

By mail to: [consular@hague.mfa.gov.il](mailto:consular@hague.mfa.gov.il)

Johan de Wittlaan 5  
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To the Ambassador of Israël in the Kingdom of the Netherlands  
His Excellency Mr. Modi Moshe Ephraim

Amsterdam March 19th, 2024

*Re: Protecting journalists and press freedom in the Israel-Gaza war*

Dear mr Ephraim,

We kindly ask your attention for the following urgent matter.

We ask your government to take immediate and explicit steps to protect the lives of journalists covering the war in Gaza, in accordance with international law.

Since the war started at October 7, when Hamas-led fighters carried out horrific attacks and hostage-taking in Israel, the number of fatalities among media workers has risen to unprecedented numbers.

Four journalists were killed in Hamas' assault on October 7, and at least 95 journalists have been killed since, almost all of them by the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), according to the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ).

Independent reports underline that, in some cases, the IDF may have deliberately targeted journalists. These reports indicate that the IDF strikes in southern Lebanon on October 13 that killed Reuters journalist Issam Abdallah and injured six other journalists from Reuters, Al Jazeera, and Agence France-Presse were unlawful and apparently deliberate.

On January 7, the IDF has acknowledged deliberately targeting a car in which journalists were traveling, killing two journalists and seriously injuring a third.

In other cases, journalists reported receiving threats from Israeli officials and IDF officers before their family members were killed in Gaza.

The event of this weekend where Al Jazeera Arabic correspondent Ismail al-Ghoul has been arrested and severely beaten and the equipment of journalists has been destroyed by Israeli forces in Gaza City's al-Shifa Hospital is the last example in long row.

For international media it is impossible to enter the Gaza area and for the journalists already inside the Gaza strip, it is nearly impossible to do their work in a safe way.

We understand the complexity of this war, but this can by no means be a reason to target journalists and make it impossible for them to do their work in a safe way.

We kindly ask you to allow us a visit to further explain our sincere worries and discuss the possibilities to respect the right of journalists to report on the hostilities and stop the deliberate killing of journalists in the area.

Cordially yours,

On behalf of the NVJ

Folkert Jensma, Chairman of the board NVJ

Thomas Bruning, General Secretary NVJ

Nederlandse Vereniging van Journalisten

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