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[RightsAndDissent.org](https://RightsAndDissent.org)

[CourageFound.org](https://CourageFound.org)

[RootsAction.org](https://RootsAction.org)

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## **Over 100 journalists to Blinken: Stop arming Israel**

News outlets, press freedom organizations, and more than 100 journalists, including 4 Pulitzer Prize winners, have written to U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, urging the U.S. to immediately cease sending weapons to Israel amid the country's widespread killing of journalists in Palestine. The letter was initiated by the Courage Foundation, Defending Rights & Dissent, and Roots Action.

"Israel's military actions are not possible without U.S. weapons, U.S. military aid, and U.S. diplomatic support," the journalists write. "By providing the weapons being used to deliberately kill journalists, you are complicit in one of the gravest affronts to press freedom today."

113 journalists, 20 news outlets, and 7 press freedom organizations, largely based in the U.S., have sent a joint letter to Sec. Blinken, calling on the U.S. to stop sending weapons to Israel that are used to kill Palestinian journalists.

"By providing Israel the weapons it uses to kill Palestinian journalists, the U.S. is complicit in these horrifying crimes. It is not enough for the State Department to issue words of concern or request Israel investigate its own crimes. That is why in this historic move, journalists, news outlets, and press freedom groups are joining together to tell the State Department that the only way to support press freedom is to impose an arms embargo on Israel," said Chip Gibbons, Policy Director, Defending Rights & Dissent.

"The United States cannot continue to claim it defends press freedom and upholds democratic values while continuing to arm a government that intentionally kills journalists in Palestine. We stand in solidarity with Palestinian reporters who are braving nightmarish conditions every single day to bring us the truth of this horrific assault, and we mourn those we have already lost to U.S. weapons deployed by Israel. The U.S. must reverse course immediately," said Nathan Fuller, executive director of the Courage Foundation.

Israel has killed at least 160 journalists in Palestine since the beginning of its assault on Gaza, the largest recorded number of journalists killed in any war. As the signers note, Israel has intentionally targeted reporters to shield its war from global scrutiny:

“Israel’s deliberate targeting of these journalists seems intended to impose a near blackout on coverage of its assault on Gaza. Investigations by United Nations bodies, NGOs, and media organizations, have all found instances of deliberate targeting of journalists.”

Furthermore, Israel has imposed military censorship on both its own journalists and international reporters operating in the country, blocking all foreign journalists from Gaza, shutting down Al Jazeera, raiding its office and blocking its broadcasts and website within Israel.

The letter underlines that under international law, the intentional targeting of journalists is a war crime. Additionally, U.S. domestic law prohibits the State Department from providing assistance to foreign security forces credibly accused of gross violations of human rights, such as Israel’s well-documented pattern of extrajudicial executions of journalists.

The signatories remind Blinken that he recently called on “every nation to do more to protect journalists,” and reiterated his “unwavering support for free and independent media around the world”, and ask him to stand by his words. The letter concludes with a call to immediately stop abetting Israel’s war on journalists by ceasing the transfer of all weapons to the country.

“By providing Israel with the weapons used to kill journalists, the State Department is abetting Israel’s violent suppression of journalism. The U.S. is providing the weapons Israel continually uses to target Palestinian journalists in Gaza. This is a violation of International law and U.S. domestic law. We urge you to immediately cease the transfer of all weapons to Israel.”

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## Quotes from the letter's signers

**Spencer Ackerman**, *Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and author of "Reign of Terror: How The 9/11 Era Destabilized America and Produced Trump."*

"Journalism is not a crime, and must never be a death sentence. When Russia kills and imprisons journalists, the U.S. is appropriately vocal in condemnation, but when Israel does it, the U.S. falls silent. Yet every Palestinian, Lebanese, American – remember Shireen Abu Akleh – and other journalist that Israel has killed implicates its patron, the United States, which possesses the leverage to stop Israel's onslaught."

**Seraj Assi**, *a Palestinian writer living in Washington, DC, and the author, most recently, of My Life As An Alien (Tartarus Press)*

"By targeting Palestinian journalists and their families, Israel is trying to cover up its genocide in Gaza and kill Palestinians in the dark. I'm also extremely worried about the safety of the remaining Palestinian journalists in Gaza, who have been in the crosshairs of the Israeli military for more than ten months. Unless we act now, Israel will continue to slaughter journalists in Gaza without consequences."

**Tareq Hajjaj**, *Gaza correspondent for Mondoweiss,*

"Mr. Blinken,

I had a great life in Gaza City. I had a home, a job, and my family was around me!

My home was bombed by U.S made bombs, my city was levelled as well, and my family got separated. Some of them got killed and others got injured. I'm homeless now because of this war, thousands of families are like me!

Mr Blinken, I don't think this is the purpose of arming Israel! These weapons are only damaging our lives, and pushed us to leave our homeland, and we are civilians, Mr. Blinken!"

**James Bamford**, *bestselling author and journalist*

"There is no better definition of courage than to be a journalist reporting from Gaza in the midst of a genocidal war of forced starvation and mass killing of innocent civilians. The Biden/Harris administration must stop sending weapons and aid to Israel until it ends its slaughter."