

New UK funding to support media freedom around the world: 9 February 2022

Press release

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- UK pledges up to £600,000 to further the work of the international Media Freedom Coalition
- Thomson Reuters Foundation will now provide administrative support to the Media Freedom Coalition

The UK has announced up to £600,000 for a new secretariat to help advance the work of the Media Freedom Coalition – a partnership of 50 countries working together to advocate for media freedom and safety of journalists and hold to account those who harm journalists for doing their job. The Coalition's purpose is to defend media freedom where it is under threat.

With 55 journalists and media workers killed last year, and the number of journalists jailed for their work at a global high media freedom continues to be a serious issue.

Since its inception, the Coalition has grown to 50 countries, and issued more than 20 joint statements calling out abuses and violations of media freedom. Media Freedom Coalition members have also used their diplomatic networks to lobby and address media freedom issues locally.

The new administrative support funded by the UK will be delivered by Thomson Reuters Foundation, a registered charity which works to advance media freedom and promote human rights, and will help coordinate Coalition activities.

The announcement was made at a ministerial meeting of Coalition partners hosted in Estonia today (9 February) by Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon, Minister of State for South and Central Asia, UN & The Commonwealth, Prime Minister's Special Representative on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict.

After two years as co-chair of the Coalition, the UK is handing the co-chair position to the Netherlands, but will remain a key partner and further the work of the Media Freedom Coalition as part of its Executive Group. Defending media freedom at home and abroad will remain a priority for the UK.

FCDO Minister of State for Human Rights, Lord Tariq Ahmad of Wimbledon, said:

Our new funding will further the crucial work of defending media freedom wherever it is under threat, supporting brave journalists around the world on the frontline of defending democracy.

Background notes to editors

- The Thomson Reuters Foundation is a registered charity and the administrative arm of Thomson Reuters, the global news and information services company. Their media freedom work covers three pillars; media for democracy and development, defending media freedom and strengthening the future of journalism.
- The 50 Members of the Coalition have all signed the Global Pledge on Media Freedom, a written commitment to improving media freedom domestically and working together internationally.
- The Coalition promotes media freedom by lobbying on individual cases, working to hold abusers to account, supporting members of the Coalition and other countries to improve protections for the media and making collective statements in multilateral fora.

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