



**International
Federation
of Journalists**

PHILIPPE LERUTH
President

ANTHONY BELLANGER
General Secretary

Mr António Guterres
UN General Secretary

Martin Griffiths
U.N. special envoy to Yemen

Brussels, 21st February 2019

Your Excellencies,

We are writing on behalf of the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), the world's largest journalist organisation representing over 600,000 members in 139 countries, and its affiliate the Yemen Journalists' Syndicate (YJS). We want to express our deep concerns regarding the lengthy detention of ten journalists in Yemen by the Ansar Allah militias and their recent decision to refer them to a specialised terrorism court.

During the last four years of their illegal detention, those who hold them have broken all international conventions and norms on the treatment of prisoners. They were subjected to physical and psychological torture, denied health care, family visits and other basic needs. A few days ago, we were hopeful that their ordeal was coming to an end and that they would be reunited with their families and colleagues. Instead they are now facing an unjust and bogus court.

We look forward to hearing your strong rejection of the use of journalists in Yemen as a bargaining chip in the negotiations between the warring parties and we are urging the UN special envoy to Yemen to bring their full authority and the powerful array of legal tools at their disposal to demand the immediate and non-negotiable release of our Yemeni colleagues Akram Al Waleedi, Hareth Homid, Hasan Onab, Hashem Al Yousfi, AbdelKhalee Omran, Essam Bulgat, Toufic Al Mansoury, Hisham Tarmom, Haytham Al Sheham, Waheed Al Soufi, Salah al Kaadi, Mir Baghossian and Mohammed Al Makrami - most of them held since June 2015.

We wish to remind you that, in accordance with Security Council Resolutions 1738 (2006) and 2222 (2015) on the protection of journalists, parties involved in situations of armed conflict are urged *"to respect the professional independence and rights of journalists and media professionals"*.

International Federation of Journalists, International Press Centre

Résidence Palace, Block C, 155 Rue de la Loi, B-1040 Brussels
Tel: +32 2 235 2200 Fax: +32 2 235 2219 E-mail: ifj@ifj.org



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In October 2018 we launched a [specific campaign on Yemen](#) following our grave concerns about impunity of crimes against journalists. So far, 36 reporters have died in the country since 2011. The last one was [Ziad al-Sharaabi](#), a cameraman killed in a bomb attack on January 28. In addition, 53 media workers have been kidnapped or arrested since the conflict began. Most of these crimes were perpetrated by Ansar Allah and the government. Furthermore, according to IFJ and the YJS, 135 cases of press freedom violations were registered since January 2018 until the end of September of the same year.

Within this context, we are also requesting the UN to pursue any investigation following the violations committed against the journalism community and press freedom in Yemen so that those responsible will face justice if necessary and the victims of these attacks would be secure full restitution.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'P. Leruth', written on a light-colored background.

Philippe Leruth
IFJ President

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Anthony BELLANGER', written on a light-colored background.

Anthony Bellanger
IFJ General Secretary

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