

TO: Pervaiz Rashid

Minister for Information, Broadcasting and National Heritage, Government of Pakistan

4th Floor, Cabinet Block, Pakistan Secretariat, Islamabad

RE: Pakistan's expulsion of Declan Walsh, Islamabad bureau chief for The New York Times

21 June 2013

Respected Minister Rashid,

We are writing to protest the Pakistani government's recent move to expel Declan Walsh, the Islamabad bureau chief for The New York Times, without clearly specifying the allegations against him or allowing him an opportunity to respond to them.

The Pakistani government has repeatedly said that it respects press freedom. The manner in which it expelled Mr. Walsh runs counter to this stated commitment and threatens the entire journalism community in the country.

In the early morning hours of May 9, police officers delivered a two-sentence letter to Mr. Walsh's home in Islamabad informing him that his visa was canceled because of unspecified "undesirable activities" and ordering him to leave the country within 72 hours.

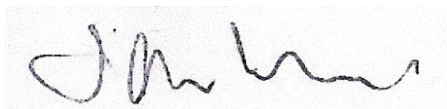
Mr. Walsh received no further explanation of his alleged wrongdoing despite repeated requests. He was eventually escorted by security forces to the airport in Lahore and forced to fly out of the country on May 12.

Mr. Walsh is a respected journalist of high standing who has lived and worked in Pakistan for nine years for both The Guardian and The New York Times newspapers.

We fully recognize the Pakistani government's legal right to control who enters the country and to accredit foreign journalists. But we do not agree with the use of this power to stifle freedom of the press.

We therefore ask the government to reinstate Mr. Walsh's visa and allow him to return to the country in line with the nation's stated commitment to press freedom.

Sincerely,

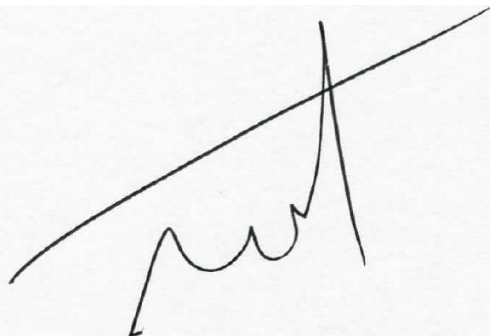


Jon Williams
Managing Editor, International News



Kathleen Carroll
Senior Vice President and Executive Editor

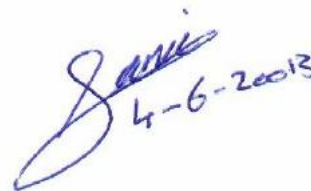




Philippe MASSONNET
Global News Director



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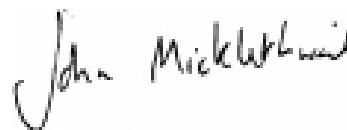
Sami El Haj
Office of Human Rights



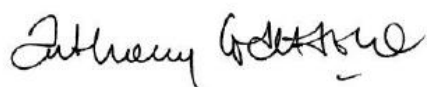
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BBC
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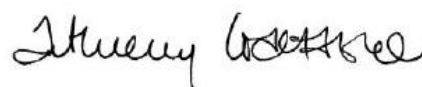
Sarah Ward-Lilley
Acting Head of BBC Newsgathering



John Micklethwait
Editor in Chief



Tony Gallagher, Editor
The Daily Telegraph

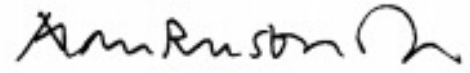


Tony Gallagher, Editor
The Telegraph

Loïck Berrou
Deputy Director



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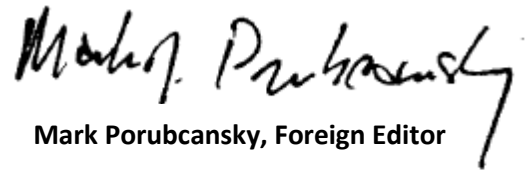
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theguardian



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ITN [NEWS]



Mark Porubcansky, Foreign Editor

Los Angeles Times



Rüdiger Ditz
Editor in Chief

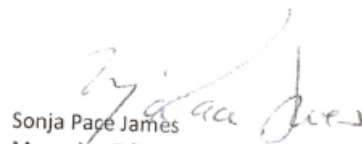
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Gerard Baker
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Sartaj Aziz, Adviser to Prime Minister on National Security and Foreign Affairs
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