

Turkey: Washington Post Journalists

Contributed by DI Media Committee
Monday, 17 March 2008
Last Updated Thursday, 20 March 2008

The lives of the Washington Post journalists Andrea Bruce and Joshua Partlow are in danger over a story about Turkey's latest military action in Kurdistan Region.

Defend International urge authorities to ensure Bruce's and Partlow's safety; thus guarantee they will not be abducted by nationalist Turks; provide the highest level of security for them and to put an end to all kinds of harassment against them.

The case:

Washington

Post published an article on March 8, 2008 caused severe reaction from Turkish government. At the same time Turkey's one of the leading newspapers Hurriyet started a campaign against the Washington Post journalists over a story about Kurdish guerrilla in Zab valley during Turkey's latest military action in Kurdistan region in Northern Iraq. Hurriyet urged its readers to protest the Washington Post.

DI

Views:

Respect for basic

human rights in Turkey, particularly freedom of expression and opinion, deteriorated in 2007 and 2008. Torture and ill-treatment in detention is used repeatedly to punish non-violent protesters and peaceful activists. Mainly press freedom and freedom of expression and opinion has been suppressed systematically In Turkey. The controversial article 301 of the Turkish penal code, which took effect on June 1, 2005 is a well known threat to freedom of expression. According to 2007 Annual Report by Reporters Without Borders, article 301 is used frequently "against journalists, writers and intellectuals mentioning sensitive topics such as the Armenian massacres and the Kurdish question". "At least 65 people, including many journalist and writers, have been prosecuted under" this article.

The First Amendment Center in the US, states that "freedom of the expression upon public questions is secured by the First Amendment" so that "debate on public issues should be uninhibited, robust and wide-open."

Defend International urge authorities to:

- * Ensure Bruce's and Partlow's safety; thus
- * Guarantee they will not be abducted;
- * Provide the highest level of security for them;
- * Put an end to all kinds of harassment against them and to stop nationalist Turks threatening them.

Defend International is very preoccupied by Hurriyet's campaign against Bruce and Partlow and concerned that this model illustrates a determination to:

*Shut down independent journalism, not only in Turkey but also abroad;

* Silence virtually all independent media;

* Reduce morale within the media industry;

* Benefit political allies; and

* Silence, limit or compromise the atmosphere of professionalism on which independent journalism thrives.

Campaign:

Please copy the following appeals, add your signature and address and send them to arrive as soon as possible.

With thanks and appreciation

Defend International

The Washington Post

Mrs. Deborah Howell

E-mail: ombudsman@washpost.com

Dear Mrs. Howell,

First and foremost I would like to thank the Washington Post and its courageous journalists for their great efforts to bring reality to the international community. By mentioning this I also think about the article published on March 8, 2008 titled "A Kurdish Society of Soldiers".

I strongly condemn Turkish government's overreaction demonstrating their disrespect for the freedom of press, thought and expression, inside Turkey as well as abroad.

I urge you to continue your wonderful job and support all your independent journalists, and ensure that journalists are able to carry out their activities freely, in safety and without any hindrances or fear of harassment or intimidation which undermine freedom of expression, independent journalism and the free flow of information to the public.

The Turkish government's campaign against photographer Andrea Bruce and journalist Joshua Partlow raises a number of important human rights issues as they are in violation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights to which Turkey is a state party.

I would like to highlight that everybody should appreciate your independence and Washington Post doesn't need to apologize for Turkey. As a matter of fact, Turkish authorities and Turkish far-right media are the ones who are supposed to give the Washington Post an apology.

Finally I wish the Washington Post continuous success and your journalists the best of luck with their future endeavors.

Best wishes

Office of the Spokesperson
for the Secretary-General

United Nations, S-378

New York, NY 10017

USA

Fax: 212-963-7055

Subject: Please
forward to His Excellency Ban Ki-Moon

Your Excellency,

Herby I am expressing my concern that the lives of Washington Post journalists Andrea Bruce and Joshua Partlow are in danger. A group of nationalist Turks has threatened to assassinate them.

I call on you to ensure Bruce's and Partlow's safety; guarantee that they are not going to be abducted and to provide the highest level of security for them.

I urge you to put an end to Turkey's forms of harassment, including at diplomatic level, against Bruce and Partlow and all independent journalists, and ensure that journalists are able to carry out their activities freely, in safety and without any hindrances or fear of harassment or intimidation which undermine freedom of expression, independent journalism and the free flow of information to the public.

Political considerations should not prejudice human rights. Moreover the Turkish government's campaign against photographer Andrea Bruce and journalist Joshua Partlow raises a number of important human rights issues as they are in violation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights to which Turkey is a state party.

Finally I urge you to remind Turkey it has to ensure in all circumstances the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in

accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and with international and European Union human rights instruments signed and ratified by Turkey.

I also seek assurances that Bruce's and Partlow's lives are not going to be effected by this kind of uncivilized behavior. From now on Turkey has full responsibility if anything happen to Bruce and Partlow.

I hope for your urgent attention to this matter.

Respectfully yours,

----- His Excellency George W. Bush -
The president of the US

The White House

Washington,
D.C. 20500

USA

Fax: + 202 456 2461

E-mail: president@whitehouse.gov
Your Excellency,

Herby I am expressing my concern that the lives of Washington Post journalists Andrea Bruce and Joshua Partlow are in danger. A group of nationalist Turks has threatened to assassinate them.

I call on you to ensure Bruce's and Partlow's safety; guarantee that they are not going to be abducted and to provide the highest level of security for them.

I urge you to put an end to Turkey's forms of harassment, including at diplomatic level, against Bruce and Partlow and all independent journalists, and ensure that journalists are able to carry out their activities freely, in safety and without any hindrances or fear of harassment or intimidation which undermine freedom of expression, independent journalism and the free flow of information to the public.

Political considerations should not prejudice human rights. Moreover the Turkish government's campaign against photographer Andrea Bruce and journalist Joshua Partlow raises a number of important human rights issues as they are in violation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights to which Turkey is a state party.

Finally I urge you to remind Turkey it has to ensure in all circumstances the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and with international and European Union human rights instruments signed and ratified by Turkey.

I also seek assurances that Bruce's and Partlow's lives are not going to be effected by this kind of uncivilized behavior. From now on Turkey has full responsibility if anything happen to Bruce and Partlow.

I hope for your urgent attention to this matter.

Respectfully yours, ----- Speaker of the United States House of Representatives
Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi Office of the speaker H-232, US Capitol Washington, DC 20515 USA Fax: +202 225 8259
E-mail: sf.nancy@mail.house.gov Dear Speaker Pelosi, Herby I am expressing my concern that the lives of Washington Post journalists Andrea Bruce and Joshua Partlow are in danger. A group of nationalist Turks has threatened to assassinate them.

I call on you to ensure Bruce's and Partlow's safety; guarantee that they are not going to be abducted and to provide the highest level of security for them.

I urge you to put an end to Turkey's forms of harassment, including at diplomatic level, against Bruce and Partlow and all independent journalists, and ensure that journalists are able to carry out their activities freely, in safety and without any hindrances or fear of harassment or intimidation which undermine freedom of expression, independent journalism and the free flow of information to the public.

Political considerations should not prejudice human rights. Moreover the Turkish government's campaign against photographer Andrea Bruce and journalist Joshua Partlow raises a number of important human rights issues as they are in violation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights to which Turkey is a state party.

Finally I urge you to remind Turkey it has to ensure in all circumstances the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and with international and European Union human rights instruments signed and ratified by Turkey.

I also seek assurances that Bruce's and Partlow's lives are not going to be effected by this kind of uncivilized behavior. From now on Turkey has full responsibility if anything happen to Bruce and Partlow.

I hope for your urgent attention to this matter.

Respectfully yours, -----

Council of Europe office

55, avenue Kleber

F - 75784 Paris Cedex 16

Paris

France

Fax: +33 (0)1 47 27 36 47

Dear members of Council of Europe,

Herby I am expressing my concern that the lives of Washington Post journalists Andrea Bruce and Joshua Partlow are in danger. A group of nationalist Turks has threatened to assassinate them.

I call on you to ensure Bruce's and Partlow's safety; guarantee that they are not going to be abducted and to provide the highest level of security for them.

I urge you to put an end to Turkey's forms of harassment, including at diplomatic level, against Bruce and Partlow and all independent journalists, and ensure that journalists are able to carry out their activities freely, in safety and without any hindrances or fear of harassment or intimidation which undermine freedom of expression, independent journalism and the free flow of information to the public.

Political considerations should not prejudice human rights. Moreover the Turkish government's campaign against photographer Andrea Bruce and journalist Joshua Partlow raises a number of important human rights issues as they are in violation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights to which Turkey is a state party.

Finally I urge you to remind Turkey it has to ensure in all circumstances the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and with international and European Union human rights instruments signed and ratified by Turkey.

I also seek assurances that Bruce's and Partlow's lives are not going to be effected by this kind of uncivilized behavior. From now on Turkey has full

responsibility if anything happen to Bruce
and Partlow.

I hope for your urgent attention to this matter.

Respectfully yours,