



**ALLIANCE** *for*  
**JOURNALISTS'**  
**FREEDOM**

Level 3  
1 Bligh St  
Sydney 2000  
Australia

11 May 2020

To President Duterte

**Regional Coalition calls on Duterte Govt to re-open ABS-CBN  
and ensure Press Freedom in the Philippines.**

At times of crisis, reliable information is a key part of society's ability to cope and respond. In the context of the Covid19 pandemic, the closure of broadcaster ABS-CBN is unconscionable.

Lack of a free media makes democracy vulnerable, fractures societies and undermines trust in institutions – especially in Government.

The Filipino public greatly needs reliable information. This is particularly the case given the well documented vulnerability of the Philippines to fake news spread through Facebook.

We cannot beat this virus without knowledge through transparency, and cooperation through communication.

Governments have a responsibility to maintain their democratic and social systems, and a free media plays an essential role within that.

The closure of ABS-CBN makes the Philippines a less healthy society, and also undermines the ability of the region and the world to respond to this crisis.

We, the undersigned journalists, press freedom groups and media organisations have come together to call on you to urgently reinstate ABS-CBN's operating license and make an ongoing commitment to press freedom.

Join us in maintaining a regional and global standard.

Sincerely

Peter Greste  
**Director**  
**Alliance for Journalists' Freedom**  
**UNESCO Chair of Journalism & Communication at the University of Queensland**



&

**Margaret Simons, freelance journalist and author**

**with:**

**Alan Soon  
Co-founder Splice Media**



**Dr Alexandra Wake  
President, Journalism Education and Research Association of Australia**

**Anna Draffin  
Chief Executive Officer, The Public Interest Journalism Initiative**





**Dr Cait McMahon OAM, PhD, MAPS**  
**Managing Director, Dart Centre Asia Pacific**



**Chris Feik**  
**Editor, Quarterly Essay**

**Associate Professor Fay Anderson**  
**Head of Journalism, Monash University**

**Gaven Morris**  
**Director, News, Analysis & Investigations at Australian Broadcasting Corporation**



**Gary Dickson**  
**Press freedom researcher and writer**



**Helen Garner**  
**Writer**

**Jane Worthington**  
**Director – Asia-Pacific**  
**International Federation of Journalists (IFJ)**



**Associate Professor Jason Bosland**  
**Centre for Media and Communications Law, Melbourne Law School, University**  
**of Melbourne**



**Jean Ker Walsh**  
**Moderator, Cranlana Centre for Ethical Leadership**

  
Johan Lidberg

**Johan Lidberg**  
**Deputy Head Journalism, Monash University**



**Jon Bisset**  
Chief Executive Officer, Community Broadcasting Association of Australia



**Dr Joseph M Fernandez**  
Adjunct Associate Professor, Curtin University

**Karen Mahlab AM**  
Publisher, Pro Bono Australia, Founding Director The Public Interest Journalism Initiative



**Lenore Taylor**  
Editor, The Guardian Australia





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**Lisa Davies**  
Editor, *The Sydney Morning Herald*

**The Sydney Morning Herald**

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**Lisa Waller**  
Professor of Digital Communication, RMIT University



**Maddison Connaughton**  
Editor, *The Saturday Paper*

**THE SATURDAY PAPER**

**Marcus Strom**  
President of MEAA Media





*Mark Ryan*

**Mark Ryan**  
Executive Director, The Judith Neilson Institute for Journalism and Ideas



*Maria A. Ressa*

**Maria A. Ressa**  
CEO and Executive Editor, RAPPLER



**RAPPLER**

*Misha Ketchell*

**Misha Ketchell**  
Editor & Executive Director, The Conversation, Australia and New Zealand

**THE CONVERSATION**

*Nick Feik*

**Nick Feik**  
Editor, The Monthly

**The Monthly**



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**Professor Helen Sullivan**  
Academic

**Premesh Chandran**  
CEO, Co-Founder of Malaysiakini



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sabra Lane'.

**Sabra Lane**  
President, National Press Club of Australia



**Professor David Robie**  
Director, Pacific Media Centre, Auckland University of Technology







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**Professor Glyn Davis**  
**Crawford School of Public Policy, Australian National University**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'S Forde', is shown on a light grey rectangular background.

**Professor Susan Forde**  
**Dean (Academic), Arts Education and Law Group, Griffith University**