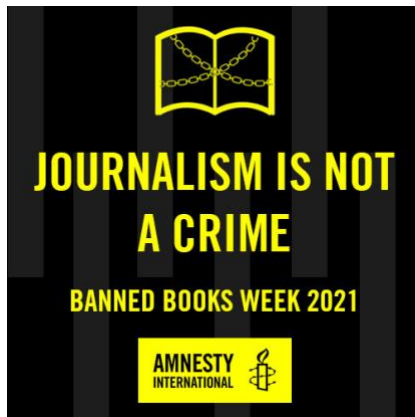


Amnesty International USA: Banned Books Week 2021



What is Banned Books Week and freedom of the press?

Each year during Banned Books Week, Amnesty International activists draw attention to people around the world who have been imprisoned or threatened because of their writing, art, or other published work.

Freedom of the press is the right of newspapers, magazines, and other media to report news without being controlled by the government. This freedom is written into the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), an important document that outlines 30 rights and freedoms that belong to all human beings and cannot be taken away, no matter what.

The UDHR is a global road map for freedom and equality – protecting the rights of everyone, everywhere, but these rights are not always respected. By speaking up and taking action together, we can make a difference.

What's happening in El Salvador?

Journalists from El Salvador protect human rights by making sure Salvadoran citizens and people around the world know about the human rights issues in their country. If people do not know what is happening, they do not have the chance to speak up or fight back.

Journalists in El Salvador are facing many challenges in their work and it is getting harder and harder for them to share urgent information with the public.

- Members of El Faro, an online newspaper, face public and unproven attacks on their work. They believe these attacks are being made to hurt the newspaper's reputation as one of the most respected media outlets in the country.
- El Faro Editor Sergio Arauz was deported, or forced to leave the country, in July. Salvadoran journalists see this as another example of harassment and an attack on freedom of the press.
- In June, the former president of the El Salvador Association of Journalists (APES), Angélica Cárcamo, reported that security forces were trying to intimidate her by staying outside her house and watching her.
- Also in June, the Minister for Justice and Public Security in El Salvador said that some media outlets advocated crime and the authorities are "monitoring many journalists."



The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ordered the Salvadoran government to protect 34 members of El Faro. Salvadoran human rights organizations face similar challenges from President Bukele and other public officials. You can learn more in this article published by Amnesty International in July: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2021/07/receta-nayib-bukele-para-limitar-ejercicio-derechos-humanos/>

What can you do?

You can take action to fight challenges to freedom of expression by writing a message to Salvadoran journalists and human rights defenders about why you support and value their work!

Use the sample message below to write to journalists in El Salvador in English or Spanish. You can use the message to get you started, and add your own ideas too.

When you finish, mail your letter to the address below. Then, visit <https://bit.ly/AIUSABBW2021> to learn more about other challenges to freedom of expression around the world and take action on the six cases Amnesty International USA is featuring this Banned Books Week. If you have any questions or need any support, email communitynetworks@aiusa.org.

Sample Message in English:

Thank you for your in-depth investigations on issues such as gang violence, abuses by the security forces, and violence against women and the LGBT community!

This work is important for protecting human rights in El Salvador and keeping the international community informed. I appreciate the work you are doing and stand with you in your fight for human rights and freedom of the press!

Sample Message in Spanish:

¡Gracias por sus investigaciones en profundidad sobre temas como la violencia de las pandillas, los abusos de las fuerzas de seguridad y la violencia contra las mujeres y la comunidad LGBT!

Este trabajo es importante para proteger los derechos humanos en El Salvador y mantener informada a la comunidad internacional. ¡Aprecio el trabajo que está haciendo y le apoyo en su lucha por los derechos humanos y la libertad de prensa!

Mailing Address:

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