

Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale

Bilagsnr.:	656
Land:	Gaza-Vestbredden
Kilde:	Article 19
Titel:	Israel and Palestine - Allow international media access to Gaza
Udgivet:	25. januar 2024
Optaget på baggrundsmaterialet:	5. februar 2024

Israel and Palestine: Allow international media access to Gaza



Israeli airstrike near Rafah, near the Egyptian border in the southern Gaza Strip. Photo: Anas-Mohammed/ Shutterstock

ARTICLE 19 expresses serious concern about the continued and severe restrictions on international journalists' entry to the Gaza Strip. We reiterate our previous calls to finally open up access to Gaza for international journalists, enabling independent reporting and to protect all journalists on the ground.

Since the Hamas led-attacks and hostage-taking on 7 October 2023, there has been a ban on entering Gaza, preventing international journalists from covering the conflict on the ground. Both the Erez crossing from Israel into Gaza and the Rafah crossing from Egypt into Gaza have been closed to journalists. While some international journalists have been embedded with the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), the IDF has imposed strict conditions, including the requirement for reports to be submitted for [review](#) before publication and the [prohibition of interaction with Palestinians](#).

ARTICLE 19 expresses its disappointment with the Supreme Court of Israel's recent ruling, which reportedly [rejected](#) an appeal by the Foreign Press Association (FPA) in Jerusalem seeking independent access for journalists to the Gaza Strip. The FPA, which represents various international media organisations in Israel and Palestine, submitted [a petition](#) on 19 December 2023 after previous petitions to the IDF and the Israeli government received no response.

According to the FPA, the court argued that the restrictions on entry were 'justified on security grounds' and accepted claims by the Israeli defence authorities that journalists in Gaza 'could be put at risk in wartime and endanger soldiers by reporting on troop positions, and that it was too dangerous for Israeli personnel to be present at the border to facilitate press entry to Gaza'. The court is further reported to have invited the FPA to ask for access when circumstances change.

ARTICLE 19 emphasises that while national security reasons may warrant restrictions on media access to conflict zones, and access to particularly dangerous areas within a conflict zone might be impeded, a complete ban for the entire Gaza strip for over 90 days – except under strict conditions of embedding and approval of footage – goes beyond permissible restrictions under international standards.

Granting access to independent journalists to report from the ground is essential for ensuring objective media coverage, informing the world about the ongoing hostilities, documenting violations of human rights and humanitarian law, and protecting civilians. The continued ban on entering Gaza is just one facet of the [severe censorship regime](#) we have witnessed since 7 October 2023. We reiterate: the all-out assault on freedom of expression in this conflict must stop now.