

公益社団法人 日本外国特派員協会

The Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan

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FCCJ JOINS GLOBAL PRESS FREEDOM ORGANIZATIONS TO ASK FOR THE IMMEDIATE RELEASE OF FILIPINA JOURNALIST FRENCHIE MAE CUMPIO

Open letter from global journalists, press clubs and media organizations

Dear President Marcos,

The recent conviction of community journalist Frenchie Mae Cumpio of terrorism financing charges came as a shock to journalists and media freedom advocates. The court relying solely on implausible testimonies from prosecution witnesses has made the decision unbelievable and revolting.

On February 7, Cumpio and her companion, lay worker Marielle Domequil, will mark their sixth year in detention since their arrest in February 2020. UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and Opinion Irene Khan pointed out in a statement that the arrest and criminal charges, following months of 'red-tagging', surveillance, intimidation and harassment, appear to have been filed in retaliation for [Cumpio's] work as a journalist. [More than 250 journalists and representatives of media organizations from 35 countries](#) all over the world wrote in September 2025 calling on your administration to stop the persecution of Cumpio and release her immediately.

It is gravely alarming that Cumpio has been publicly labeled as a communist and terrorist by no less than the Department of Justice (DOJ) following the court decision. The labeling puts her life in danger and shows how the administration attempts to isolate Cumpio and justify her continuous detention. It is also concerning that terrorism-related charges are used systematically by the Filipino authorities to prosecute journalists and human rights defenders. This is a deeply troubling trend that should not exist in a democracy, and it brings the Philippines dangerously close to its authoritarian neighbors.

Cumpio's case is emblematic of the multiple risks faced by Filipino journalists. Elsewhere in the world, there are other Frenchie Mae Cumpios languishing in jail for telling the truth.

We, journalist groups, press freedom watchdogs and human rights organizations, reiterate our support for Cumpio and urge your Excellency to right the wrong. With the Philippines chairing the ASEAN this year, it is imperative that your administration walk the talk. The reversal of the unjust

conviction of Cumpio is necessary to prove the Philippines' commitment to press freedom, free expression and democracy.

Signatories:

1. AAJA-Asia – Asian American Journalists Association's Asia Chapter
2. Afghanistan Media Support Organisation (AMSO)
3. Aliansi Jurnalists Independen – AJI (Indonesia)
4. Altermidya – People's Alternative Media Network
5. ARTICLE 19
6. Asia Human Rights and Labour Advocates (AHRLA)
7. Asian American Journalists Association's Asia Chapter
8. Asian Institute of Journalism and Communication
9. Association of Foreign Press Correspondents
10. Association of Taiwan Journalists (ATJ)
11. Atenews
12. Bangladeshi Journalists in International Media (BJIM)
13. Baretang Bikolnon
14. Bulatlat
15. Cambodian Journalists Alliance Association (Cambodia)
16. Cari-Trans Support Group Jamaica
17. Center for Community Journalism and Development
18. Centre for Independent Journalism (CIJ) Malaysia
19. Coalition For Women In Journalism (CFWIJ)
20. College Editors Guild of the Philippines
21. Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ)
22. Dampig Katarungan
23. Davao Today
24. EMPOWERHOUSE – Denmark
25. Filipino Freelance Journalists' Guild
26. Foreign Correspondents Association of the Philippines (FOCAP)
27. Free Press Unlimited (FPU)
28. Freedom Forum, Nepal
29. Freedom Network (FNPK), Pakistan
30. Freedom Now
31. Globe International Center, Mongolia
32. Hong Kong Journalist Association (HKJA)
33. Hong Kong Media Overseas
34. Indian Journalists Union
35. Institute for Research, Advocacy and Development (IRADA), Pakistan

36. International Association of Women in Radio & Television(IAWRT-Kenya)
37. International Association of Women in Radio and Television – International
38. International Association of Women in Radio and Television – Nepal
39. International Association of Women in Radio and Television – Norway
40. International Association of Women in Radio and Television – Philippines
41. International Association of Women in Radio and Television – USA
42. International Federation of Journalists (IFJ)
43. International Women's Media Foundation
44. Kodao Productions
45. Legal Initiatives for Vietnam (LIV)
46. Media Diversity Institute (MDI)
47. Media Entertainment and Arts Alliance (MEAA), Australia
48. Migrante Taiwan
49. Mizzima Media – Myanmar
50. Movement for Media Safety Philippines
51. National Union of Journalists of the Philippines
52. National Union of Journalists Peninsular Malaysia
53. Nest Center for Journalism Innovation and Development NGO, Mongolia
54. Northern Dispatch
55. Paghimutad Negros
56. Pakistan Press Foundation (PPF)
57. Palestinian Journalists Syndicate
58. Panay Today
59. PanaySayon
60. PEN America
61. Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism
62. Philippine Collegian
63. Prachatai
64. PUP Campus Journalists
65. PUP The Catalyst
66. Reporters Without Borders (RSF)
67. Salò of the University of the Philippines Manila – School of Health Sciences South Cotabato Campus
68. Save Cagayan Valley
69. Scientia – UP Diliman
70. Serve the People Association (SPA) (Taiwan)
71. Society of Professional Journalists
72. Southeast Asia Freedom of Expression Network (SAFEnet)
73. Swedish Tibet Committee
74. Taiwan Association for Human Rights (Taiwan)

75. Taiwan Foreign Correspondents' Club (TFCC)
76. The Accounts (College of Management, UP Visayas)
77. The EyeWitness Project
78. The Foreign Correspondents Club of Japan (FCCJ)
79. The Journalists Association of Korea (JAK)
80. The Manila Collegian
81. The Media and Democracy Project
82. The Network of Women in Media, India (NWMI)
83. The Vietnamese Magazine
84. The Voice of UPLB DevComSoc (UPLB Los Baños)
85. The Warden Publication (Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Muntinlupa)
86. Tinig ng Plaridel
87. TomasinoWeb
88. United for Climate Justice
89. UP Solidaridad
90. UPLB Perspective
91. VERA Files
92. World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters-Asia Pacific (AMARC-AP)

FCCJ Freedom of the Press Committee