

*Oslo, June 3, 2020*

H.E. Mr Kenneth J. Braithwaite II  
The embassy of the United States of America  
Morgedalsvegen 36,  
0378 Oslo, Norway  
**osloamb@state.gov**

Your excellency,

The national board of the Norwegian Union of Journalists, representing the journalists in Norway, condemns the targeting of journalists covering the widespread protests in the United States.

We find it worrying and shocking to read the reports of violence both from police and rioters across the country. Over the past six days, we have received the alarming number of at least 125 press freedom violations nationwide, reported by journalists covering demonstrations protesting George Floyd's death in police custody in Minneapolis.

A president who regularly attacks journalists verbally, contributes to a growing number of protesters hostile to the media. We have seen this going on for a while, starting long before today's protests. The escalating violence we have witnessed over the last week has shown how dangerous such an attitude to the media can be. Working as a journalist covering the protests has now become just as dangerous in the United States as in many 3<sup>rd</sup> world countries we don't usually like to compare to our countries.

The president of the Norwegian Union of Journalists, Hege Iren Frantzen, is scared and seriously worried by what is happening to our colleagues covering the events in the United States.

"It is very serious when journalists on assignment are attacked", she says, adding:

"Journalists are meant to be people's ears and eyes, so this is an attack on the people as well. It seems to me that the police are targeting reporters with visible press-IDs. That is frightening".

The Norwegian Union of Journalists asks the U.S. government and local and national authorities to instruct the police not to target journalists, to ensure that all journalists can work during curfew restrictions, and do their utmost to protect all journalists covering the protests – from the protesters and the police alike. Only this way can media freedom be reinstated, and the public be fully informed about what is happening in their country.

We ask the U.S. Ambassador to Norway to forward our concern to the relevant U.S. authorities. Journalists on assignment must not be harassed or attacked.

With regards,



Hege Iren Frantzen  
President,  
The Norwegian Union of Journalists



Dag Idar Tryggestad,  
Vice President,  
The Norwegian Union of Journalists