



**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**



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**Margaret Simons, freelance journalist and author**

**with:**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alan Soon', written in a cursive style.

**Alan Soon  
Co-founder Splice Media**



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alexandra Wake', written in a cursive style.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anna Draffin', written in a cursive style.

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





A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. McMahon'.

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



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Feik'.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gaven Morris'.

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



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gary Dickson'.

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

**Helen Garner**  
**Writer**



**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**  
**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



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Lenore Taylor'.

**Lenore Taylor**  
Editor, The Guardian Australia

**The  
Guardian**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Lisa Davies'.

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

**The Sydney Morning Herald**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Lisa Waller'.

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





**Marcus Strom**  
**President of MEAA Media**



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Ryan".

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



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "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**

*Helen Sullivan*

**Professor Helen Sullivan**  
Academic

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

**malaysiakini**  
news and views that matter



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Sabra Lane'.

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



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



A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'S. Forde'.

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