

The Honorable Antony Blinken
United States Secretary of State
2201 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20520

CC: Suzy George, Chief of Staff

Dear Mr. Secretary,

The undersigned represent journalists from news organizations, press clubs, and press freedom organizations around the world. We are writing to ask your help in securing safe passage from Afghanistan for journalists at Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Afghan service.

Some 280 RFE/RL journalists and dependents were left behind during the US withdrawal despite their years of service to the United States and the specific threat they face from the Taliban.

Already, nearly two dozen RFE/RL journalists have received visits by armed men asking about their activities. Others have been called to Taliban inquiries via public summonses pasted to their doors. Active searches for US-affiliated journalists are already underway in Helmand and Kandahar provinces, according to RFE/RL reporters.

We are asking you to use your good offices to ensure these brave reporters, producers, and editors are a successful part of whatever Plan C our government is assembling.

They cannot – must not – be abandoned to reprisal, imprisonment, and murder.

We realize that these threatened RFE/RL journalists are among thousands of Afghans seeking rescue and resettlement. Still, their role is unique – and so is their peril.

Please remember their service to the United States, and to its ideals of a free press, and use your fullest influence to ensure their safe passage out of Afghanistan.

Sincerely,

Overseas Press Club of America
Overseas Press Club Foundation
The Coalition For Women In Journalism
The International Women's Media Foundation
Ethnovision
The Signals Network
Storyhunter
Pakistan Press Foundation (PPF)
Dart Center for Journalism and Trauma
Committee to Protect Journalists
James W. Foley Legacy Foundation
Freedom House
Women Photograph
Rory Peck Trust
ACOS Alliance