

## JOINT STATEMENT

### **Serious international concern over the growing deterioration of press freedom in El Salvador**

The undersigned organizations express our deep alarm at the accelerated deterioration of press freedom in El Salvador, which has intensified significantly in recent weeks.

The Association of Journalists of El Salvador (APES, for its Spanish acronym) has documented the forced displacement of at least 40 journalists because of a sustained pattern of harassment, intimidation, and arbitrary restrictions on journalistic work.

These cases do not include other critical voices or human rights defenders who have also fled the country due to the climate of persecution. Journalists forced to flee come from various media outlets and have conducted key investigations into human rights abuses, corruption, and lack of transparency.

This mass exodus of journalists has triggered a profound crisis of freedom of expression and created a climate of widespread fear, affecting even the families of exiled journalists.

APES has raised concerns about the existence of [watchlists and threats of arrest](#) targeting journalists and human rights defenders—including those from the renowned outlet El Faro.

The situation is further worsened by the recent enactment of the Foreign Agents Law, which poses a [direct threat](#) to press freedom and the work of independent organizations. This legislation imposes severe restrictions and could be used as a tool of persecution against those who practice journalism or defend fundamental rights.

[Recent missions](#) by international press freedom organizations visiting the country concluded that El Salvador is undergoing one of its [darkest moments](#) for press

freedom since the end of the armed conflict, marked by high levels of self-censorship and forced exile.

Considering this alarming situation, the undersigned organizations state the following:

- The Salvadoran government must guarantee the physical integrity and freedom of all journalists and immediately cease any form of persecution, surveillance, or intimidation.
- The Salvadoran State has the responsibility to publicly clarify reports of watchlists and threats of arrests and to ensure that critical voices are not being criminalized.
- The international community is closely monitoring the situation and demands the unrestricted respect for freedom of the press and expression in El Salvador.
- The Salvadoran government must provide security guarantees so that journalists who have been forced to flee can return to the country without fear of persecution or legal action.

The undersigned organizations will continue to monitor the situation in El Salvador closely. We urge the authorities to act responsibly and in accordance with democratic principles, and to put an end to all forms of persecution against journalists and human rights defenders. Respect for press freedom and fundamental rights demands a clear, urgent, and committed response.

**Signatory organizations:**

Alianza de Medios MX

ARTICLE 19 México y Centroamérica

Asociación Colombiana de Medios de Información (AMI)

Asociación de Entidades Periodísticas Argentinas (ADEPA)

Asociación Mundial de Editores de Noticias (WAN-IFRA)

Asociación Nacional de la Prensa (ANP) Chile

Associação Nacional de Jornais (ANJ) Brasil

Comité para la Protección de Periodistas (CPJ)

Consejo de la Prensa Peruana (CPP)

Free Press Unlimited (FPU)

Fundación por la Libertad de Expresión y Democracia (FLED)

Fundamedios

Instituto Prensa y Sociedad (IPYS)

International Press Institute (IPI)

PEN Internacional

Press Freedom Center at the National Press Club

Reporteros sin Fronteras (RSF)

Sociedad Interamericana de Prensa (SIP)