaders to raise global press freedom issues, including cases of imprisoned and killed journalists. In January,



Sen. Marco Rubio (R-FL) used research requested from CPJ to call on the State Department to work with Mexico to solve journalist murders. In March, he requested information on imprisoned Ethiopian journalist Eskinder Nega, then tweeted a call for his release. ESKINDER was later freed. In April, we provided information to Sen. Richard Durbin (D-IL) on journalists imprisoned in Morocco, whose cases he raised with the Moroccan embassy.

We also worked with Sen. Cory Booker (D-NJ), who cited CPJ during the confirmation hearing for now-Secretary of State Mike Pompeo in April and asked if he would commit to defending press freedom globally. (Pompeo said, “Yes.”) In May, we worked with Senate offices on a letter to the Reuters

journalists imprisoned in Myanmar that was signed by nine senators.

On World Press Freedom Day, members of the Senate and the House of Representatives introduced resolutions that stress the importance of press freedom in the U.S. citing CPJ research. This kind of resolution had never before been introduced in the House. CPJ had worked closely with U.S. leaders on the Hill, urging them to call for media freedom.

CPJ will continue doing what we can to ensure that press freedom remains in the public conversation and policymaking circles. As Sen. McCain said in his op-ed, “Ultimately, freedom of information is critical for a democracy to succeed.”

‘Freedom of information is critical for a democracy to succeed.’

Ethiopian journalist Eskinder Nega, pictured after being released from Kality Prison.
AFP/Yonas Tadesse

Q&A with Eskinder Nega

In February 2018, Ethiopian columnist and editor Eskinder Nega was released from prison after serving nearly seven years.

The journalist was arrested in 2011 and sentenced to 18 years in prison under the country's sweeping anti-terrorism law. CPJ believes his imprisonment was part of a pattern of government persecution in reprisal for his critical coverage. For years, CPJ and other groups advocated for Ethiopian authorities to release him.

In April, CPJ spoke to Eskinder about his time in prison. Here is a condensed and edited version of our conversation.

What did you miss most about life outside prison?

The most? My family, of course. There was much to remember about them. There was much to regret, much to savor, much to hope. Prison gives you ample [time] to reflect, and that allows you to see things from the grand perspective. That grand perspective has been a humbling experience, at least to me.

I have come to value my family more than ever. It was on the battlefield for freedom of expression that my wife and I met, and it was on that battlefield that our child was born in prison. The struggle has de-

finied and dominated our family life. In this saga, it is my wife and child, not I, who have suffered the most.

You were in Kality Prison. What was it like?

If there is to be a competition for the world's worst prison, the top prize would most probably go to Kality—a prize, I should add, the prison authorities would not be ashamed of. Depriving prisoners of good books to read is part of the punishment for them. The books were worn out, few in numbers and outdated. You read them only in the absence of choice.

But of the six and a half years I spent in prison, it was only for the first two years or so I had access to a library. I spent the remaining time segregated from the general prison population, with no access to a library. In this time, all my books were confiscated and a strict embargo was imposed against pen, paper, and anything else I could write on. All this because the authorities had demanded that I stop writing, and I had of course refused. And they tried to break my spirit.

In the first two years of my imprisonment, I had received books and *The New Yorker* from CPJ. They were simply a delight to read, and I read them over and over again. Unfortunately, they were later confiscated permanently. They would have been among my most prized possessions if I still had them.

How did you feel knowing that CPJ and other groups were fighting for your freedom?

Those who have freedom should help those who have no freedom. I am a great believer in this dictum. Freedom is not relative to culture, history, religion, race, or what have you. Our common humanity yearns for the same freedom. In the work of CPJ and other rights organizations, I see our common humanity at work. And I see our commonality, rather than our differences, defining us.

I should also stress that I would not be a free man today without the work of CPJ and other rights organizations. The statements put out by rights organizations unnerve autocracies, despite their public bravados. They are aware of the moral weight the statements bear. Those statements also reinforce the moral confidence of the oppressed, the abused, and the forsaken. I know because I was one of them. Thanks to family members, I knew about each and every statement.

You and other journalists were briefly detained again in March, a month after you were released. What happened?

Allegedly we had breached the state of emergency. We had gathered at a friend's [place] and hoisted the old Ethiopian flag, which is—hold your breath,

this is no joke!—illegal. But this was only a pretext. It is a law which is rarely enforced. What the government really wanted was to demonstrate that it can imprison us at its will, recently released or not. It was a warning. But it was a warning we chose not to heed. We have always refused to fear. And more and more people are joining our ranks.

What else can CPJ do to help promote press freedom in Ethiopia?

Freedom has yet to be won in Ethiopia. The fight is not over. In this epic struggle for freedom, CPJ's record has been impeccable. It has stood on the side of freedom from the very first moment. And it must be there at the final moment, when freedom comes to Ethiopia.

In this long journey, we expect CPJ to persevere to the end as we shall persevere to the end.

What's next for you?

I have passion for the written word. My heart lies with print. But in our situation, television is now vital. The quest for freedom of expression demands it. And I will have to venture into that field. The odds are stacked against my success, but that will not stop me from trying. I know that should I succeed, there will be history to make.

‘Those who have freedom should help those who have no freedom.’



A CPJ delegation meets with journalists and civil society members in Ecuador.
CPJ

The road to a free press

In 2014, Ecuadoran President Rafael Correa ripped up a copy of the newspaper *La Hora* on live television, saying the “corrupt press” had published a “lie.”

Those days are over.

President Lenín Moreno, who took office in May 2017, has adopted a much more amiable tone with the press. Less than a month after he took office, Moreno invited a group of journalists and executives from media outlets to the presidential palace. During the meeting, he promised a new era of press freedom. “It is important to emphasize that the press must be the first to denounce [corruption],” Moreno said.

Since then, “it’s like an enormous weight has been removed from our backs,” one Ecuadoran journalist told CPJ.

Local journalists pointed to the state agency Supercom, which was created to monitor the media. Under Correa, Supercom issued about five sanctions per week, fining newspapers for printing what it called “unbalanced coverage” or stories that the government didn’t like. But under Moreno, the

agency has been largely inactive, and Ecuadoran judges have voided several of the agency’s past decisions. In both words and deeds, Moreno seems much more open to the idea of an independent, healthy free press.

Sensing an opportunity to engage with the administration of this new president, one who seemed interested in distancing himself from his predecessor, a CPJ delegation met with Ecuadoran government leaders in March. We published our findings from the mission in a special report, “The U-Turn,” in July.

One of the main purposes of CPJ’s mission was to urge authorities to reform the 2013 Communications Law, commonly known as the *ley mordaza* or gag law, which CPJ considers one of the most repressive pieces of media legislation in the hemisphere. The law establishes regulations on editorial content and gives authorities the power to impose arbitrary sanctions and censor the press. Newspapers face enormous fines for failing to publish government responses in their stories. The law has become an “instrument of repression,” journalists told CPJ.

LIBERTAD DE PRENSA



CPJ’s meeting with *El Universo* journalists is featured in a newspaper in Ecuador.
CPJ

In a meeting with Communications Secretary Andrés Michelena, the CPJ delegation raised its concerns about the law and called for a full repeal. CPJ also said we would welcome any other changes that would significantly improve the media environment in the country.

Michelena acknowledged to CPJ that Correa’s government had severely damaged press freedom in Ecuador and that the Communications Law had restricted the work of journalists. Moreno, he said, had made a dramatic shift, promising to uphold press freedom and engage in dialogue with the media. The president was inviting special rappor-

teurs on freedom of expression to visit Ecuador and make recommendations, and was considering making a major speech on the importance of press freedom, Michelena said. CPJ said this would be a big step forward for the Ecuadoran press.

Then, in a speech on World Press Freedom Day, Moreno announced that he would reform the country’s Communications Law. “The best initiative we can promote as government is to move toward regulatory changes based on respect for international standards of protection that were violated in the past decade,” he said. “Today, on May 3, I confirm my commitment to a free press.”

‘I confirm my commitment to a free press.’

Journalists protest the attack on *The News* reporter Ahmad Noorani in October 2017.
AP/Shakil Adil



CPJ meets with journalists in the Karachi Press Club in February.
CPJ



Scared into silence

It was a Friday morning in October when a group of men pulled Ahmad Noorani out of his car and began attacking him with knives and a tire iron. Later, when he was finally taken to a hospital, the doctors said a second blow to the head would have killed him—or incapacitated him for life.

Noorani, a senior reporter for the Pakistani newspaper *The News*, frequently reported on Pakistan's military and intelligence agencies. A few months before the attack, he had published a series of stories that examined the investigation that led to the ouster of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif. And while he never said the military was involved with the investigation, the inference was enough. The military called him and made its displeasure clear.

Noorani, sensing the tension, stopped reporting and quit social media. The attack, he told CPJ

during a mission we conducted to Pakistan in February, “was a clear message to the media that all journalists who are critical of certain wrong things in the establishment ... will have to face the same consequences.”

CPJ spoke to other journalists and press freedom advocates who agreed with Noorani. They told CPJ that the country had been on a slow path toward press freedom until around 2014, when conditions began to deteriorate. Despite a decline in fatal violence against journalists—at least 27 journalists were killed for their work in Pakistan from 2010 to 2014, compared with four journalists between 2014 and 2018—the media environment is worse today than it has been in recent years, they said.

CPJ is publishing a report, accompanied by a short documentary, that finds that intimidation and



threats of assault have led journalists and editors to avoid reporting stories on topics that would lead them into trouble. These topics include a wide range of touchy issues: religion, Chinese investment, relations with India, militant groups, and criticism of the military. “Even discussing politics or serious conflicts can be a red line,” Zaffar Abbas, editor of the English-language daily *Dawn*, told CPJ.

The report also cites a survey published in May by the Pakistani advocacy organization Media Matters for Democracy. Nearly 90 percent of the journalists who were surveyed said they censored what they wrote or reported. Asad Baig, the founder of the organization, told CPJ, “People are very clear about what to say, and what not to say.”

In addition, the media has become polarized. News outlets publicly accuse each other of being anti-Pakistan, agents of India, or pro-America or Israel. “Some are pro-government, some are pro-establishment, some are anti-government, some are anti-establishment,” Iqbal Khattak, the founder of the press freedom group Freedom Network, told CPJ. “It’s extremely difficult to bring all these media owners to a single table around a single point agenda that is journalist protection or media freedom.”

So what can journalists in Pakistan do?

For Noorani, it’s to take one day at a time. He’s only slowly getting back to the heavy-hitting stories he’s known for.

‘People are very clear about what to say and what not to say.’

A memorial in March for Maltese journalist Daphne Caruana Galizia. Reuters/Darrin Zammit Lupi

CPJ speaks at a memorial in March for Daphne Caruana Galizia.

CPJ/Elisabeth Witschel



CPJ meets with Marlene Bonnici, Malta's permanent representative to the EU, center, in an advocacy mission to Brussels in April.

CPJ



Advocating for justice

On October 16, 2017, Maltese investigative journalist Daphne Caruana Galizia updated her blog. “There are crooks everywhere you look now,” she wrote. “The situation is desperate.”

Those were the last words she ever published. The 53-year-old journalist was killed when her car exploded later that day.

Caruana Galizia’s murder sparked outrage across the globe. CPJ and other groups co-sponsored vigils for her in Brussels, London, and Washington. CPJ spoke at the events, highlighting the need to fight for justice in journalist murders. It is time, CPJ said at the Brussels vigil, “for the European Union to think about protecting journalists around the EU better and more effectively.”

In April, six months after Caruana Galizia’s murder, a CPJ delegation traveled to Brussels and met with eight senior European Union officials. The delegation spoke to Commission Vice President

Frans Timmermans and urged him to call for thorough investigations into Caruana Galizia’s murder and that of Ján Kuciak, a Slovakian reporter who was found dead in his home in February. Kuciak, who was investigating the Italian mafia group ‘Ndrangheta for a story, was killed by a single bullet to the chest.

“We’re doing everything we can,” Timmermans told CPJ, adding that it was important that “we don’t just put the guys who did it in jail but find out who behind them did it.”

CPJ also met with Věra Jourová, European Commissioner for Justice, Gender Equality, and Consumers, and pushed her for increased scrutiny by the EU of the investigations as well. Jourová told CPJ she would consider it and that she wants to “do something that can help.” A few weeks later, the commissioner told journalists she would visit Malta and look into the investigation into Caruana Galizia’s murder.



The issues in the EU go beyond physical safety of investigative journalists. Independent journalists in Poland face legal threats, as CPJ found during a mission we conducted there in February. Press freedom is also in danger in Hungary, where Prime Minister Viktor Orbán was re-elected in April. The CPJ delegation met with Polish and Hungarian representatives to the EU during the Brussels mission, where we called on them to ensure that EU values are upheld in both countries.

During the meetings with Timmermans, Jourová, and the other EU officials, the CPJ delegation repeatedly raised its concerns about the importance of protection of whistleblowers and their sources. Timmermans told CPJ he was focused on the issue. A few weeks later, the Commission proposed a law that would protect whistleblowers who report breaches of EU law. The law would set EU-wide standards that would establish safe channels for reporting.

CPJ has met with multiple members of European Parliament to push for the EU to better protect journalists. In March, MEP Ana Gomes recorded a video appeal calling for thorough investigations into the murders. In late April, less than two weeks after CPJ’s mission, a number of these Parliament members backed a resolution on the protection of investigative journalists in Europe. The same month, the Council of Europe appointed a special rapporteur to monitor Caruana Galizia’s case. CPJ had joined other groups two months prior to call for this exact measure. We continue to work closely with the rapporteur and are urging him to raise questions about the investigation in Malta.

We will keep speaking out about the need for journalists to work safely in EU countries. When CPJ spoke to Malta’s permanent representative, Marlene Bonnici, during the mission, she pledged to bring CPJ’s concerns to the attention of relevant authorities. “Daphne was a household name,” Bonnici told CPJ. “Everyone knew her.”

‘Daphne was a household name.’

Supporters of President Hassan Rouhani celebrate his re-election.
AFP/Behrouz Mehri



CPJ launches the Iran report at the European Parliament in Brussels.
CPJ/Tom Gibson

Era of reform at risk

“We want freedom of the press, freedom of association, and freedom of thought,” President Hassan Rouhani told more than 10,000 of his supporters at a campaign rally in Tehran in May 2017.

Two days later, Rouhani was re-elected in a landslide. He had openly pledged reforms to end the country’s international isolation, to improve protections for journalists, and to ensure greater political freedom. And he succeeded in reversing the starkest measure of repression: From the record 45 journalists that Iran was holding in 2012, the number had dropped to five in 2017.

But, CPJ found in a special report published in May, censorship and repression of the media in Iran remain intact.

In an effort to understand what was going on in the country—and because it was not possible to report from within Iran—CPJ interviewed exiled journalists, international correspondents, and tech experts for the report. All of them told CPJ that Rouhani had not followed through on his pledges for reform.

An independent journalists association had not been allowed to reopen, they said. The families of journalists are still being harassed. Hardliners are aggressively trying to control the online space, putting pressure on social media platforms like Telegram, which is increasingly used to gather and disseminate news. Journalists are forbidden from reporting on some subjects, including the Supreme Leader, the elite security institution the Islamic Revolutionary Guards, and the judiciary.

CPJ launched the report, which highlighted these and other concerns, at the European Parliament in Brussels. The launch was supported by the office of Marietje Schaake, a Dutch member of Parliament who serves on the Iran task force. The report aimed to draw the attention of European Union leaders to CPJ’s concerns on press freedom in Iran and was accompanied by a series of recommendations to the Iranian government and European officials.

After all, European Union leaders have leverage now—and they should use it.



In 2015, six countries—the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Russia, and China—struck a deal compelling Iran to limit its nuclear program in exchange for removing trade and economic sanctions. (In May 2018, the United States withdrew from the deal.) After the deal was struck, trade increased and Iran’s economy improved. Rouhani’s political legacy rests on the strength of the economy.

CPJ met with the European External Action Service’s human rights division and Iran task force,

urging them to call for improved human rights and better protections for press freedom in Iran. We also spoke to the permanent representatives of the Netherlands, Austria, and the United Kingdom, as well as to members of European Parliament.

But there is still much to be done. And it remains unclear whether Iranian journalists can depend on Rouhani. At the stadium during his campaign speech, the president told his cheering supporters, “I often had problems keeping my promises.”

‘We want freedom of the press.’

Protesters demonstrate from a road block as they face off with security forces in Nicaragua.
AP/Alfredo Zuniga

A dangerous assignment

Covering protests has always been dangerous for journalists. They're not supposed to be fatal. Yet dozens of journalists have died on this dangerous assignment since CPJ began keeping records in the early 1990s.

This year, CPJ's Emergencies Response Team stepped in to mitigate the risks faced by journalists covering demonstrations.

Protests erupted in Nicaragua in April as thousands demonstrated against changes to the country's social security system. Local groups said scores of people died, among them police and protesters, while hundreds of others were injured. Dozens of journalists were wounded while reporting on the protests. At least one journalist was killed.

CPJ's Emergencies Response Team worked with the

South and Central Americas program to provide a rapid response to the situation on the ground. We partnered with local and international groups to create an encrypted chat to discuss the events as they unfolded. The team also published a safety advisory detailing ways for journalists to minimize risk on assignment. CPJ provided grants to three journalists and shared information for additional support in the Journalists in Distress network, a forum co-founded and managed by CPJ that coordinates support for journalists with 20 other organizations.

Meanwhile, in late March, violent protests broke out in the Gaza Strip as Palestinians demonstrated against Israel. Dozens of journalists were injured by live rounds, rubber bullets, and tear gas. Two journalists were killed despite wearing helmets and vests that identified them as members of the press.

CPJ commissioned security experts in Gaza to assess safety for journalists covering the protests. These experts acted as a resource or liaison for journalists—taking them to shelter, if necessary, or escorting them to a nearby hospital if they were wounded. We also distributed public and private safety advisories to journalists, editors, and other groups, which included information like when crowds tended to increase, where journalists could operate more safely, what form of communications they should avoid, and what equipment they should bring that would be allowed when they enter Gaza.

But it's not just physical danger that journalists face when covering protests. Authorities in the Democratic Republic of Congo shut down internet

and telecommunications services during protests in early 2018 that called for President Joseph Kabila to step down. CPJ documented at least 27 cases of journalists being threatened, detained, and assaulted in the country. Several of them said their equipment was confiscated, and recordings or images deleted.

CPJ published a series of safety information cards for journalists working in the Congo, including on how best to protect recorded content and use digital tools to report safely. The safety cards are available in English and French. CPJ distributed the cards to journalists and to journalist groups. To download the safety cards, go to CPJ's website at <https://cpj.org>.

'It's not just physical danger that journalists face when covering protests.'

#FreeThePress

CPJ believes all journalists should be able to report freely, without fear of harassment or retaliation. But each day, all over the world, reporters, photographers, editors, and bloggers are imprisoned for their work. According to CPJ's annual prison census, at least 262 journalists were behind bars in 2017, the highest number CPJ has ever documented.

CPJ knows that prison can be isolating. Over the years, we have reported on journalists being denied access to their families and lawyers. Many have been held in solitary confinement. Others have told us that prison authorities denied them even a pen and paper to write.

In 2018, CPJ launched a #FreeThePress campaign designed to show solidarity and inspire action on behalf of journalists imprisoned for their work. We chose journalists from five countries and asked you to sign digital and physical postcards to them.

And you did. More than 1,000 of you, from 49 countries, wrote messages of hope to the journalists. Here are some of them.



Alaa Abdelfattah

Blogger, Egypt

Charges: Anti-state, Defamation, Retaliatory

First Jailed: October 27, 2014

Length of Sentence: 5 years

Postcards of note:

"I'm disheartened and infuriated to read that you were imprisoned for being an honest, dutiful Egyptian."

"Those who speak the truth to power speak for powerless people everywhere. The battle never ends, but, now, as always, we must honor the brave ones, the inspirational ones, such as yourself."

"You are a shining example for the world to stand up to injustice no matter what kind it is."



Azimjon Askarov

Internet Reporter, Kyrgyzstan

Charge: Retaliatory

First Jailed: June 15, 2010

Length of Sentence: Life

Postcards of note:

"Thank you for the work you have done on behalf of humanity. Because of courageous journalists like you, the world is slowly becoming a better place."

"The words will never be powerful enough, but I want you to know that there are people far from you that think and pray for you."

"Thank you for the service you have provided the world. You exist as a symbol to people all over the world of free press."



Ding Lingjie

Editor and Internet Reporter, China

Charge: No charge

First Jailed: September 22, 2017

Length of Sentence: Not sentenced

Postcards of note:

"There will come a day where justice will find its way, so you can live your life again, express your thoughts, love and be loved."

"I hope the people holding you captive will realize that authentic journalism isn't Eastern or Western, but a universal and timeless commitment to honesty and service. You have committed no crime."

"I read about your efforts to ensure human rights. It is the fundamental duty of any journalist. Don't lose hope. The world is with you."



Zehra Doğan

Reporter and Photographer, Turkey

Charge: Anti-state

First Jailed: June 12, 2017

Length of Sentence: 2 years 9 months

Postcards of note:

"Know that you are valued, you are loved, and people you don't even know from far away know your name and are praying for you."

"You are doing incredibly important work, and the world relies on true professionals like you to shine a light in the darkest corners of our societies."

"Remember that thousands around the world know of your plight and in their own small ways are trying to pressure their governments or yours to obtain your freedom."



Ghys Fortuné Dombé Bemba

Editor, Republic of Congo

In July, Bemba was freed from prison.

Charge: Anti-state

First Jailed: January 11, 2017

Length of Sentence: Not sentenced

Postcards of note:

"You are not alone, and you are not unknown. We have heard your story and people are working to free you."

"Please know that your plight has not gone unnoticed and that the free world supports you and thanks you for your work. Truth matters."

"I am praying for you and your safe release, and I am writing to the Congolese president on your behalf. You are not forgotten. The world cares about you."

Justice for murdered journalists

CPJ is an organization that beats back censorship, supports journalists under threat, and gets journalists out of jail. One of the most important things we do each day is fight for justice when journalists are murdered.

Our advocacy takes years—we publish reports about impunity in journalist murders, we meet with government leaders, and we carry out campaigns. And sometimes our diligence pays off.

In the past five years, advocacy by CPJ and other groups has contributed to winning convictions in the murders of 38 journalists.

Here are some of them.



Georgy Gongadze
Ukraine

The body of Georgy Gongadze, editor of the news website *Ukrainska Pravda*, was found in November 2000, two months after he went missing in Kiev. Gongadze often criticized then-President Leonid Kuchma and other Ukrainian government officials. Suspects in his murder were convicted in 2000, 2008, and 2013, when a high-ranking police official was sentenced to life in prison.

Gongadze was the first online journalist worldwide to be murdered for his work. In a 2014 essay for CPJ, his wife, Myroslava, wrote, “I continue the pursuit of justice for my husband because I believe that investigating, not only exposing, crimes against journalists is our obligation to those who fight to bring the truth to the people.”

AP/Sergei Chuzavkov



Gerardo Ortega
Philippines

On a January morning in 2011, Gerardo Ortega, host of a local radio station, was shot in the head shortly after his morning broadcast. Ortega had received threats in connection with his criticism of officials accused of corruption and his opposition to provincial mining projects. While some suspects in the murder were arrested and later freed, the gunman was sentenced to life in prison in 2013. Another suspect, a former aide to the governor, was convicted in 2016.

In 2013, Ortega’s daughter wrote to CPJ: “Thank you for being with us in every development, every victory, every setback. ... We would never have gotten this far without you.”

AFP/Noel Celis



Anna Politkovskaya
Russia

Anna Politkovskaya was found slain in her apartment building in Moscow in October 2006. The special correspondent for the Russian newspaper *Novaya Gazeta* was renowned for her critical coverage of war and human rights abuses. During her career, she was threatened, jailed, poisoned, and forced into exile. In 2012, a retired police lieutenant colonel was sentenced to 11 years in prison as an accomplice in her murder. In 2014, a court found five other suspects guilty and sentenced them to lengthy terms in prison.

Still, Politkovskaya’s children are convinced “the crime is far from being fully solved,” according to their lawyer, Anna Stavitskaya.

Reuters/Denis Sinyakov

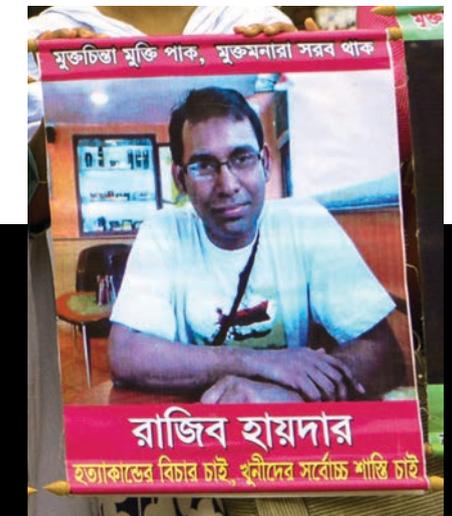


Pablo Medina Velázquez
Paraguay

Pablo Medina Velázquez and his assistant were returning from a reporting trip in October 2014 when their vehicle was intercepted by gunmen. The journalist was shot four times in the face and chest, and his assistant was also killed. Medina had received threats in connection with his coverage of the booming drug trade in the region. CPJ had also reported on the 2001 murder of Medina’s brother, a journalist who denounced political corruption.

In late 2017, a court found a former mayor of a nearby city guilty of ordering the murder and sentenced him to nearly 30 years in prison. Police also charged the brother and nephew of the former mayor in the murder. They are not yet in Paraguayan authorities’ custody.

AP/ABC Color



Ahmed Rajib Haider
Bangladesh

Ahmed Rajib Haider, who criticized Islamic fundamentalism on his blog, was hacked to death by assailants wielding machetes in February 2013. He was one of the bloggers murdered amid an escalation in attacks against online journalists in Bangladesh that year. As one blogger told CPJ, “Give in to blind faith, shut your mouth, and break your pen if you wish to remain in the country.”

CPJ reported on all of the murders and repeatedly called on authorities to convict the killers. In 2015, a Dhaka court convicted eight suspects in Haider’s murder. Of the six journalists in Bangladesh killed for criticizing Islamist groups in the past five years, only in Haider’s case have the killers been convicted.

AFP

A journalist lights a candle during a vigil for 10 Afghan journalists who were killed on April 30. The day was one of the deadliest CPJ has ever recorded for journalists in Afghanistan.

AFP/Dibyangshu Sarkar



Attack on a journalist anywhere is an attack on
democracy everywhere. Unite to fight for
press freedom. Let us talk for a world without
fear.



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CPJ is proud to honor these brave journalists with the 2018 International Press Freedom Awards.

They have faced harassment, threats, and imprisonment in their pursuit of the truth. Through their outstanding work, they continue to push the frontiers of press freedom.



Luz Mely Reyes

Investigative reporter Luz Mely Reyes has covered politics in her native Venezuela for more than 25 years. Her first day as a reporter coincided with former President Hugo Chávez's first coup attempt in 1992.

In 2012, Reyes was named editor-in-chief of the newspaper *Diario 2001*, the first woman to hold this position at a national newspaper in Venezuela. In 2015, after authorities demanded to see her sources, she quit the paper and co-founded the independent news website *Efecto Cocuyo*. The website, which has become a champion of independent journalism, hosts training workshops and panel discussions for journalists. The staff also collaborates on investigative projects with international journalism organizations as well as news outlets from Mexico, Peru, and Colombia.

Luz Mely Reyes



Anastasiya 'Nastya' Stanko

Anastasiya Stanko is a Ukrainian journalist and TV presenter and a member of the "Stop censorship" movement, an anti-censorship group in Ukraine. In 2013, she co-founded the independent media channel Hromadske. She previously worked for the national TV channels Pershiy and TVI.

Since the beginning of the Maidan Revolution—anti-government demonstrations that led to the ouster of President Viktor Yanukovich in 2014—Stanko has reported on the protests in Kiev. In 2014, she and her cameraman were taken hostage by the so-called Luhansk People's Republic while on assignment for Hromadske. Two days later, they were freed.

Stanko, an award-winning journalist, continues to report on human rights violations by the police and Ukraine's Security Service in the conflict zone.

Hromadske



Amal Habbani

Amal Khalifa Idris Habbani, a freelance journalist and contributor to the news outlet *Al-Tagheer*, has worked in Sudan since beginning her career in 2008. She has repeatedly been harassed and detained by Sudanese authorities in connection with her coverage of protests and official wrongdoing.

Authorities have sought to silence or intimidate Habbani for years. In January, she was arrested while covering anti-inflation protests and held for 34 days. She suffered serious injuries after being beaten by officials with electric sticks. In previous years, she was detained for days, banned from writing and traveling, and prosecuted for her reporting on the alleged rape and torture of a youth activist.

AFP



Nguyen Ngoc Nhu Quynh, 'Mother Mushroom'

Nguyen Ngoc Nhu Quynh, one of Vietnam's most prominent independent bloggers, is best known by her penname "Mother Mushroom." She has been behind bars since 2016 on charges of "propagandizing against the state."

In 2017, Quynh was sentenced to 10 years in prison after a one-day trial. The charges were in connection with 18 articles she posted online, including reports on an industrial toxic spill that devastated large areas of the country's coast.

Before her arrest, Quynh covered sensitive issues that were censored by state-controlled media. She has faced frequent harassment by authorities. In 2014, she prophetically told CPJ she feared she would be arrested and jailed.

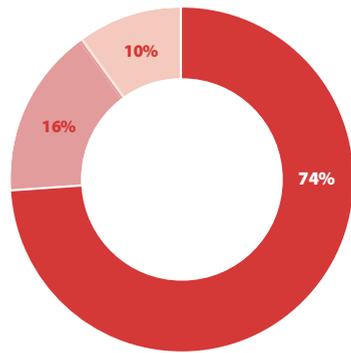
Family photo

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Nearly three-quarters of every dollar spent by CPJ goes directly to program activities.

- 74% Program Services
- 16% Fundraising
- 10% Management and General

Statement of financial position as of December 31, 2017

(with comparative totals as of December 31, 2016)

Assets	12/31/2017	12/31/2016
Cash and cash equivalents	\$3,479,150	\$1,664,702
Investments	\$13,771,258	\$12,092,436
Pledges receivable, net	3,684,459	5,209,786
Prepaid expenses and other receivable	123,897	54,494
Fixed assets (net of accumulated depreciation)	267,647	300,077
Security deposit	82,211	82,171
Total assets	\$21,408,622	\$19,403,666
Liabilities and Net Assets		
Liabilities		
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$436,689	\$344,173
Deferred rent	90,785	140,233
Conditional contribution	400,000	300,000
Total liabilities	927,474	784,406
Net assets		
Unrestricted	3,270,171	1,575,809
Temporarily restricted	7,710,977	7,543,451
Permanently restricted	9,500,000	9,500,000
Total net assets	20,481,148	18,619,260
Total liabilities and net assets	\$21,408,622	\$19,403,666

Statement of functional expenses for the year ended as of December 31, 2017

(with comparative totals for the year ended December 31, 2016)

	Program Services	Management and General	Fundraising	Total Expenses 12/31/17	Total Expenses 12/31/16
Salaries	\$2,359,956	\$92,408	\$505,339	\$2,957,703	\$2,535,882
Payroll taxes and benefits	678,983	25,904	150,577	855,464	746,488
Professional fees (including in-kind)	1,098,897	308,999	280,866	1,688,762	1,197,192
Occupancy	373,027	12,173	69,391	454,591	403,355
Travel	383,277	7,905	79,276	470,458	317,653
Grants	203,763			203,763	244,008
Office supplies and maintenance	66,042	5,958	13,447	85,447	39,151
Telephone and Internet	46,352	2,565	7,441	56,358	45,921
Publications, printing and postage	83,025	291	42,902	126,218	103,222
Insurance	45,704	1,790	9,787	57,281	35,858
Fees	18,704	3,740	45,972	68,416	28,323
Depreciation	80,709	3,160	17,282	101,151	55,534
Other	108,518	286,248	17,228	411,994	204,074
Total	\$5,546,957	\$751,141	\$1,239,508	\$7,537,606	\$5,956,661

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