

Joint Letter from the Nordic Journalists' Associations to the Foreign Ministers of the Nordic Countries

2 December 2025

To the Honorable Ministers Elina Valtonen, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Finland, Espen Barth Eide, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Norway, Lars Løkke Rasmussen, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, Maria Malmer Stenergard, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sweden and Þorgerður Katrín Gunnarsdóttir, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Iceland.

Subject: Call for action to end Israel's restrictions on press freedom and lift the ban on journalists' access to Gaza

Dear Foreign Ministers of the Nordic countries,

We, the undersigned journalists' unions of the Nordic countries, urge the foreign ministers of our nations to take an active stand and call on the Israeli authorities to end their restrictions on freedom of expression and lift the ban preventing journalists from entering Gaza.

For more than two years since the start of the conflict, Israeli authorities have barred foreign journalists from entering the Gaza Strip independently. Despite repeated appeals from press freedom organizations and international news outlets for open and independent reporting, Israel continues to deny the media free and unaccompanied access to the enclave.

The only access permitted has been through tightly controlled military embed programs, under which a limited number of Israeli and foreign reporters are taken into Gaza under the direct supervision of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF). These visits are brief, prearranged, and highly restricted, offering no freedom of movement or opportunity for independent contact with Palestinian civilians.

Press freedom advocates have repeatedly emphasized that such arrangements do not constitute genuine journalistic access and fall far short of the standards required for free, independent, and transparent reporting from a conflict zone.

Israel continues to enforce these restrictions despite international pressure to lift the media ban following the ceasefire.

Since the beginning of the war more than 200 journalists have been killed, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ). Many of them have been directly targeted. In addition, many have been injured or imprisoned. We strongly condemn these killings and any deliberate attacks on journalists. Palestinian journalists, like all journalists, must be able to work without fear of being attacked or killed; their protection is essential for the flow of verified information and for accountability. We call for independent investigations into all deaths and attacks on media workers and for those responsible to be held to account.

Freedom of the press and the right to report are fundamental principles of democracy. When journalists are silenced or barred from conflict zones, truth itself becomes a casualty. The absence of independent reporting from Gaza allows misinformation to spread and deprives the global public of verified, reliable information about the humanitarian situation and the actions of all parties involved.

As nations long committed to press freedom, human rights, and open democracy, the Nordic countries have both the moral authority and the diplomatic influence to act. We therefore call on your governments to use your voices and influence within the international community to:

1. Promote international protection and support for local journalists and media workers in Gaza, recognizing their essential role in documenting and bearing witness to events on the ground.
2. Advocate publicly for Israel to grant international journalists safe, independent, and unrestricted access to Gaza, in accordance with international humanitarian and human rights law.
3. Work actively within the European Union, the United Nations, and other relevant international forums to strengthen the global defense of press freedom and the right to information in conflict zones.
4. Demand independent investigation of all killings of journalists and that those responsible be brought to justice.

Freedom of expression and press freedom are not privileges reserved for peaceful times - they are the very foundations of accountability in times of war. Preventing journalists from doing their work endangers truth and weakens the international commitment to human rights.

We urge you, as foreign ministers of nations built on openness and democracy, to act decisively in defense of these principles.

Respectfully,

The Icelandic Union of Journalists (Blaðamannafélag Íslands)
The Danish Union of Journalists (Dansk Journalistforbund)
The Norwegian Union of Journalists (Norsk Journalistlag)
The Swedish Union of Journalists (Svenska Journalistförbundet)
The Union of Journalists in Finland (Journalistiliitto)